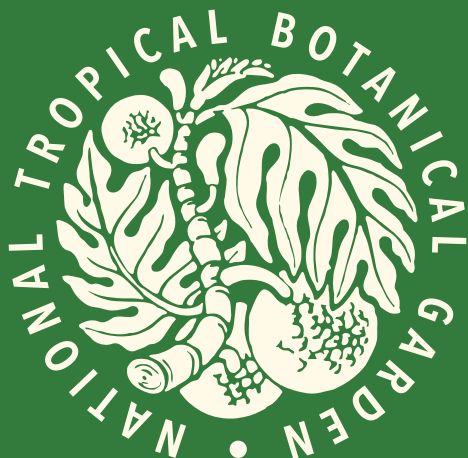


The
Kampong

Guide Book



Five Gardens. One Mission:

To enrich life by perpetuating tropical plants, ecosystems, and cultural heritage. Your visit to **The Kampong** helps grow a brighter tomorrow for generations of plants and people.



Welcome to a sanctuary of tropical plants.

Each one here has a story to tell about the habitats where they grow, the cultures they nourish, and the people who have cared for them. We are also a research and education center, home to the International Center for Tropical Botany at The Kampong. In collaboration with Florida International University, we continue a long tradition of plant exploration to help grow a brighter tomorrow. As you journey through the garden, you become a plant explorer too!

You follow in the footsteps of famed plant explorer David Fairchild, who with Marian Bell made The Kampong their home. From mangoes to avocados, the plants he introduced reshaped American agriculture and our gardens. You can trace David's travels, meet many of the plants he found, and learn about their cultural heritage. You can also visit the Fairchild-Sweeney House. Catherine ("Kay") Sweeney, a lifetime advocate for protecting plants, purchased The Kampong from the Fairchilds and gifted the garden to the National Tropical Botanical Garden in 1984.

Throughout this history, South Florida has been part of the ancestral homelands of the Tequesta, the Calusa, and today, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. Indigenous communities maintain deep bonds with Florida's plants. We acknowledge these relationships and grow many cherished native plants here.

Start your own story with the plants of The Kampong and grow deeper with us. Feed your inner plant explorer!

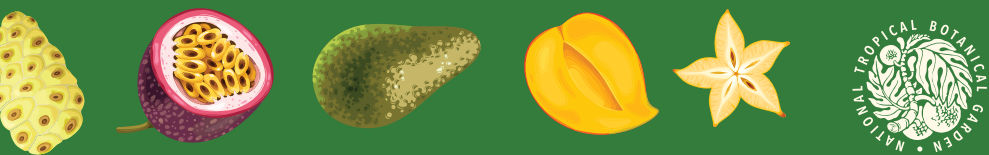


How to use this book

Our Guide Book is here to help you safely explore and enjoy The Kampong. We have designed it to help you choose your own adventure through the plants, places, and stories of our garden. As you wander, please be careful of uneven and slippery terrain, adhere to posted signs, and do not enter restricted areas.

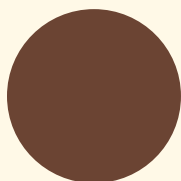
On the next four pages are maps of The Kampong. The first map is the **General Map (pages 6 and 7)**, showing garden sections and facilities. Each section—indicated by light yellow text—has a corresponding physical sign with more interpretation. The second map is the **Tour Stop Map (pages 8 and 9)** and shows specific tour stops that are interpreted in this Guide Book. There is a physical sign at each tour stop with a number that corresponds with the numbered description in this Guide Book.





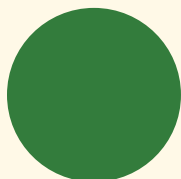
The Kampong is alive with tropical plants and rich in history.

To help you choose what stories you would like to learn about on your visit today, we have created two types of tour stops to indicate the primary focus of the stop:



History

Tour stops in this book with brown colors focus on the history and people of The Kampong.



Plants

Tour stops in this book with green colors focus on the plants of The Kampong.

If you need assistance at any time, please contact (305) 442-7169.

