



Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Gardens e-Newsletter

JANUARY 2021 EDITION

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Journey from "Hidden Gem" to "Crown Jewel"

Dana Doody, Executive Director



Our sweet Arboretum has been found! People are coming from all over the country to see our trails and gardens. But what does it take to become a true botanical garden? Our trails have always been the reason many people have found us and why we have received the *Best in Jax Award* for *Best Trails* two years in a row. Now, the focus is turning to our gardens.

2020 brought some beautiful additions with our raised beds and the newly planted tropical garden on our South Loop. Shayan Khatibi and our hardworking volunteers have work hard to create these gorgeous arrangements with more to come.

In 2021, we will create a master plan for our gardens centered around our Lake Loop. Our board has made the decision to hire designers Tres Fromme, 3. Fromme DESIGN, and Chris Barkley, HDLA. We will start workshops very soon to plan what types of gardens we want. What will it be? A color garden? A meditation garden? A children's garden? It is all so exciting to even imagine!

We do know that our trails will remain just as they are, besides potentially adding more boardwalks (as funding permits) or enhancing them with conservation projects suited for each trail.

What else could happen in 2021? Bathrooms? We hear you...we are working on those, too!

Whatever the future holds for our beautiful property, please know that it will be done with great care. We will be keeping you informed every step of the way. Happy New Year and we hope you are all staying safe! We hope 2021 is a better year for everyone, but no matter what happens, you know you can always find peace at the Arboretum.

As always, thank you so much for your support!

A Product of Process: Envisioning Your Botanical Garden

**T. Fromme, Principal
3. Fromme DESIGN**



This spring, the Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Gardens leadership, Board Members and supporters will begin the exciting and invigorating process of envisioning a compelling future for the gardens. They will identify and explore the diverse attributes that invite people to embrace the Arboretum as a beloved cultural asset. Planning's essential starting point will be the unique qualities inherent in the beautiful property, the way the Arboretum engages the community, and the people invested in the organization's ongoing success.

The master planning process will articulate and build upon what has made and currently makes Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Garden a compelling place to gather and mark life's cycles: Florida's seasons and ecosystems, the dynamic art of horticulture, individual and community celebrations, and intergenerational traditions. The master plan will, in short, strengthen the garden as a focus of individual and community life.

As consultants, our first responsibilities are to ask questions, listen and communicate what we have learned from those who know the Arboretum best: its leadership and patrons. We look for the ideas stimulating enthusiasm and engaging the imagination. Chris Barkley, HDLA Partner, has noted, "Master planning is a collaboration. Our role as designers is to facilitate people in generating a collective and compelling vision for the next ten to fifteen years."

The first planning phase will explore topics such as the goals for the master plan, distinctive aesthetic identity, the ideal visitor experience, and potential features, facilities and venues to evolve the organization to a higher level of relevance and excellence. Evaluating and prioritizing these possibilities for their alignment with JAG's mission and vision will be essential.



Discovering Nature Nearby: A Note from Alexandria Wilson

As usual, we have been having fun with our Discovering Nature Nearby Program. In November, with fall fast approaching, we learned about why leaves change colors. As the chlorophyll breaks down in the leaves, it begins to change color from green to yellow, orange, red and purple! We had such a great time exploring the Arboretum, finding leaves of all different colors and making leaf rubbings with crayons.

Our Discovering Nature Nearby Program will resume in February at the Arboretum with a special love-themed event. Join us! Here are the details:

**What's Love Got to Do with It?
February 13
10:00 a.m.**

We'll go on a Valentine's Day nature tour focused on the heart: plants that have heart shaped leaves, those that are good for our hearts and those that represent love. This is an event for all ages!

We hope to see you love bugs on February 13!

Plant of the Month: Camellia



Camellias are a genus of evergreen flowering shrubs native to Asia and imported first to South Carolina. Tea drinkers sought after their leaves in the *Camellia sinensis* plant, while gardeners were pursuing *Camellia sasanqua* and *Camellia japonica* as a reliable addition to landscapes of the southeast.

Camellias flower in fall and winter, providing interest when most other plants are dormant. The beautiful blooms are set against evergreen, glossy foliage, which often have unique textures. The slowly growing shrub can tolerate more sun, although it grows ideally in part shade with a well-drained, acid leaning soil. Once established, they often manage on their own. They can be fertilized in spring and late summer before blooming. Hand prune before buds form in summer and mulch with pine

bark or leaves. Your camellias can become elegant low maintenance winter roses in your landscape.

Sources:

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep002>

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/camellias.html>

Photo Credit – Martha T. Mazza

Volunteer Spotlight: SOLitude

Thank you to the folks of SOLitude Lake Management for dedicating a team of volunteers to a workday of removing invasive plants on our trails. We appreciate your hard work!

Interested in volunteering with us?

[Sign up today](#)



Construction on the Jones Creek Bridge

Are you ready for a new bridge on the Jones Creek Trail? So are we! Beginning February 8, we will start construction to create a wider bridge with handrails.

We are looking forward to many improvements over 2021, and this one is long time coming. It will come with a few days of closure, however. Stay tuned to social media and our website for details.

Thank you to the Simmons Family, REI Co-op and Hollywood Decks for your support of this exciting project.

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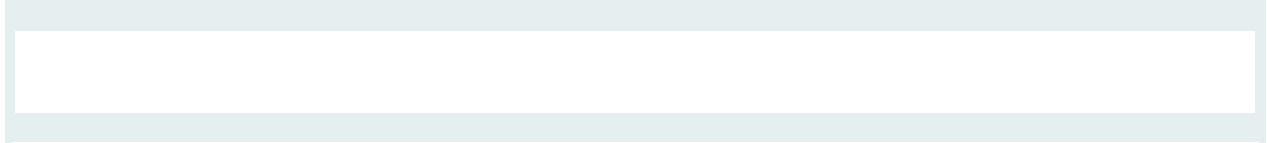
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