

VOLUNTEER

April 2022



Morris Arboretum
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

Magnolia stellata
star magnolia

Volunteer

Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania

Volunteer is a newsletter published monthly for
Arboretum volunteers.

Mission

The Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania
inspires an understanding of the relationship between
plants, people and place through education, research and
horticultural display.

Vision for the Future

As an irreplaceable public garden, the Morris Arboretum
provides a place of respite, beauty and learning where
the joy and wonder of the natural world inspire all who
visit to be enthusiastic ambassadors for plants and our
fundamental dependence on them.

A vital part of one of the great research universities in
the world, the Morris Arboretum is renowned for its
science aimed at understanding and conserving plants

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Volunteer

Melissa Lisbao-Underwood, Editor

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Questions, comments, and submissions can be
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Photos: Melissa Lisbao-Underwood, unless otherwise stated

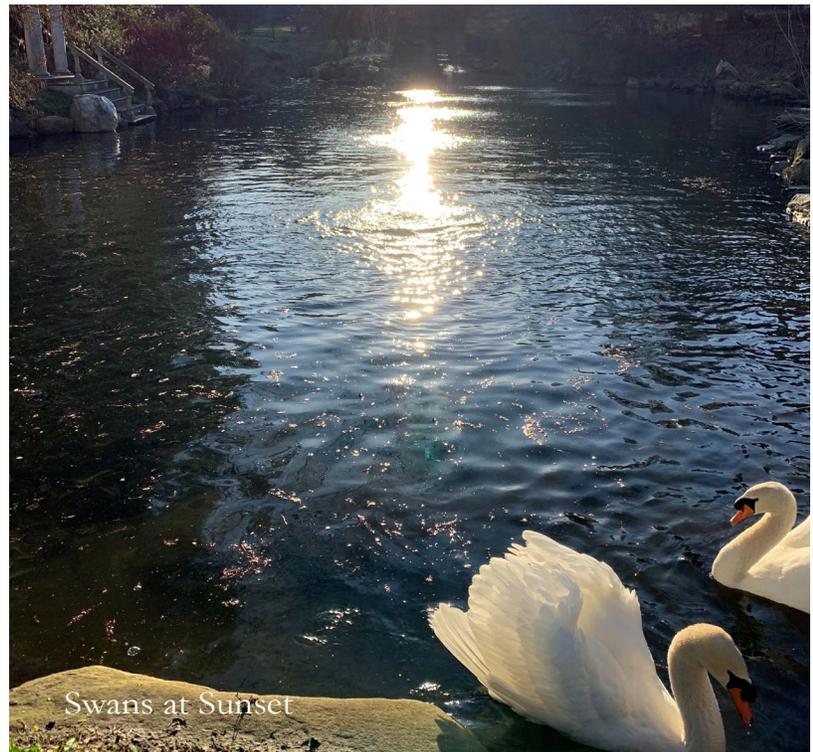
Cover: *Magnolia Stellata* 'Star Magnolia'



Malus 'Indian Summer' Indian Summer crabapple
photo by Lynn Weaver

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Swans at Sunset

Letter from the Editor

Dear volunteers,

I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Youth and Visitor Education Intern here at the beautiful Morris Arboretum! It has only been a little over two weeks, but it feels like longer. Maybe that's because in my mind I've been living here ever since I saw the job description on Indeed back in October. Back then I was working several part-time jobs in New Jersey but as soon as I saw the posting, I drove down to the Arboretum to see it for myself.

If a photographer had joined me on this trip, I could show you the pictures of my face when I got out of the car. The trees wore blazing crowns of red and yellows, singing their last hurrahs. The roses still smelled like spring,

and ferns with ink-black witchy stems were whispering their hundred-million-year-old secrets.

In my opinion, there is no fuller life than one spent outdoors, and no greater teacher than nature herself. I am so grateful for this opportunity to work alongside other curious minds who value nature as much as I do, to learn from my fellow interns, staff and volunteers, and to join in a very important mission: connecting people with nature!