General Map

Map Legend



Restroom



Check-in &
Information



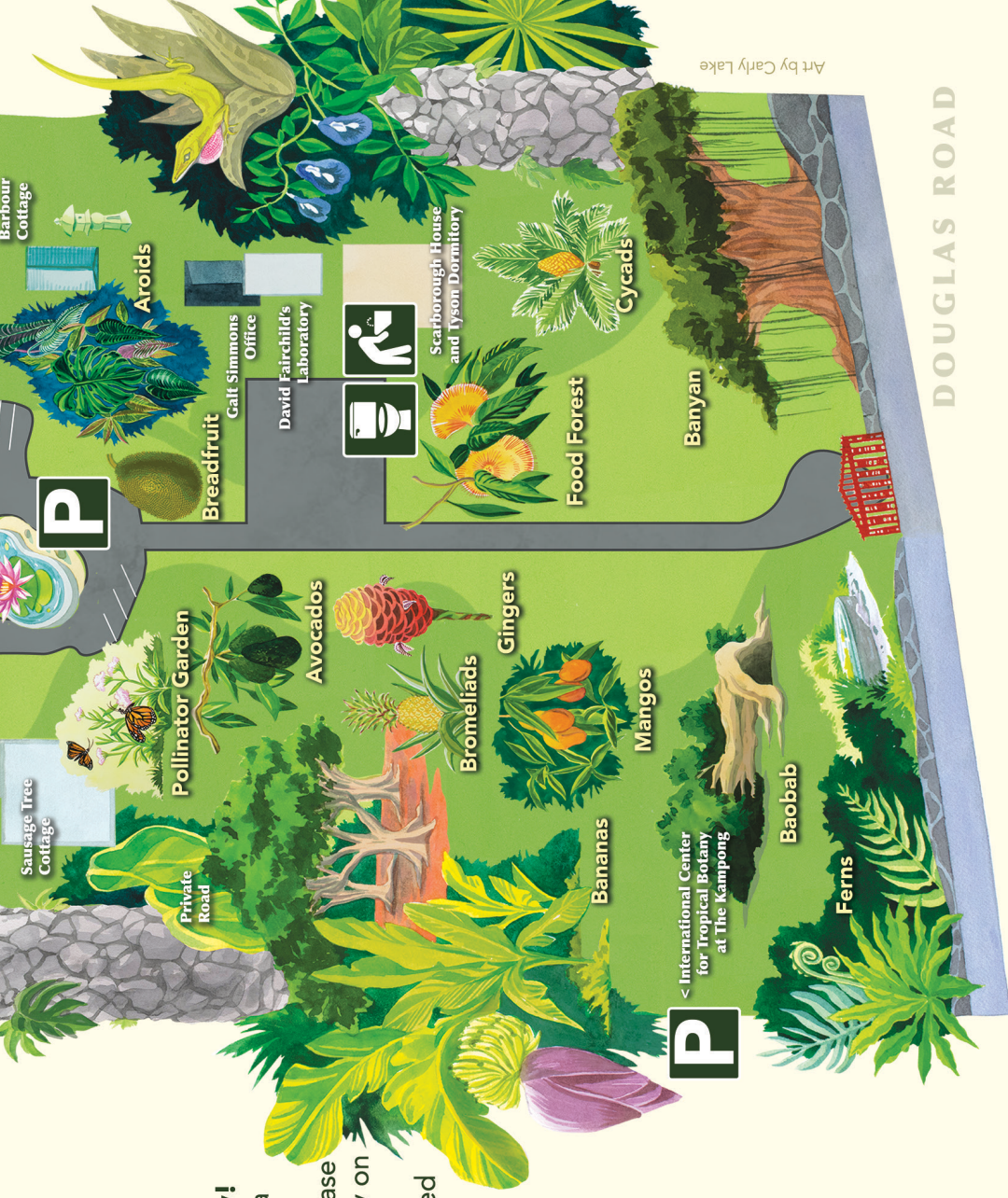
Drinking Water



Parking



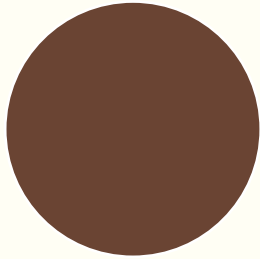
Please explore safely!
Our grounds contain a mixture of paved and unpaved surfaces. Please use caution, especially on uneven and slippery terrain. Observe posted signs and watch for vehicles.



