

NORTH CAROLINA BOTANICAL GARDEN
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Contemporary Botanical Art Exhibition to Commemorate Bartrams' Travels

"Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps" Exhibition and Related Event Series
August 30–November 2, 2014 at the North Carolina Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 1, 2014 Chapel Hill NC—This fall, the North Carolina Botanical Garden (NCBG) is pleased to present its most ambitious botanical and artistic public exhibition to date—***Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps***—a major juried exhibition of 44 original contemporary plant illustrations, illuminating the historical, artistic and botanical influence of John and William Bartram. This dynamic father and son duo traversed the American colonies' eastern wilderness from the 1730s to the 1790s discovering and documenting for the first time the remarkable flora, fauna and Native American culture of the southeastern U.S., including North Carolina, on view **August 30–November 2, 2014** at the NCBG Education Center DeBerry Art Gallery, 100 Old Mason Farm Road, Chapel Hill NC.

Bartram's Franklinia-Karen Klugein



The exhibition offers a fresh look at these early explorers' seminal body of knowledge and art and their significance in expanding the scientific understanding of North American plants and their value in landscaping and gardening and is accompanied by many Bartram plant discoveries in the North Carolina Botanical Garden and adjoining Nature Trail.

Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps engages a wide range of audiences, including those interested in the intersection of botanical art, science, history, and nature. The experience fosters a deeper understanding of our shared horticultural heritage and heightens our respect for the natural world in the twenty-first century.

Organized by New York-based American Society of Botanical Artists (ASBA) and Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia, the exhibition depicts native plants discovered and introduced by John and William Bartram and their passionate observations of these nature discoveries which have influenced generations of artists and explorers throughout the world.

The original illustrations were juried from a field of approximately 200 entries submitted by ASBA members from around the world and members of the Philadelphia Society of Botanical Illustrators. Two of the featured illustrations are works by Bill Alberti and Maryann Roper, graduates of the NCBG Certificate in Botanical Art and Illustration.

The two-month fall exhibition is enriched with over 25 literary, artistic and hands-on events, featuring workshops, talks, classes, and discussions for all ages with leading botanical experts and artists from across the state and across the country including two very special literary guests—**Andrea Wulf**, *New York Times* best-selling gardening expert and author of *Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation* on **Sunday, September 28** and National Book Award-winner **Charles Frazier**, author of *Cold Mountain*, **Sunday, October 19**.

The indoor exhibition extends outdoors with opportunities to explore the delightful Garden and Nature Trails and view plants discovered by the Bartrams including many depicted in the exhibition. Arguably the most important of the hundreds of plants they found on their travels was the Franklin tree, *Franklinia alatamaha*, which is now believed to be extinct in the wild as well as the infamous Venus flytrap found only in North and South Carolina.

Self-guided and docent-led Garden tours will be accompanied with opportunities to traverse the one-half mile NCBG Nature Trail loop which includes a carry-along compendium of poetic musings by father John of the plants and landscape he encountered on his fruitful journeys throughout the Southeast.

“The exhibit and rich array of associated programs is a remarkable representation of the mission and diverse activities of the North Carolina Botanical Garden,” said Garden Director Peter White. “John and William Bartram not only represent the best scientific explorers of their day, but were also inspired by the beauty of the natural world and the bounty it offers us all.”

Meet the Trailblazers...John and William Bartram

John Bartram (1699-1777) was a prominent early American horticulturist and explorer. His eight-acre botanic garden in Philadelphia is frequently cited as the first true botanical collection in North America. In addition, he was a co-founder, with Benjamin Franklin, of the American Philosophical Society in 1743.



John's third son, William Bartram (1739-1823), traveled with his father as a boy and young man, and became a prominent naturalist, artist, and explorer in his own right. In 1773, William departed on a four-year journey from the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains to Florida and from the interior of the Southeast to the edge of the Mississippi River. His journal, *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida*, is an American classic and invaluable record of the eighteenth-century environment of the southeastern region. Today, the Bartram Trail follows the approximate route of his journey through the Southeast and includes trails in the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee.

William's natural history illustrations were often the first images seen of North American plants and animals and are an underutilized cultural resource. *Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps* seeks to draw attention to the history and culture of 18th-century American naturalists including those with botanical and artistic focus. It illuminates the role contemporary artists play in depicting these same plants for today's audience and preserving their record for generations to come.