Melissa Lisboa-Underwood

*The McLean Contributionship
Endowed Visitor Education Intern*



*Magnolia x soulangeana
'Brozzonii'*
Photo by Jennie Ciborowski



A foggy day

Meet the 2022 Interns!

We, the interns of 2022 are delighted to introduce ourselves as the newest members of the Morris Arboretum Community! We are so grateful for the opportunity provided by our contributors, and are dedicated to making the most out of our time here. Now that you've seen our faces, please stop and say hello!



Darle Riordan

The Charles S. Holman Jr. Rose and Flower Garden Intern

Darle went to school for horticulture management. In her spare time she is involved with community gardens throughout Philadelphia.



Nora Wildberg

John J. Willaman & Martha Haas Valentine Curatorial Intern

Nora has a background in art history and has worked as an art curator. In her spare time she loves to read and work on puzzles.



Rebecca Roth

The McLean Contributionship Adult Education Intern

Rebecca has been an academic medical librarian and is passionate about environmental sustainability. In her spare time she gardens, hikes, and volunteers on local farms.



Caroline Mertz

The Hay Honey Farm Natural Areas Intern

Caroline went to the University of Vermont for natural resource ecology. In her spare time she likes to watch movies and has a great affection for cats.



Wylie Lapp

Charles S. Holman Jr. Rose and Flower Garden Intern

Wylie is a local environmental enthusiast and graduate of Chestnut Hill College. In his spare time he likes to play guitar.



Priscilla Parshall

The Alice & J. Liddon Pennock Jr. Horticulture Intern

Priscilla comes from a veterinary background, and is excited now to be working with plants, as she is equally passionate about plants and animals.



Andrew Conboy

The Martha S. Miller and Rusty Miller Urban Forestry Fellow

Andrew received his bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Chestnut Hill College and his master's degree in Biology from Lehigh University. He is passionate about trees and plants and their potential for remediating environmental issues.



Rebecca Dill

The Walter W. Root Arboriculture Intern

Rebecca double-majored in Forest Ecosystem Management and Wildlife and Fisheries Science. She works with the arborists in the arboretum and beyond, keeping the trees healthy and reducing potential hazards.



Joanne Gumaer

The Alice & J. Liddon Pennock Jr. Horticulture Intern

A lifelong learner, Joanne studied chemistry academically but horticulture informally for decades. She is in the midst of a career change, and is looking forward to learning even more about plants.



Isabel Mooney

The Martha J. Wallace Plant Propagation Fellow

Isabel has had prior horticultural experience working at Longwood Gardens in production greenhouse, specifically with chrysanthemum forms. Her favorite part of the garden is natural lands/the wetland area.



Melissa Lisboa-Underwood

The McLean Contributionship Youth & Visitor Education Intern

Melissa majored in violin performance and minored in agriculture. She is a strong proponent of integrating the arts and sciences, loves plants, and enjoys swimming.

Meet the New Staff! We are pleased to introduce the two newest members of our staff--Stephanie Bruneau, Assistant Director of Adult Education, and Jenny Rajotte, Intern and Volunteer Coordinator--who have already made a wonderful addition to our team.

Hello!

I'm so pleased to be joining the staff here at the Morris Arboretum!

Here at Morris I will be overseeing our course catalog and conferences, and continuing a long tradition of popular, practical and fun courses for both amateurs and professionals.

Outside of work I am a beekeeper and writer, and I speak and write about honey bees and the natural world throughout the Philadelphia area and beyond.

I live in Northwest Philadelphia with three cats, eight free range chickens, and two free range children.



Stephanie Bruneau with her daughter, Clara

Dear Volunteers,

I am so thrilled to introduce myself as the Intern & Volunteer Coordinator here at Morris Arboretum—a new position that I have stepped into right along with our 2022 Intern cohort, as we all started together on March 7! Some of you may remember spying me and my many hats in the gardens during your tours or working alongside me last year in Horticulture as a Seasonal Gardener.

While over a decade of my career has been in Non-profit Arts Management, I don't see much of a jump from there to here: gardening is a beautiful—and the slowest—performing art; a thrilling, ever-ongoing collaboration between humans and nature. It's a perfect match to me.