Art by Carly Lake

DOUGLAS ROAD

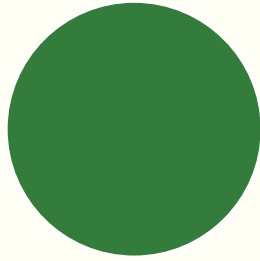
Tour Stop Map



1-9

Tour stops in this book with brown colors focus on the history and people of The Kampong.





10-36

Tour stops in this book with green colors focus on the plants of The Kampong.



The Kampong

1. Fairchild-Sweeney House

Built in 1928, the Fairchild-Sweeney house has stood witness to some of Miami's important history, including the establishment of Everglades National Park. The living room once hosted notable figures, such as Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Alexander Graham Bell, and Marjory Stoneman Douglas. On the opposite side of the house, the library and archives hold important journals, such as *Curtis's Botanical Magazine*.



An early view of the Fairchild-Sweeney House from Biscayne Bay

2. Planting Hole

You're standing above the Miami Rock Ridge, a continuous outcrop of limestone under much of South Florida. This limestone was created as sediment and coral reefs accumulated over millions of years when the area was submerged under the sea. To build The Kampong, Fairchild used dynamite to break down the rock and allow planting. This exposed rock is evidence that Pine Rockland, a globally imperiled ecosystem only found in Florida, was once found here. Today, heavy mulching is used to build soil.

*The pines shown in this view of The Kampong from 1917 were likely Dade County pines (*Pinus elliottii* var. *densa*), a rare tree only found in South Florida*



3. The Well

The well, used by the Fairchilds, is now dry. The overuse of water by the agricultural industry and urban residents have depleted wells like this one, where saltwater has rushed to replace the freshwater that could once be extracted here. Saltwater intrusion remains a big challenge in South Florida. You can help by monitoring your water use.

4. University of Miami Potting Pavilion

In 2019, students from the University of Miami School of Architecture Design/Build studio created the Potting Pavilion to propagate and preserve heritage plants. Ornamental plants and plants of conservation interest are also cultivated. The design of the Pavilion took into consideration the existing structures and plants. Four louvered panels allow for views into the Garden.

5. Lotus Pond

The members of the genus *Nelumbo* are collectively called "Lotus." This group of aquatic plants have very unique characteristics: their leaves are extremely water-repellent, and more interestingly, they can produce heat. It is thought that the lotus plants' higher temperature is used to attract pollinators. While horticultural hybrids have been produced, there are only two known living species of lotus.



The Kampong

6. Barbour Cottage

This cottage was built by the Fairchilds before the completion of the main house. It was used to accommodate the frequent visits of Fairchild's friend, patron, and scientific colleague Thomas Barbour, an invertebrate zoologist at Harvard. Today, we use the cottage to house distinguished scientists and artists who come to The Kampong to conduct research and teach courses.



Barbour Lathrop (left) and David Fairchild (right)

7. Solar Water Still

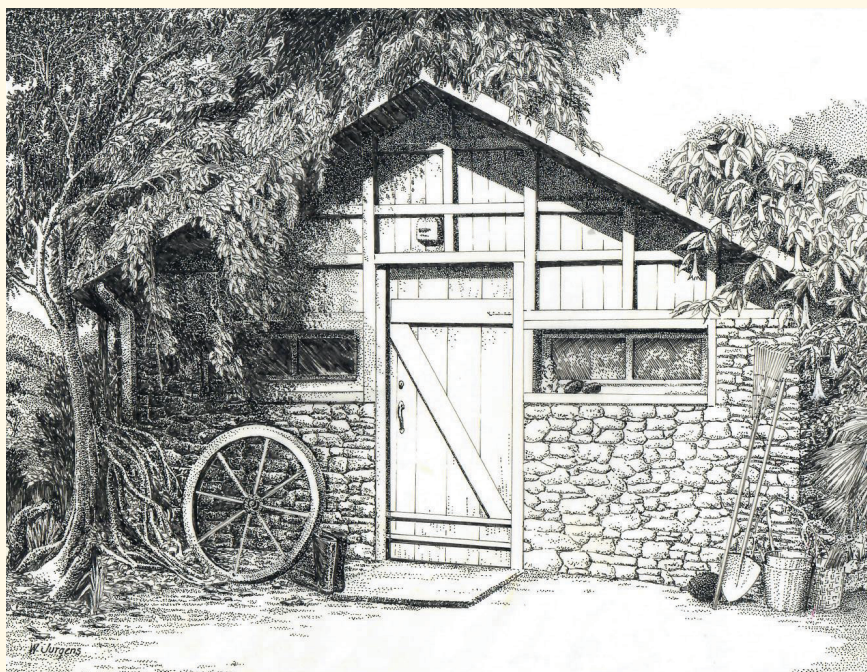
This "Sun Still" was created by Alexander Graham Bell, Marian Bell Fairchild's father. The still has a glass panel, set at a 30-degree angle, that captures the sun's energy, evaporating the water onto the glass. The condensation (of distilled water) runs down the glass panel and is collected in the concrete channel at the base.

