



Must See

June 2025



Camellia grijsii - Camellia Garden

In June, the Garden is full of surprises. Find charismatic plants who charm with smell, flowers, foliage, trunks and cones on this month's tour.

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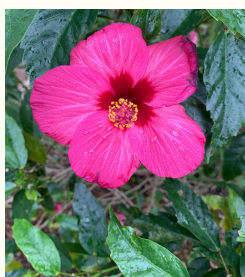
1 **Camellia Garden**
Fragrant Camellias



Our Camellia collection is home to many rare species, cultivars and hybrids, including some that are fragrant. Look for *Camellia grijsii* from China with delicately scented, heart-shaped petals. Nearby *Camellia transnokoensis*, native to lush forests of Taiwan, has small fragrant white flowers. Best of the batch is *Camellia* 'Minato-no-akebono' (pictured), a profusely flowering, sweetly scented hybrid from Japan, whose name translates as 'Harbour at Dawn'.

Family: Theaceae

2 **Hibiscus storckii**
Storck's Hibiscus



Endemic to the cloud forests of Fiji (Taveuni), this exquisite species, first collected in 1860, had long been thought extinct. Incredibly, *Hibiscus storckii* was recently re-discovered by botanists! With its showy pink petals and crimson eye, it's thought that it influenced traits of modern Hibiscus hybrids. In the wild, Storck's Hibiscus, and other newly discovered species, *Hibiscus bennettii* and *Hibiscus macverryi* are endangered.

Family: Malvaceae

3 **Tagetes lemmoni**
Lemmon's or Mountain Marigold



Crush the leaves and smell the delicious citrus-passionfruit-mint fragrance! This tough, drought-hardy, evergreen shrub, with finely divided leaves is native to Arizona and Mexico. It loves the sun, producing golden flowers from late summer through winter. A cheerful plant for winter gardens, adding beauty and fragrance while attracting pollinating bees and butterflies. Available for purchase at our Growing Friends Plant Sales, open daily.

Family: Asteraceae

4 **Encephalartos tegulaneus**
Kenyan Giant Cycad



This beautiful cycad is native to the evergreen forests of the Mathew Ranges in the Rift Valley province of north-central Kenya. It can reach heights of 10 metres in its natural habitat but is slow growing. Cycads have separate male and female plants (dioecious). Our female plant is producing a bright yellow, cylindrical cone that is breaking up to reveal orange seeds that are highly poisonous. Admire our precious cycads but please don't touch.

Family: Zamiaceae

5 **Brachychiton rupestris**
Queensland Bottle Tree



This succulent tree is memorable for its bottle-shaped trunk. Endemic to Central Queensland and Northern NSW, the species epithet *rupestris*, Latin for 'growing in rocky places', refers to the species' habitat in the Brigalow Belt, an endangered ecosystem. This much-loved specimen began life as a seedling in 1846, making it 179 years old.

Family: Malvaceae

7 **Xanthostemon chrysanthus**
Golden Penda



This spectacular flowering rainforest tree is endemic to North Queensland, often growing along creek banks. Golden Penda produces masses of brilliant golden flowers with prominent 'fluffy' stamens, and its leaves contain oil droplets. Bird-attracting flowers are followed by woody capsules. The genus *Xanthostemon*, derives its name from the Greek 'xanthos' and Latin 'stamen', meaning 'yellow thread.'

Family: Myrtaceae

8 **Calliandra haematocephala**
Red Powder Puff



This evergreen shrub with red pompom-like flowers is native to Bolivia. Raspberry-like flower buds open to powder puff flower heads, bursting with silky red stamens. Leaves are unusual - they fold up at night! Such 'sleep movements' (nyctinasty) are common in the pea family (Fabaceae). The earliest record of nyctinasty dates to Alexander the Great in 325 BC. But the biological significance remains a mystery!

Family: Fabaceae



Plant of the Month

6 **Bauhinia x blakeana**
Hong Kong Orchid Tree

This spectacular flowering tree has a curious origin. Today it's the floral emblem of Hong Kong, admired for fragrant pink blossoms and bilobed leaves shaped like butterfly wings. But its history begins in 1880. This tree was discovered near a ruined building in Pokfulam, Hong Kong by a Catholic missionary, who took a cutting. Since 1914 Hong Kong's Zoological and Botanical Garden has sent cuttings to botanic gardens world-wide. In 2005 scientists showed it to be a naturally occurring (sterile) hybrid of two Bauhinia species. As it is sterile, all existing trees in the world are genetically identical to that first discovered tree.

Family: Fabaceae