I am generally at the Arboretum 3 days/week. When I'm not here, you may find me walking rescue pets in my South Philly neighborhood; in my capacity as an independent artistic producer creating music events around the city; working as a Goat Handler and volunteer for the Philly Goat Project; or hanging around the Irish Center where I am a Board Member for the Philadelphia Ceili Group. Please say hi any time!



Jenny Rajotte with her goats

Notes from the Guides Chair

Ecuador's Biodiversity Compared to that of Pennsylvania

On my January trip to Galapagos and Ecuador's Cloud Forests, I was amazed by the biodiversity of that part of the world. While Ecuador is only half the size of France, its cloud forests are considered the most biodiverse area of the planet, containing nearly 17% of the world's plant species and nearly 20% of its bird diversity. There are an estimated 16,087 plant species, including ferns and plants with seeds. Of these, 15,300 species are native and 4,173 are endemic. In contrast, Pennsylvania is home to about 3,000 plant species, two-thirds of which are considered native.

With over 1,500 species of birds, Ecuador ranks 4th in avian diversity amongst all countries in the world. Pennsylvania's bird population includes 435 species, 285 of which live in the state and 150 of which regularly visit.

Ecuador's cloud forests are home to iconic species such as the spectacled bear, jaguar, sloth, howler monkey, puma and white-tailed deer. But it's Ecuador's moths that really caught my attention: While Pennsylvania is estimated to have 350 moth species, Ecuador is home to 2850, making up 25% of all species worldwide. These moths are a wonder of nature, exhibiting an incredible diversity of shapes, patterns, sizes and strange disguises.

Sadly, Ecuador's cloud forests are being cleared at such a rapid rate, it is predicted that Ecuador will



be completely deforested within the next 30 years without intervention. Pennsylvania, meanwhile, follows the same trajectory: urban sprawl, climate change, loss of biodiversity, and impaired water quality present major challenges to Pennsylvania's natural resources as it has one of the highest rates of land development in the U.S, even though its population growth is comparatively low.

While Ecuador and Pennsylvania have very different ecosystems and climate, the diversity of plant and animal life are equally threatened in each, just as they are in the rest of the world.

See you at the Arboretum.
Happy Spring!

Jim Kohler
Chair of the Guides

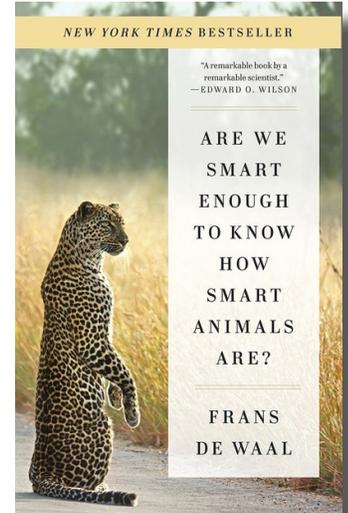


Volunteer Workshops and Opportunities

— May Book Club

Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are? by Frans de Waal
May 6 | 1:00 PM | [zoom meeting](#)

What separates your mind from an animal's? Maybe you think it's your ability to design tools, your sense of self, or your grasp of past and future—all traits that have helped us define ourselves as the planet's preeminent species. But in recent decades, these claims have eroded, or even been disproven outright, by a revolution in the study of animal cognition. Take the way octopuses use coconut shells as tools; elephants that classify humans by age, gender, and language; or Ayumu, the young male chimpanzee at Kyoto University whose flash memory puts that of humans to shame. Based on research involving crows, dolphins, parrots, sheep, wasps, bats, whales, and of course chimpanzees and bonobos, Frans de Waal explores both the scope and the depth of animal intelligence. He offers a firsthand account of how science has stood traditional behaviorism on its head by revealing how smart animals really are, and how we've underestimated their abilities for too long. De Waal opens our minds to the idea that animal minds are far more intricate and complex than we have assumed. De Waal's landmark work will convince you to rethink everything you thought you knew about animal—and human—intelligence.



The Book Club is open to all Arboretum volunteers and staff. All are welcome to attend any session and you do not have to attend every month.



