



Friends of Honolulu Botanical Gardens

The Bodhi Leaf

180 N. Vineyard Boulevard • Honolulu, Hawaii 96817 • Phone 808-537-1708

WINTER 2014



The Beginning of a Garden



Photo: Sara Collins

Craig Howes as
Dr. William Hillebrand



Photo: Sammie Choy

Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl as
Mary Elizabeth Mikahala Foster



Photo: Sammie Choy

Neal Milner as
Dr. Harold Lyon

REPEAT PERFORMANCE

If you missed the premiere performance of 'The Beginning of a Garden' you have another chance. This living history play will be performed on Sunday, April 6th, in the lovely Foster Botanical Garden. Stroll amongst the trees and plants as you listen to three costumed actors reveal the history of the garden and learn how three historical characters changed the very landscape of the island.

Join us on **Sunday, April 6th**, for this repeat performance. There will be three one-hour-long performances beginning at 3 pm. Call 522-7066 for reservations! Free

Co-sponsored by the Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts, Honolulu Botanical Gardens, and the Friends of Honolulu Botanical Gardens

President's Message

GIFTS FROM THE PAST

Gifts are magical and profound. They enchant the giver and the receiver. The gift of giving, when you do something nice for someone, brings you joy and satisfaction and expresses your love. Receiving a gift makes you feel loved and appreciated, and once in a while, you even love the gift. Gifts from the past are a little different. These gifts we tend to take for granted because they were "always" there. But, almost nothing has been there forever. Just about everything has a beginning. Someone or some people created them or made them happen. We are all the beneficiaries of great people, heroes, who came before us. I have mine; you have yours, but most remain unknown. These people profoundly affect our lives today with their gifts and, for our own sake, we owe them our thanks and appreciation. Realizing how good things came to be helps us preserve and copy them. These heroes show us how giving people can create and do great things.

Foster Botanical Garden wasn't inevitable and its preservation isn't automatic. We owe its existence to the efforts of many people and some good luck. It's a fascinating story. The Friends have co-sponsored the creation of an event that brings the history of our garden to life through the telling of the life stories of three of its heroes: Dr. William Hillebrand, Mary Foster and Dr. Harold Lyon. I saw it and was impressed, informed and entertained. It will be performed periodically. I think you will love it and be proud to have sponsored this gift.

Bill Follmer, President
Friends of Honolulu Botanical Gardens



Year-End Donations

The Board of Trustees of the Friends of Honolulu Botanical Gardens would like to thank the following for their generous response to our year-end appeal. Mahalo!

Lehua (\$1,000 or more)

Paul Weissich

Koa (\$500 - 999)

Dr. Robert & Adelaide Kistner

Kukui (\$100 - \$499)

Ethan & Jean Abbott
Yuklin Aluli
Mary Ann & James Bell
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Patricia Schnack
Emmy Seymour

Keith Steiner
Sadako Tengan
Laura Thompson
Thomas S. Witten
(in memory of James T. Witten)
Pat U. Wong
Lue Zimmelman

Milo (\$1 - 99)

Anonymous
Jann Boxold
Jeremy Bush
Fredrica Cassidy
Philip & Gerry Ching
Lois Clarke
Kurt & Sylvia Eschbach
(in memory of Charles Fukumoto)
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Norma Jean Geil
Stanley Grogan
Gloria Guntner
Marilyn Haine
Donald & Shirley Hasenyager

Suzie Heidrich
Ray Higa
Ruth S. Hirahara
(in memory of Gladys Takenaka)
Janice Itsuno
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Joyce Spoehr
Dorothy Suiso
Katsugi Tamanaha
Joette Wheelon

From the Director's Desk

As always, the start of the New Year stirs one deep emotion in me: hope. From small issues to large concerns, there is a sense of optimism that hope brings - that we can work together to bring about improvements, and that things will get better.

One improvement has already begun. Thanks to the generous donation from the Friends of Honolulu Botanical Gardens, we look forward to receiving a new engraver, which will enable us to engrave labels identifying our accessioned plants.

In this issue of the newsletter, Naomi Hoffmann writes about the HBG plant identification project in which she is involved. As more and more plants are correctly identified, she and garden staff will be able to place accurate plant labels next to them. What a wonderful learning opportunity for our visitors!