8. Coral Castle Oolite Chairs

These oolite limestone chairs were constructed and gifted to David and Marian Fairchild by their friend Ed Leedskalnin, the creator of Coral Castle. From 1923 to 1951, Ed single-handedly and secretly carved more than 1,100 tons of coral rock, and his unknown process has created one of the world's most mysterious accomplishments.

9. Dr. Eleanor Galt Simmons' office

It was here that Dr. Eleanor Galt Simmons, Miami's first female physician, treated settlers and members of the surrounding Indigenous communities. In her honor, we added medicinal plants used in traditional healing around the building. The miracle fruit (*Synsepalum dulcificum*) is used for taste disturbances in patients undergoing chemotherapy.



An illustration of Dr. Eleanor Galt Simmon's office by artist Wes Jurgens

The Kampong



10. Miracle Fruit

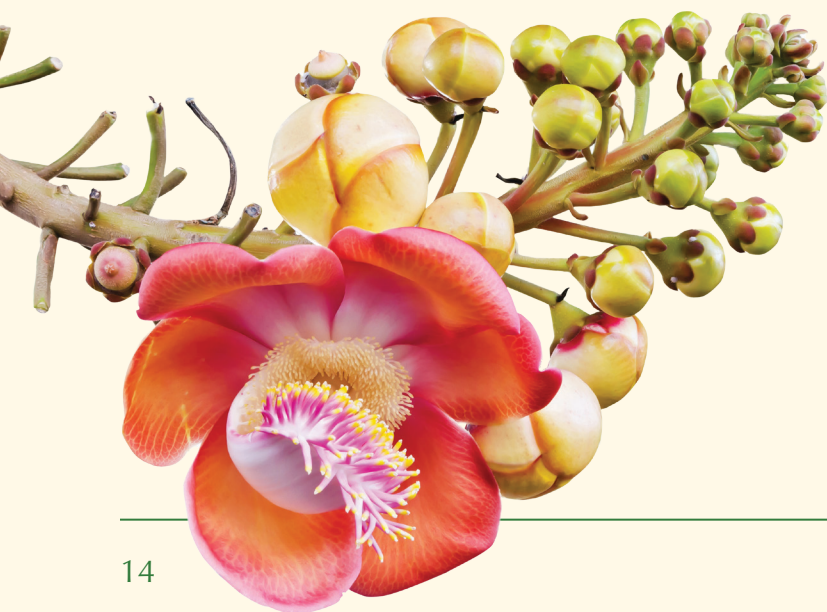
Native to West Africa, miracle fruit is a small evergreen shrub. The berries can cause sour foods, like lemons, to taste sweet thanks to the molecule miraculin. The Yoruba, an Indigenous group from Nigeria, have been consuming the fruit since at least the 18th century. Other names include miracle berry, miraculous berry, sweet berry, and agbayun (in Yoruba).

Scientific name: *Synsepalum dulcificum* (Sapotaceae)

11. Cannonball Tree

Potentially reaching over 100 ft (30 m), the cannonball tree is native to Central and South America. The flowers are borne on long stalks from the trunk. They are fragrant at night and contain two regions of male flower parts. Native Amazonian communities use parts of the tree to treat aches, hypertension, and the common cold.

