



DESERT  
BOTANICAL  
*garden*

**DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN**  
Press Kit | Summer 2025

# The Garden

Discover the tranquil vibrancy of 50,000 desert plants nestled amid the red rocks of the Papago Buttes at Desert Botanical Garden. Visitors can stroll through five thematic trails to explore plants, including towering cactus, alluring succulents and brilliant desert wildflowers. Delve deeper to experience world-class art exhibitions, festive events and so much more.

## By the Numbers (as of 2024)



**634K+**  
TOTAL ATTENDANCE



**28,826**  
MEMBERS AND DONORS



**608**  
NEW ACCESSIONS ADDED



**548**  
RARE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED TAXA



**100,000**  
TOTAL HERBARIUM SAMPLES

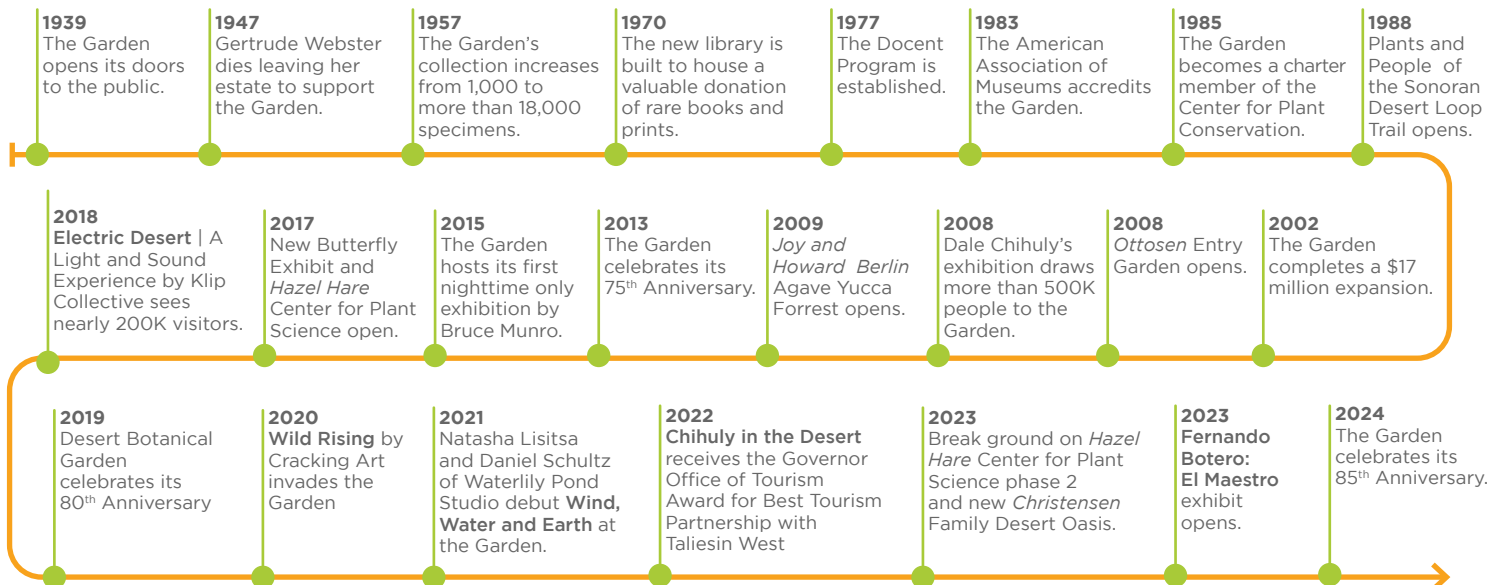


**770+**  
VOLUNTEERS



## History

In the 1930s, a small group of passionate local citizens saw the need to conserve the beautiful desert environment. One was Swedish botanist Gustaf Stark, who found like-minded residents by posting a sign that said “Save the desert,” with an arrow pointing to his home. More than eight decades later, thanks to leadership and investments from many individuals, Desert Botanical Garden has blossomed from a dream into a living museum unlike any other. See how the Garden has grown during its history into a compelling attraction and desert conservation pioneer.