Opening Reception, Workshops, and Special Events

Six (listed below) of the more than 25 free or fee-based events illustrate the rich diversity of programs for all interests and levels:

Where the Land is the Star

Tom Earnhardt, Naturalist and Writer, President, Botanical Garden Foundation
Sunday, August 10, 2:30pm

Famous botanists and naturalists gravitated to North Carolina in the 18th and 19th centuries; learn why the real star was the land. \$15 (\$10 NCBG Members)

Exhibit and Symposium Opening Remarks and Reception

Contemporary Botanical Artists Explore the Bartrams' Legacy

Carol Woodin, Exhibitions Director, American Society of Botanical Artists

Sunday, September 7, 2:30pm

Woodin explains how the exhibit illuminates their natural history contributions. Reception and exhibit viewing follow. *Free; advance registration required*

Paint Out!

NC Guild of Natural Science Illustrators

Saturday, September 13, 10am-3pm (Rain Date: September 20)

Enjoy the outdoors and visit with artists creating in the spirit of the Bartrams. Completed paintings available in Garden Shop. *Free*

The World Famous Venus Flytrap

Dr. Larry Mellichamp, Director of UNCC Botanical Garden, Author

Saturday, September 27, 2:00pm

The infamous Venus flytrap is found only in North and South Carolina and William Bartram published what is thought to be its first drawing in 1767. *\$20 (\$15 NCBG Members)*



Andrea Wulf, New York Times Best Selling Author

Annual Jenny Elder Fitch Lecture

The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession

Sunday, September 28, 2:30pm

Wulf tells the tale of 18th century naturalists who transformed England into a nation of gardeners thanks to John Bartram's introduction of American trees and shrubs to their landscape. Their story of passion, friendship and quarrels is set against the backdrop of the emerging British Empire and America's magnificent forests. Wulf is the 2010

American Horticultural Society Book Award-winner. Reception and book signing. *Free; advance registration required*



A Conversation with Author Charles Frazier

"Bartram's Travels" On Cold Mountain

Panel: Margaret D. Bauer, ECU Rives Chair of Southern Literature/Editor, *North Carolina Literary Review*; Peter S. White, NCBG Director; Alan Weakley, Director, UNC Herbarium

Sunday, October 19, 2:30pm

Learn why the main character in Frazier's celebrated *Cold Mountain* carries a copy of *Bartram's Travels* on his journey as he also shares the role nature plays in his narratives and life as a writer. Reception and book signing. *\$25 (\$20 NCBG Members)*

The Literary Bartram

Phillip Williams, Author, Poet and Jeffery Beam, Poet

Sunday, October 26, 2:30pm

Two noted southern poets will show us how Bartram's ideas influenced poets, novelists and essayists. Philip Lee Williams will read from his book, *The Flower Seeker: An Epic Poem of William Bartram*; Beam will read from Cooper, Thoreau, Moore, Carlos Williams, and Taggart. *\$15 (\$10 NCBG Members)*

A complete schedule of *Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps* events and registration information is found on the NCBG website: ncbg.unc.edu/bartram/. For more information and inquiries, call (919) 962-0522 or email bartram@unc.edu.

Images available upon request

Following in the Bartram's Footstep has been presented at the Bartram's Garden Gallery in Philadelphia PA; South Florida Museum, Bradenton FL; the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center; and University of North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill, NC August 30-November 2, 2014.

Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps NCBG Partnering Organizations

Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Alumni of the NCBG Certificate in Botanical Art & Illustration
Bartram Trail Conference
Guild of Natural Science Illustrators—Carolina's Chapter
Highland Biological Station
NC Bartram Trail Society
American Society of Botanical Artists

About the North Carolina Botanical Garden

The North Carolina Botanical Garden is a component of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a mission "*to inspire understanding, appreciation, and conservation of plants in gardens and natural areas and advance sustainable relationships between people and nature.*"

Since its founding by Dr. William Chambers Coker in 1903, NCBG has acquired responsibility for the Coker Arboretum (since 1982), the Mason Farm Biological Reserve (1984) Battle Park a well-loved natural area in the late 1800s and part of the Garden since 2004) and the University of North Carolina Herbarium (founded in 1908 and part of the Garden since 2000) now comprising some 700,000 plant specimens. The NCBG has grown to over 700 acres, not including a number of nature preserves held by the Botanical Garden Foundation (210 acres).

Today the North Carolina Botanical Garden is nationally known for its conservation programs, educational collections, and diverse programs including native plant studies, botanical illustration, and horticultural therapy.

Promotional images available upon request.

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