Scientific name: *Couroupita guianensis* (Lecythidaceae)





12. Screw Pine

Screw pine is one of more than 700 *Pandanus* species that occur in Asia, Africa, and Oceania. It is an evergreen, multi-branched tree with aerial prop roots. When mature, the fruit turns orange to yellow. *Pandanus* has multiple uses in the Pacific and it is a canoe plant — those that have played a pivotal role in Hawaiian culture.

Scientific name: *Pandanus utilis* (Pandanaceae)



13. Coffee

The global coffee industry relies on two members of the genus *Coffea*. Living in the understory, *Coffea arabica* is native to Ethiopia; *C. canephora* is native to central and western sub-Saharan Africa. The first accounts for roughly 60-80% of the world's production. Both species are threatened by human activities and climate change.

Scientific name: *Coffea arabica* and *Coffea canephora* (Rubiaceae)



14. Madruno

Also known as charichuela, madrono, and lemon drop mangosteen, this tree is native to the rainforest of Central and South America. The fruit's appearance is like a shriveled lemon. The inside contains a juicy, white pulp that has been compared to lemony cotton candy. Parts of the tree are used to treat ulcers and other sores. The wood is used for furniture and construction.

Scientific name: *Garcinia madruno* (Clusiaceae)



The Kampong



15. Kapok

The kapok tree, also known as ceiba, is native to Central America, the Caribbean, and northern South America. The tree can reach up to 240 ft (73 m) and its flowers provide bees and bats with sources of nectar and pollen. The cotton-like fiber from the seed pods is used extensively by Indigenous populations across the American Tropics.

Scientific name: *Ceiba pentandra* (Malvaceae)

16. Bird's Nest Fern

Bird's nest fern occurs as an epiphyte (grows in the air) or terrestrial plant in tropical Africa, temperate and tropical Asia, and Australasia. The simple, stemless leaves overlap to form a rosette. As the fronds die they curl and turn brown giving the plant an appearance of a bird's nest. The plants have been used in traditional medicine to treat asthma, sores, and childbirth pains.

Scientific name: *Asplenium nidus* (Aspleniaceae)



17. Fairchild's Fig

This fig is native to Southeast Asia and Pacific Islands and can grow up to 148 ft (45 m) tall. In some cases, the seeds germinate in the treetops and send roots to the forest floor. Its flowers are pollinated by wasps and its stems are used as fence posts. We call it "the wedding fig," as it has witnessed many, including Fairchild's daughter's wedding.

Botanical family: *Ficus subcordata*
(Moraceae)

18. Bignay

Native to Southeast Asia, the bignay is an evergreen tree that can grow up to 98 ft (30 m) tall. In the fall, it produces red-black berries that taste tart when eaten fresh and sweet when cooked; nonetheless, roughly 1 in every 20 people has a recessive gene that causes them to perceive the taste as bitter rather than sweet.

Scientific name: *Antidesma bunius*
(Phyllanthaceae)



The Kampong



19. Canistel

Also known as egg fruit, zapote amarillo, and buah kuning telur (“yolk fruit”) in Malay, this tree is native to southern Mexico and Central America. The tree can reach 20-25 ft (6-7 m) high. The fruit can be eaten fresh and has the texture of an egg yolk, added to smoothies, or it can be made into jam and flour.

Scientific name: *Pouteria campechiana* (Sapotaceae)

20. Cacao

Cacao is the plant from which chocolate is derived. It is a small, evergreen tree, growing up to 40 ft (12 m). It is native to Mexico south to the Amazon basin. In pre-Columbian Mesoamerica, the cacao bean was used as currency by the Aztec empire; a drink similar to hot chocolate was used in ceremonies.

Scientific name: *Theobroma cacao* (Malvaceae)



21. Breadnut Tree

The Breadnut is native to Central and Southern Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and the Amazonian basin. Reaching up to 150 ft (45 m), each breadnut tree can produce up to 400 lbs of fruit per year. The breadnut flowers at different times of the year, depending on its location; ours, introduced by David Fairchild in 1946, flowers in the fall-winter.

