ART AT FAIRCHILD
Through May 31, 2011
The art of Les Lalanne and Yoko Ono’s Wishing Grove
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

JANUARY 2011
PLANTS AND PEOPLE: AN INTERACTIVE GARDEN
Monday, January 3
11:30 a.m. Reservations required for this free program for people living with Alzheimer’s, 305.667.1651, ext. 3388
Saturday, January 8
11:30 a.m. Reservations required for this free program for people living with Alzheimer’s, 305.667.1651, ext. 3388
MOMMY AND ME TEA
Sunday, January 9, 3:00 p.m.
For more information call 305.663.8059
MEMBERS’ LECTURE AND MOONLIGHT TOURS
Wednesday, January 19
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Ecuador through the Eyes of a Plant Nut. Presented by Georgia Tasker, followed by a Moonlight Tour. Exclusively for members
5th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL
Friday, Saturday and Sunday, January 21, 22 and 23
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
THE FAIRCHILD CHALLENGE PRESENTS: HIGH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL DEBATES
Saturday, January 29
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
PLANTS AND PEOPLE: AN INTERACTIVE GARDEN
Monday, January 31
11:30 a.m. Reservations required for this free program for people living with Alzheimer’s, 305.667.1651, ext. 3388
FEBRUARY 2011
GALA IN THE GARDEN—A RENAISSANCE GARDEN
Saturday, February 5, 6:30 p.m.
VALENTINE’S CONCERT AT FAIRCHILD
Monday, February 14
7:00 p.m. For more information please call 305.663.8044
MEMBERS’ LECTURE AND MOONLIGHT TOUR
Wednesday, February 16
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
PLANTS AND PEOPLE: AN INTERACTIVE GARDEN
Saturday, February 19
11:30 a.m. Reservations required for this free program for people living with Alzheimer’s, 305.667.1651, ext. 3388
FAIRCHILD CHALLENGE: RESEARCH PROJECT SHOWCASE
Saturday, February 26
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
FIRST LADIES TEA
Sunday, February 27, 3:00 p.m.
For more information call 305.663.8059
MEMBERS’ LECTURE
Wednesday, April 13
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
MEMBERS’ LECTURE AND PLANT SALE
Wednesday, March 9
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Guangxi, A Little Known Plant Paradise in Southwestern China Presented by Dr. Hong Liu, Fairchild Research Ecologist. Exclusively for members
FAIRCHILD’S 9th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ORCHID FESTIVAL
Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 11, 12 and 13
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
The ORCHID TEA ROOM
Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 11, 12 and 13
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
PLANTS AND PEOPLE: AN INTERACTIVE GARDEN
Monday, March 21
Saturday, March 26
11:30 a.m. Reservations required for this free program for people living with Alzheimer’s, 305.667.1651, ext. 3388
APRIL 2011
SPRING GARDEN TEA
Saturday, April 10, 3:00 p.m.
For more information call 305.663.8059
PLANTS AND PEOPLE: AN INTERACTIVE GARDEN
Monday, April 11
11:30 a.m. Reservations required for this free program for people living with Alzheimer’s, 305.667.1651, ext. 3388
MEMBERS’ LECTURE
Wednesday, April 13
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
A RENAISSANCE GARDEN
Paradise in Southwestern China Presented by Nicholas Cockshutt, Fairchild Research Ecologist.
PLANT SALE
Saturday, April 16
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
THE FOOD AND GARDEN FESTIVAL FEATURING THE 32ND ANNUAL SPRING PLANT SALE
Saturday and Sunday, April 30 and May 1
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

This schedule of events is subject to change. For up-to-the-minute information, please call 305.667.1651 or visit www.fairchildgarden.org/Events
Early Exploration Brought "Strange" Plants to European Collections

By Javier Francisco-Ortega, Arnoldo Santos-Guerra, Charles E. Jarvis, Mark A. Carine, Miguel Sequeira and Mike Maunder
The publication of *Species Plantarum* by Carl Linnaeus in 1753 represented a major milestone in the history of plant sciences, laying the foundation for the scientific system of naming plants that we use today. However, long before Linnaeus, plant exploration was a major priority for the early botanic gardens established in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries, which included “strange” plants in their living collections. Indeed, it appears that the search for new plants has been at the core of botanic gardens’ missions since their early establishment.

The Atlantic archipelagos of the Azores, Canaries, Salvages and Madeira are located relatively close to the European mainland. Yet, they have many endemic species that are morphologically very different from those found on the mainland. Dr. David Fairchild visited the Canaries in 1925 and 1927 during his famous Utowana expeditions, and he referred to these islands with the following words: “I doubt if there is any other archipelago in the world that approaches this one in its wealth of ancient romance. The Canaries seem to have been in Homer’s mind as the islands beyond the Pillars of Hercules to which the souls of departed heroes were transplanted and which he called Elysium. Herodotus referred to them as the Gardens of the Hesperides.” In these archipelagos, European botanists found an exotic flora that could be studied directly without major investments in logistics. It is, therefore, not surprising that the unique plants of these islands have attracted the attention of botanists since Europeans colonized them in the 15th and 16th centuries.
As part of our research on botanical history, we have been investigating early accounts of plant exploration in these archipelagos. Our findings include the oldest documented herbarium collections for Madeira and the Canary Islands. The direct result of these explorations was the early introduction of spectacular Canary Island endemics such as the giant bell-flower, *Canarina canariensis*, woody mints (e.g., *Sideritis canariensis*), the Canarian foxglove, *Isoplexis canariensis*, and the Canarian morning glory, *Convolvulus canariensis*, into private and public gardens of Europe. Indeed, based on our studies, we estimate that by the early 16th century at least 91 plant species from these Atlantic Islands were relatively well known by European herbalists.