Magnolia x soulangeana
'Brozzonii'

Photo by Jennie Ciborowski



Magnolia stellata
star magnolia

Photo by Jennie Ciborowski

Did you know...

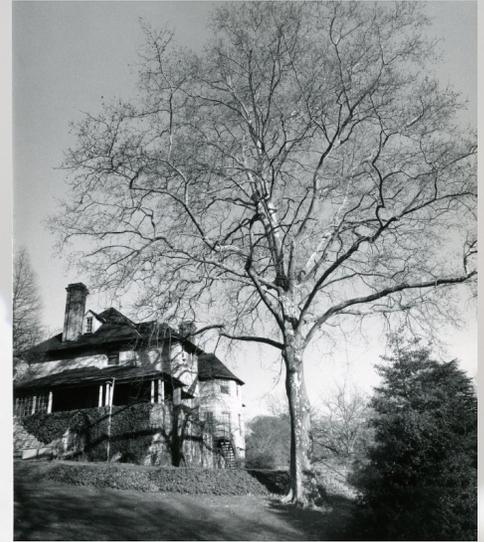
Records show that Magnolias have been around for about 100 million years. They're so old, they evolved before bees and are actually pollinated by beetles!

Workshops & Opportunities (Continued)

Join us for the Gates Hall Tour & Chat

Tues. April 12th, 12:30pm

Interested in knowing more about Gates Hall? Join us Tuesday April 12 for a chat and tour of the house formerly called Overlea. Find out who designed it, who lived there and how the original rooms are used now. Plus we'll answer the question no one ever asks: what does George Widener have to do with Overlea? Join Leslie Morris-Smith and Joyce Munro in the lobby of Gates at 12:30pm.



Gates Hall -2004.1.688

Join us at the Barn at Bloomfield Farm

Wed. May 11th, 1:30 1:30pm

For decades, the Morris Arboretum has stored many unused treasures in the Barn at Bloomfield for safekeeping. Did you ever wonder what's in the Barn that is usually off limits to the volunteers?

We asked Bob Gutowski to unlock the door and lead us on a treasure hunt. Barns are notoriously dusty and dirty, so wear your old clothes and be ready for a journey into the past.

Don't Miss this Class!

Magnolias: The Essentials

Jen Monico, Horticulturist, Morris Arboretum

Saturday April 2nd, 2:30-4:00pm

Magnolias are one of the core collections at the Morris Arboretum and when they are in bloom, they magnificently light up the Arboretum's entrance drive. In this class, we will take a walking tour to explore the magnolia collection that should be in full bloom. Jen will also discuss magnolia care and how to best use these beautiful plants in the landscape. She will highlight basic botanical characteristics, best cultivation practices, good species for your home landscape, and interesting insights into the history and management of the Arboretum's magnolia collection. This class meets at the Arboretum. Park in the grass lot to the left of the entrance kiosk and meet Jen there. Dress for the weather and bring your questions. (Members \$30, non-members \$35)

From the Archives

by Joyce H. Munro

The Orange Balustrade

One of the most prominent garden features John and Lydia Morris created at Compton is the Orange Balustrade. It's not surprising that the balustrade was constructed in traditional Italianate style—the Morris siblings had seen some of the world's finest Baroque gardens on their travels. Imagine John exclaiming to Lydia, "When we get back to Philadelphia, let's build something like this!" They had all the essentials: oodles of space, sweeping vistas, a yen for order and a growing collection of Italian garden ornaments.

The Morrises' inspiration may have come from touring European gardens but the practical details came from books in their library like *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* by Andrew Jackson Downing. Everyone with an interest in landscaping was reading Downing's books in the 1880s, especially those who had just bought their "country seat" and needed advice on how to meld their highly conspicuous house with the surrounding grounds. From Downing the Morrises learned that a