Best wishes to you for a Happy New Year of many improvements!

Winnie Singeo, Director
Honolulu Botanical Gardens

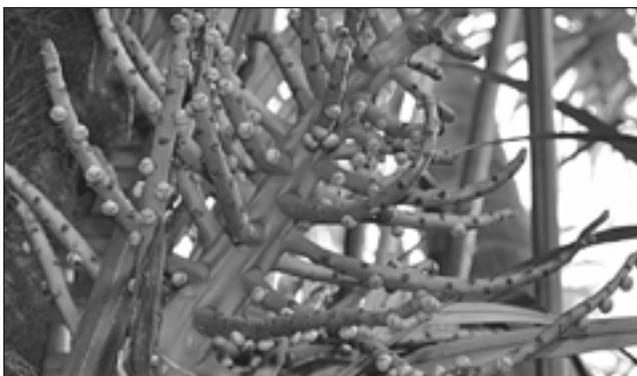
Plant Identification Project

by Naomi Hoffman, HBG Botanist

Join me for a walk around Foster Botanical Garden to see what has been newly identified thanks to the Plant ID Project being funded by the Friends of the Honolulu Botanical Gardens.

Upon entering the garden, and across from the Bo tree, is a tall and lovely trumpet tree with pink blossoms. We now know that its scientific name is *Tabebuia heterophylla*. As we wander back into the Lyon Orchid Garden, we see a small bush with tiny leaves planted among some Chinese rice flower trees. This mystery bush looks very similar to the rice flower trees, and was perhaps planted by mistake. Its proper genus is *Maytenus* in the *Celastraceae* (bittersweet family) and we are still waiting on a species name from the experts. (Unfortunately, our bush doesn't set mature fruit.)

Let's walk onto the majestic main terrace. Along the H-1 fence, there is another trumpet tree with gorgeous purple and pink flowers; its new name is *Radermachera gigantea* and is native to Tropical Asia. Walking through the cool and shady middle terraces we notice a sweet smelling *Arenga* palm – the inconspicuous flowers are very fragrant. This palm now goes by the name *Arenga tremula*, the Philippine dwarf sugar palm. Over by the cannonball trees, we see a few small trees with spiny leaves and vivid orange flowers. These were previously known as *Jacquinia* sp. They now can be correctly called *Bonellia macrocarpa* in the *Primulaceae* (primrose family). *continued on page 4*



Arenga tremula, Philippine dwarf sugar palm



Buttress roots and seedlings from *Sterculia ampla*

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Plant ID (from page 3)

In the economic garden several plants were previously only known to the genus level. Among those with newly given species names is *Raphiolepis umbellata* spp. *umbellata*, a special subspecies of Yeddo hawthorn. Walking toward the baobab tree, there is a skinny tree behind the calabash nutmeg tree. This one had been labeled as a *Randia*, but now we know it is actually a species of *Gardenia*. The flowers are small and cream-colored, but alas, it never sets fruit and so we still have to wait on its true species name.

The great big tree with peeling bark in the Daibutsu area has finally been given a name as well. This one has puzzled experts for years. Please allow me to introduce to you, *Albizia niopoides*! This *albizia* is native to Central and South America and is different from the invasive species seen spreading across our Hawaiian Islands. Also in the Daibutsu area is a tree that makes fabulous winged seed pods. Kids love to watch these pods helicopter to the ground! We thought it was a species of *Myroxylon*, but in fact it is *Platypodium elegans* in the legume family. This tree is native to South America, and several species of monkeys rely on the leaves for food. It is certainly an elegant tree and you should come check it out!

The last tree we will visit is behind the Conservatory, near the nursery gate. It is a nice big tree with large leaves and handsome buttress roots. This tree has been identified as *Sterculia ampla* in the Malvaceae (hibiscus family). This tree is native to Papua New Guinea where people eat the seeds like peanuts. I hope you enjoyed our walk through the garden! Having proper names on our plants is crucial to our success as a botanical garden in many ways. It benefits everyone from the gardeners who give proper plant care to the visiting researchers who collect samples and information. Many thanks to the Friends of HBG for funding this important project! I look forward to reporting on more plant identities in the future.