Chelsea Physic Garden is the second-oldest botanic garden in Great Britain, after the one at the University of Oxford. Based on two manuscripts found in the British Library we know that by 1694 both “trees” and seeds were apparently shipped to the Chelsea Physic Garden from the Canary Islands. The material was collected by “Thomas Simmonds” whom we believe was a merchant involved in the extensive wine trade that existed between Britain and the Canaries during the 17th and 18th centuries. The manuscripts list 68 accessions using, in many cases, Spanish vernacular names to identify the plants that were shipped to London. Research on the lists of living collections from Chelsea Physic Garden from that period show that Canary Island plants were a common component of the garden’s collections before the publication of *Species Plantarum* by Linnaeus.

Other works included material from even further afield. Sir Hans Sloane, whose extensive collections were the foundation of the British Museum, was one of his era’s most important patrons of science. He was a strong supporter of botany in Britain and succeeded Sir Isaac Newton as president of the Royal Society when the latter died in 1727. Sloane published two books that are considered Pre-Linnaean masterpieces on the natural history of the West Indies. Both resulted from a 1687 trip to Jamaica following his appointment as physician to
the island’s new governor. On the way out to Jamaica, Sloane’s ship (the Assistance) stopped in Madeira for three days (October 21–23, 1687) during which he collected 38 herbarium specimens and recorded information concerning the plants, animals and people of the island. These specimens are preserved in Sloane’s Herbarium at the Natural History Museum in London, and their images can be seen at www.nhm.ac.uk/research-curation/research/projects/sloane-herbarium/index.htm. This material represents the earliest documented herbarium collection for the island of Madeira. In addition, the second volume of Sloane’s Natural History of Jamaica (1707) recorded 57 different species that he had observed in Madeira, along with 13 illustrations of them. Our studies indicate that the plants collected by Sloane would have been growing near Funchal, the capital and main harbor of the island. His records and herbarium specimens include endemic species such as the mints Bystropogon maderensis and Teucrium betonicum, but also a great number of weeds and cultivated species, confirming that by the end of the 17th century, most of the Funchal area was already seriously altered by human activities.

Trade routes also brought European collectors into contact with the Far East. James Cuninghame, a native of Scotland, was the first Western plant hunter to explore and collect in China. He worked for the East India Company as a surgeon, and in 1697-1699 and 1700-1709 he made two trips to China. He shipped more than 600 specimens from this country to several people in Britain, the most important being James Petiver, a leading pre-Linnaean naturalist in Britain who became demonstrator of plants at the Chelsea Physic Garden between approximately 1709 and 1718.

Before Cuninghame reached China, however, he gathered and sent to Petiver the earliest documented herbarium collection for the Canary Islands. As often happens in botany, the Canaries collection originated from what amounted to a detour during Cuninghame’s first voyage to China. A mutiny onboard the ship between December 1697 and January 1698 led some men to desert in the Canary Islands, on the island of La Palma. When the ship’s captain tried to recapture the deserters, Spanish authorities seized the ship and imprisoned the crew. Before the crew was released and the expedition was finally allowed to continue its journey in early February, Cuninghame developed a friendship with two influential local priests and was able to collect plants on La Palma. Most of this material was subsequently shipped to Petiver and now forms part of the Sloane Herbarium (Sloane acquired Petiver’s collections after the death of the latter in 1718.). Cuninghame also sent a 10-page catalogue (now among the Sloane manuscripts held at the British Library) listing some of the species that he recorded during this short visit. The plant material gathered by Cuninghame contains more than 110 species, including lichens, mosses, ferns and seed plants. It has the earliest
Images of at least two of the species collected by Cuninghame in La Palma—the lichen *Roccella vicentina* and the flowering plant *Forsskaolea angustifolia* (Urticaceae)—were subsequently published by Petiver in 1709. From Petiver’s accounts we know that some of the material sent by Cuninghame was eventually cultivated in Britain, including *Semele androgyna* (Ruscaceae), a common species of the cloud forest, which Petiver reported growing at the Royal Gardens of Hampton Court from material shipped by Cuninghame. It is clear from this that Cuninghame sent to England both herbarium specimens and seeds. Cuninghame’s collections from La Palma also provide insights into historical distributions. Among his plants is a specimen of *Polygonum maritimum* (Polygonaceae), a species that grows on sandy coastal beaches with a wide distribution in coastal areas of the Mediterranean Basin, Eurasia and North America. While it occurs on four other islands of the Canarian Archipelago, it is no longer present on La Palma. Indeed, Cuninghame’s account is the only record of this species for La Palma—suggesting that, though formerly native, it is now extinct on the island. It is likely that Cuninghame collected this species along the sandy beaches that still existed near the main harbor of La Palma (Santa Cruz de La Palma) at the end of the 17th century. *Salsola divaricata* (Chenopodiaceae) is another species Cuninghame collected that is now extinct in La Palma. These coastal habitats have been completely replaced by development involved with the expansion of trade and urban activities near the harbor. While there was a single record of this species from the island in 1891, Cuninghame’s collection appears to confirm that this Canary Island endemic was present on this island at least until the end of the 19th century.

These early herbarium and archive collections show how plant expeditions led European countries to inventory plant resources in the tropics. The endeavors of early plant collectors in the Atlantic islands were extremely important in the development of botanic gardens as educational and research institutions worldwide. Today, their collections also play a key role in local conservation efforts as they pertain to species extinctions in recent history.