

# HAWAII TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

*A Garden in a Valley on the Ocean*



# Garden Updates

with Executive Director David Tan

Dear Members and Friends of HTBG,

I am happy to report that the Garden continues to enjoy record attendance and that our membership has grown to nearly 1,500 members!

On top of this good news, in June the Garden was nominated for the USA Today Readers' Choice Poll for Best Attraction in Hawaii. The Garden placed third overall but first in all of the neighbor Islands, even ahead of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park which receives about 18 times more visitors annually! It is heartwarming to see such enthusiasm from our guests. This is a huge honor and we thank all of you who took the time to vote.

Aside from being a major visitor attraction, the Garden's mission is to further education and science. That's why we were glad to host researchers from the Charles Montague Cooke, Jr. Malacology Center at Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum. The researchers walked the garden searching for land snails, collecting samples and recording their findings.

The Hawaiian land snail fauna is one of the most diverse in the world in relation to land area with over 750 recognized species in only 10 families. Unfortunately, like too many Hawaiian natives, these land snails are among the most threatened groups of animals on the planet. There are now 38 established non-native land snails competing with the natives, inflicting agricultural damage and serving as vectors for parasites that cause disease. We hope the study will bring greater attention to these threats posed by alien species and the plight of our own endangered snails.

Cover: *Strongylodon macrobotrys* or Jade Vine is a member of the same family as peas and beans (Leguminosae). This elegant liana is from the tropical jungles of the Phillipines and is under threat in the wild due to deforestation.

The Garden was also happy to host a film crew from Montreal's Rio Tinto Alcan Planetarium. Their latest film is called "EXO" which celebrates the diversity and exoticism of Earth's environment and examines the great quest for finding life on other planets. The Rio Tinto Alcan is a pioneer and leader in immersive, 360 degrees, full-dome shooting which they used to capture lush scenes in the Garden to illustrate the diversity of life.

Speaking of film and special cameras, a Google Trekker team recently came to HTBG with their cutting edge equipment to document the Garden trails. A virtual walkthrough of the Garden will be available digitally via Google Trekker as soon as this autumn. This will be a great preview for those planning a visit, and a way to see us for those unable to physically make the trip.



Myles Ritchie and Ben Ritchie  
with the Google Trekker Camera

Now, the best news of all...

When our long time horticulturist retired last year, the hunt for a suitable replacement was on. We received hundreds of resumes, some local and some from faraway places like Cornwall, England. With so many qualified horticulturists applying it was not an easy task, but eventually one candidate stood out from all the others.

We are very proud to announce Tom Mirenda, formerly Orchid Specialist with the Smithsonian and author for Orchids Magazine will be joining HTBG this September. Tom has an unrivaled ability to bring the world of plants alive for the average person through his writing and speaking, so his duties at HTBG will go well beyond plant care. His official title will be Director of Horticulture, Education, and Community Outreach.

I've asked to Tom to introduce himself on the next page, I hope to see you all around the Garden soon...

# Maluhia in Turbulent Times

by Tom Mirenda

First, and most important, I am clearly the luckiest guy on earth. I don't need to tell any of you how special the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden is. Joining this dedicated and hardworking staff at this most spectacular and beloved Botanical Garden, is more than a dream come true, it is an honor and a privilege! I can't wait to begin my new post in September and eventually, meet you all on your next visit!

I come to HTBG from the Smithsonian Institution where I served as the Orchid Collection Specialist and developed a following as a writer and passionate advocate for the world of plants. I am no stranger to Hawaii though. I spent almost 10 years here in my youth and only left with great reluctance. It feels so right to me to be finally returning to paradise.

In Washington, with our efforts to beautify, engage



Tom Mirenda

and inspire our visitors with delightful landscapes and superb horticulture, I learned how important and sacred gardens truly are, especially in today's hyper-turbulent world. Gardens offer peace, renewal, beauty, and fascination. But also, are repositories for biodiversity; havens for the world's most astonishing plants as

well as myriad other creatures that depend on them for food and habitat such as birds, reptiles and insects. Ultimately, it is the healthiest habitat for us humans too.

I'm committed to strengthening this outstanding garden we all cherish so deeply, as resource for education, species conservation, inspiration and of course, enjoyment.

if you have a special fascination for any of our amazing plants as well as any of our garden denizens, providing that information is central to

my role at HTBG. I'm also always happy to meet any and all of you when you visit. It will be my great pleasure to show you the glories of HTBG when you do! All of us that steward this incredible place are ever grateful for your support ■

## Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden's Member Appreciation Month

August is the anniversary of the Garden's opening so it is the perfect month to thank our members who continue to support the Garden's growth.

### Members, start your holiday shopping early at the Garden:

August 1st-9th take an additional 10% off ornaments

August 10th-16th take an additional 10% off children's books and toys

August 17th -23rd-take an additional 10% off t-shirts

August 24th-31st take-an additional 10% off jewelry items

### Gift membership promotion:

During the month of August, current members who purchase a new (recipient has never been a member of the Garden) gift membership will receive an additional two adult comp passes.

### Current members are automatically entered into our weekly prize drawings held each Thursday in August. Winners to be notified via phone or email.

Grand Prize: complimentary membership at current level for one year. Other Prizes include:

Complimentary upgrade to the next level of membership when you renew (individual to contributing levels only)

Private tour for four adults with the Garden's horticulturist

Four adult complimentary passes to give to friends

Garden Christmas ornaments and caps

## From the Garden Gift Shop

The Garden Gift Shop has a unique Hawaiian Treasure for sale.

Kona artist Mark Tomczak's finger-painted paperweights are the perfect compliment to anyone's desk or display area.

Each half dome crystal globe is an original piece of art created with multiple layers of paint and other materials. No two are alike!

Each paperweight comes attractively gift boxed and is easily shipped.



Regular price is \$40, but if you buy before October and mention at check out that you saw this in our newsletter, you'll receive 10% off. Members will receive 20% off.

Dan Lutkenhouse, Founder  
Pauline Lutkenhouse, Co-Founder & President

David Tan, Executive Director  
[htbg@ilhawaii.net](mailto:htbg@ilhawaii.net)

#### Board of Directors

Pauline Lutkenhouse  
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Kathleen "Pudding" Lassiter  
Debi Lutkenhouse-Frost  
Gregory Kwan  
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Alapai Ledward, Construction and Maintenance Manager

#### Gift Shop and Reception Staff

Migdalia Diaz, Tammy Silva,  
Jason Relles, Priscilla Mukai, Norman Nishizaki, Goldine Mehau

#### Garden and Maintenance Staff

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Kahele Miura - Gardener  
Scott Perry - Gardener  
Ryan Atiz - Orchid Specialist  
Wallace Ishibashi - Maintenance  
Kylan Damo - Maintenance  
Scott Pondela - Security  
Raymond-James English - Gardener

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### **GARDEN MEMBERSHIP**

Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden has 1,484 members as of July 20, 2017. Our thanks to all of you who so generously support our preservation of Onomea Valley.

If you'd like to become a member or purchase a membership as a gift, please call us at 808-964-5233 or visit our website [www.hawaiigarden.com](http://www.hawaiigarden.com). Your membership is 100% tax deductible.



Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden  
Nature Preserve and Sanctuary located at Onomea Bay, Island of Hawaii  
A Non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization  
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