## Trails

Desert Botanical Garden provides a world-class experience for every visitor. Through permanent trailside exhibits, temporary art installations and seasonal experiences, the Garden ignites discovery about the desert and the plants that have adapted to this fascinating ecosystem.



### **DESERT DISCOVERY TRAIL**

Explore the Garden's main trail and discover the many ways desert plants from around the world have adapted to the environment. Featuring a diverse array of cactus and succulents as well as historic plant collections, this core trail takes you on a journey to celebrate the beauty of the desert.



### **Harriet K. Maxwell DESERT WILDFLOWER TRAIL**

Stroll along this meandering trail where you'll encounter brightly colored blooms as well as the pollinators they attract, like bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Find out how flowers, insects and birds play an essential role in thriving desert ecosystems.



### **CENTER FOR DESERT LIVING TRAIL**

Fragrant herbs, vegetable beds and shady spots to relax make this trail a delight for the senses. Come see what's growing this season and discover tips for creating a lush, water-wise home garden.



### **SONORAN DESERT NATURE TRAIL**

Take our nature trail to learn how plants and animals survive in the desert with so little water. Watch for wildlife on your way to the top and take in mountain vistas that will change your point of view.



### **PLANTS AND PEOPLE OF THE SONORAN DESERT TRAIL**

Wander through five diverse desert habitats and discover the variety of ways indigenous people have used native plants for food, fiber and shelter.



## Experiences



### ORCHID FEVER

Now - May 11, 2025

Be enthralled by striking swathes of orchids in brilliant pinks, oranges, yellows and purples set in a lush desert oasis. Visitors of all ages will learn about Arizona's endangered and rare orchids and the efforts Garden researchers are taking to preserve them. This lush collection is sure to leave visitors inspired and renewed.



### TOWARD 2050

Now - June 1, 2025

Explore an engaging exhibit led by textile-based artist Ann Morton, centered on community and environment. TOWARD 2050 invites the public to craft handmade artworks that express their views on the environment. These unique creations will come together in a captivating labyrinth installation at the Garden that encourages visitors to take steps towards addressing climate change.



### MOTHER'S DAY

May 11

Celebrate the moms in your life with a botanical good time! The Garden will offer a day to remember with complimentary photo op, live entertainment, the Spring Butterfly Exhibit, Orchid Fever Exhibit and more! Purchase Mother's Day lunch baskets by Fabulous Food Fine Catering and Events.

## Experiences



### DESERT DISCOVERY CAMPS

June 2-27

Join us for Desert Discovery Camps, where campers explore nature and learn about the beauty of the desert. This year's camps feature outdoor skills, nature-inspired art, sustainability and science.

- **Get Outdoors** June 2-6 | Ages 6-8 and 9-12
- **Nature Art** | June 9-13 | Ages 6-8 and 9-12
- **Planet Protectors** | June 16-20 | Ages 6-8 and 9-12
- **Desert Laboratory** | June 23-27 | Ages 6-8 and 9-12



### FLASHLIGHT NIGHTS

Saturdays, June 7 – Sept. 13

Beat the heat and experience the magic of the Garden after dark. Wander through the Garden's trails by flashlight, come face-to-face with fascinating desert creatures and soak in the enchanting nighttime vibes. Discover a whole new side of the Garden and make it a night to remember with family and friends.



### JUNETEENTH

June 10

Join us for a vibrant celebration of Juneteenth at the Garden! A day of reflection, fun and connection, where we honor the enduring legacy of freedom, culture and community. Wander through the scenic trails while engaging in activities that spotlight Black culture, history and creativity.

## Experiences Continued



### FATHER'S DAY

June 14

Celebrate your favorite dads at Flashlight Nights on June 14! Treat Dad to sample the Garden's newest spirit, Gertrude's Founders Bourbon, created with Chandler-based SanTan Spirits a private label bourbon.