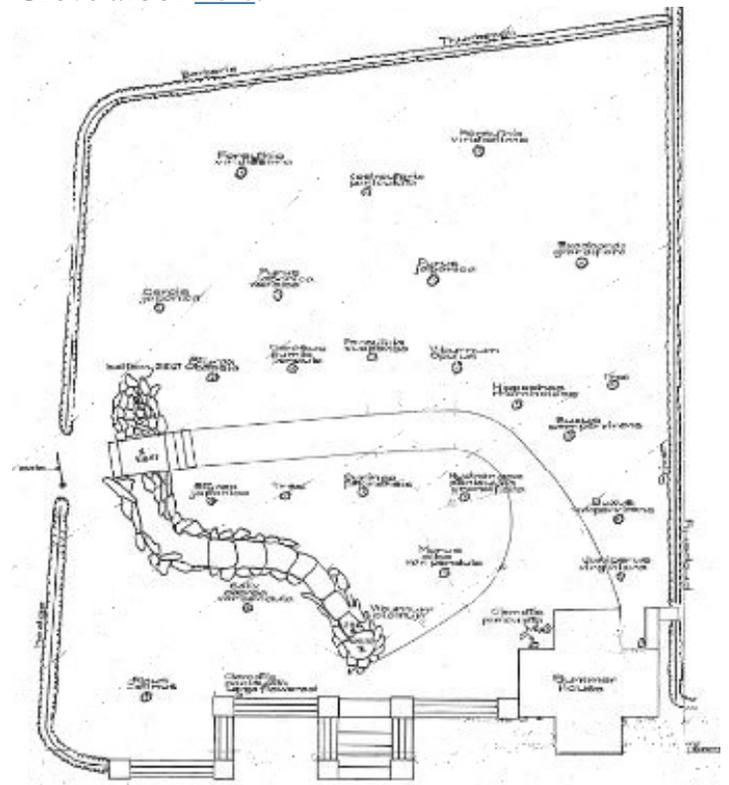
"handsome" balustrade would be the perfect entry to their elaborate patterned flower walk extending all the way down the sunny slope.

The rustic wooden structure at the right corner of the formal balustrade seems an anomaly—but not to John and Lydia, for it is nearly identical to a Gothic arbor in the garden of their ancestral home, Cedar Grove. Rather than constructing a single arbor at each corner of the balustrade (for the sake of symmetry), the Morrises grouped four arbors at 90-degree angles, creating a cruciform-shaped "Summer House." Garden aficionados seeking shade in the Summer House were treated to the heady scent of wisteria, roses and clematis trained on the arbors.

Read about the remarkable Compton-era flower walk [here](#) (page 6) and view the Cedar Grove arbor [here](#).

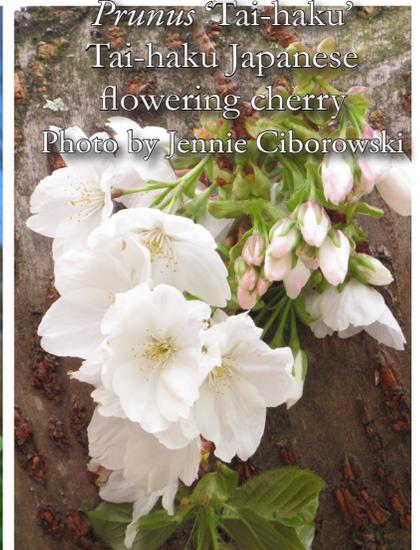


Orange Balustrade c. 1902, Morris Arboretum Archives, 2004.1.373N



Orange Balustrade, Compton Atlas, Pugh & Hubbard, 1909

Garden Highlights



Upcoming Events

April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Book Club 1 pm Zoom	2 Magnolias: The Essentials 2:30-4pm Regular Tour: 1-2pm
3 Regular Tour: 1-2pm	4	5	6 Horticulture Volunteers 8:30am-12pm	7 Guides Council: 1:30pm	8	9 Regular Tour 1-2pm
10 Regular Tour: 1-2pm	11	12 Gates Hall Tour and Chat 12:30pm	13 Horticulture Volunteers 8:30am-12pm	14	15	16 Regular Tour 1-2 pm
17 Regular Tour: 1-2pm	18	19	20 Horticulture Volunteers 8:30am-12pm	21	22	23 Regular Tour: 1-2pm

Weekly Volunteer Events

Wednesdays: Horticulture Volunteers 8:30am-12pm

Saturdays and Sundays: Regular Tour 1:00pm-2:00pm