



Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Gardens e-Newsletter

MARCH 2021 EDITION

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

Benefits of a Botanical Garden

John Burr, Board Treasurer

This month marks our first Master Plan workshops under the guidance of Tres Fromme and his award-winning team of botanical garden designers. Our goal is to develop a plan to for a botanical garden around the Arboretum's lake loop, which could include a children's garden area, an amphitheater, and specialized plantings to highlight the entrances to our trails. Too soon to say what we'll come up with, but those are some of the ideas that are being floated right now.



Jacksonville doesn't have a botanical garden. We believe it is time that a city as large and growing as quickly as Jacksonville needs a public garden. I spoke with Joan Thomas, the Director of External Relations for the American Public Gardens Association, about the benefits a botanical garden brings to a city.

The benefits Thomas discussed fall into three broad areas: economic development, education, and the positive impacts that are associated with an appreciation of nature and the creative arts.

The economic benefits that an established botanical garden generates are straight forward. People are employed, goods and services are bought, and visitors travel to the garden, eat meals and patronize hotels. A successful botanical garden would draw tourists who now drive right through Jacksonville on their way to points south, people who would love a quiet peaceful place to take a respite from their interstate travels.

The educational benefits of a botanical garden are deep and stretch across all age groups. Children are introduced to the variety of experiences, from planting seed to growing plants and learning about nature's daily miracles. Gardens can spark an interest in children that can lead to a lifelong occupation. Adults are taught how to take care of their yards with fewer chemicals or build community gardens in their neighborhoods that provide cheap and fresh foods. Other lessons learned include the benefits of using native plants and conserving water.

Harder to quantify but every bit as valuable are the positive impacts experienced from a peaceful walk in nature and seeing the wonders of plants presented to their best advantage. We've learned this lesson over the last year, as people have flocked to the Arboretum to take a break from the frustrations imposed by the COVID pandemic. A well-designed botanical garden provides a wellspring of creativity for artists, and a wonderful oasis of peace and healing for all.

That's the vision that we at the Arboretum are working towards and which the people of Jacksonville deserve. Please feel encouraged to help us, through volunteer work, donations, or both. Stay tuned for more soon. In the meantime, see you at the Arboretum.

A Bridge to the Future

Dana Doody, Executive Director



A Note from the Executive Director

How exciting is it that we now have a beautiful new bridge for the Jones Creek trail? It is one way for the public to see how dedicated we are in future of the Arboretum. Our goal for the Jones Creek trail is to make it as accessible for as many people (and four legged friends) as we possibly can. We hope that you enjoy this beautiful new bridge! Many good things to come soon! Thank you to the Simmons Family, REI Co-Op, Hollywood Decks and Decks and Docks!



Ways to Give: Naming Opportunities

Here's a unique way to pay tribute to someone you love and support the Arboretum at the same time: put their name on a special place or project! Then, everyone who visits will know how special your loved one is to you and our community. There are so many options, including: tribute bricks, benches, raised beds, our water garden, boardwalks, gardens and trails. If you're interested in learning more about these ways to pay tribute, please contact Dana Doody 904.318.4342 or email info@jacksonvillearboretum.org.

Events to look forward to!

Discovering Nature Nearby: March 13 from 10 to 11 a.m. Rescheduled!

What's Love Got To Do With It? A nature walk with a love theme.



A BRUSH WITH NATURE

May 15th & 16th
9am to 5pm
A Plein Air Painting Event



Volunteer Spotlight

Naval Branch Health Clinic Mayport, Aviation Medicine

You want something done right? Enlist help from the Navy! This team comes out and bags up trash and glass on the trails with smiles on their faces. They work hard and come out regularly to help us look our best. Thank you to HM2 Kati Manuel & her crew!

Interested in volunteering with us?
[Sign up today](#)



Plant of the Month



Aloe Vera is a very hardy succulent which thrives in the poorest soils and even in high salt environments. Aloe is well known for its burn and wound healing properties and the Egyptians went as far to call it “the plant of immortality”. The long, thick, spiny leaves grow to form a basal rosette keeping the plant under about two feet tall. Showy red or yellow tubular flower stalks emerge in late winter and are a favorite of long-beaked birds, like hummingbirds. The plant thrives outdoors in zones 8-11 and can tolerate shade to full-sun conditions. Aloe Vera can also make a great addition as an indoor plant.

More importantly, the plant is known for its wide range of medicinal properties. The gel is harvested by filleting the leaf in half and then scoring the flesh in a crisscross pattern, forcing the gel out. The gel is most widely known for aiding in wound repair, burn healing and psoriasis. When taken internally, it works as a great laxative and has been shown to lower blood sugar levels in people with diabetes and also to reduce cholesterol. Possibly the most remarkable trait is Aloe’s ability to act as an anti-cancer agent, inhibiting proliferation and angiogenesis.

Source:

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/aloe-vera.html>

http://onkder.org/pdf/pdf_TOD_949.pdf

Van Wyk, Ben-Erik, Wink, Michael. Medicinal Plants of the World, 2004

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By becoming a member or donor, you're supporting the Arboretum's operations and improvements. All donations are tax-deductible. Details are available on our website.

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