Grab a drink and enjoy the Garden's nighttime experience Flashlight Nights with the whole family. Get your flashlights and make unforgettable memories under the stars!



### SONORAN SIPPIN'

June 20, July 18, Aug. 15, Sept. 19

Savor a summer packed with fun at the Garden! Every second Friday night grab your friends for an unforgettable evening featuring refreshing welcome drinks, live music, pop-up activities, scenic Garden strolls and more. This 21+ event is the perfect way to unwind and celebrate summer!



### DESERT PULSE

October 11, 2025 - May 10, 2026


Desert Botanical Garden is embarking on a new partnership with London-based pioneering artist studio ScanLAB Projects, bringing its groundbreaking visual and technical artwork here in 2025. The exhibit will be a first-of-its-kind in the Valley to connect science and nature at this scale in both indoor and outdoor environments.

# Research & Conservation

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) identified cactus as one of the most threatened groups of living organisms, but the Garden is working to protect and conserve these treasured desert plants and many others. The Garden's researchers often collaborate internationally, as well as with federal and state agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Parks Service, to protect Arizona flora and habitat.



**548**  
Rare and  
Endangered  
Plants



**4,818**  
Taxa (includes  
plant and seed)



**26**  
Scientists  
Doing Work in  
9 Countries and  
4 Continents



Garden scientists are fulfilling our mission through projects in arid regions around the world.



## Here We Grow Again

Desert Botanical Garden recently broke ground for the Phase 2 *Hazel Hare* Center for Plant Science. This \$17 million project will advance the Garden's vision to become a global leader in desert plant conservation and the most sophisticated center in the Southwest for cactus and agave horticulture, conservation and research. Expected completion date is 2025.

### Phase 2 will include:



#### **Ahearn HORTICULTURE CENTER**

A unified, energized workspace designed to inspire the passion and dedication of the Garden's horticulture team.



#### **TEACHING GARDEN HOUSE**

Premier local resource for Sonoran Desert gardening and landscaping education, and will amplify the impact of the Garden's community educational programs.



#### **GREENHOUSE EAST**

Doubling the amount of climate-controlled areas to propagate and nurture region-specific plants.



#### **SHADE PAVILION**

The Shade Pavilion will be a 10,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility that redefines the care of desert plants and other succulents that require shade, humidity and temperature controls.



Now Open

#### **The RAF EXHIBITION GALLERY**

This space is designed to showcase the Garden's living collections and temporary art exhibits, as well as insight to research and conservation practices.



### Expected Impacts

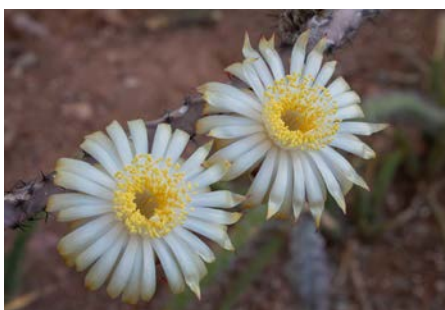
The work made possible by the completion of HHCPs will enable the Garden to not only identify and study threats to our ecosystem, but to also mitigate those threats and improve conditions for desert plant species. The capacity of these new facilities will accelerate the Garden's efforts to cultivate and preserve flora from arid deserts in Arizona, North America, and across the globe. Additionally, greater access to enhanced tools, technology and workspace will advance our comprehensive plant propagation program – the cornerstone of our conservation work.



### These state-of-the-art spaces will also be fully equipped with conversation features such as:

- The Solar & Shade Canopy will continue our efforts in creating sustainable solutions that allow the Garden to be a part of this community for generations to come.
- Energy-Efficient Site Improvements will include additional micro solar collectors, rain water-harvesting systems and temperature and light management technology.





## Mission:

The Garden's commitment to the community is to advance excellence in education, research, exhibition and conservation of desert plants of the world with emphasis on the Sonoran Desert. We will ensure that the Garden is always a compelling attraction that brings to life the many wonders of the desert.

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