Scientific name: *Brosimum alicastrum* (Moraceae)

22. Vanilla

There are approximately 110 vanilla orchids, including four Florida natives. Vanilla orchids can be terrestrial, epiphytes, or hemi-epiphytes. These vine-like plants grow upward from the apex growing point. While most vanilla orchids have leathery, green leaves, some are leafless. The flavor and aroma of vanilla is used extensively in the food, beverage, and cosmetic industry.

Scientific name: *Vanilla planifolia* and *Vanilla pompona* (Orchidaceae)



The Kampong

23. Tamarind

Tamarind is native to tropical Africa and can grow up to 80 ft (24 m). It produces brown seed pods that contain a fleshy pulp used in juices and as paste in curries, chutneys, and syrups. It is used to treat fevers and rashes in traditional medicine. The wood is used to build furniture, boats, and decorative objects.

Scientific name: *Tamarindus indica*
(Fabaceae)



24. American Beautyberry

Beautyberry is native to the southern U.S., Mexico, and some Caribbean Islands. Typically eaten by birds, the berries are edible to humans in small amounts. They are used in wines and jellies. The plant contains a compound, callicarpenal, that repels mosquitoes. Easy to grow in Florida, it is a great native, ornamental addition to yards.

Scientific name: *Callicarpa americana*
(Lamiaceae)





25. Seagrape

Also called baygrape, this plant is native throughout tropical America and the Caribbean. Seagrape is found on beaches where it acts as a dune stabilizer. It can reach up to 35-50 ft (10-15 m), and the flowers occur on separate male and female plants. Fruit can be eaten raw, or used in jellies and wines.

Scientific name: *Coccoloba uvifera* (Polygonaceae)

26. Saraca

Also known as ashoka, this plant is native to India. The small, evergreen tree grows approximately 30 ft (9 m) and has dark green leaves. The fragrant and orange to orange-yellow flowers grow directly from the trunk. The bark is said to be used to treat internal bleeding. As a sacred tree in India, it can be found near temples.

Scientific name: *Saraca indica* (Fabaceae)



27. Corypha Palm

Endemic to dry forests of Southeast Asia and southern China, this species can grow nearly 20 ft (6 m) in height and can take 40-60 years to reach reproductive maturity. Once it flowers, the plant dies. Fibers from the stems of the leaves are used to make rope and sails.

Scientific name: *Corypha lecomtei* (Arecaceae)

The Kampong



28. Silk Floss Tree

Native to parts of South America, it grows in fast spurts, and it can reach 80 ft (24 m) when water is abundant. The tree produces large flowers, similar to hibiscus. The fibrous “silk” can be used as stuffing, and the wood is used to make canoes, paper, and wood pulp. This particular tree was grafted as part of horticultural experimentation.

Scientific name: *Ceiba speciosa* (Malvaceae)



29. Sapodilla

This long-lived, evergreen tree is native to Central America and the Caribbean and grows up to 66 ft (20 m). Historically, the latex of this tree was extracted for the production of chewing gum until the late 1940s. The fruit is also known as nispero. It is eaten fresh and it has a sweet cinnamon-like flavor.

Scientific name: *Manilkara zapota* (Sapotaceae)



30. Espalier

Espalier is an old horticulture technique used to train woody plants to grow flat against a wall, fence, or a trellis. Often, the branches are pruned and tied to grow in a specific formal pattern. Woody plants with long, flexible branches that flower and produce fruits are ideal candidates for this decorative accent. It is a perfect art to grow plants in small gardens or narrow spaces.

31. Frankincense

Native to Somalia, Oman, and Yemen, it can grow up to 6-26 ft (2-8 m). The dried aromatic resin was traded throughout the region for thousands of years and it is important in various religions and traditional medicine; modern medical research is revealing new uses for this ancient substance. Frankincense is a close cousin of our native *Bursera simaruba* or gumbo limbo tree.

Scientific name: *Boswellia sacra* (Burseraceae)



The Kampong



32. Ylang-ylang

The ylang-ylang tree is native to Southeast Asia and the Philippines, where it has been prized for centuries for its fragrant flowers. Borne on high branches and hidden among leaves, the greenish flowers, with their long, strappy petals, are usually smelled before they are seen. Its iconic scent is part of the formula for Chanel No. 5.

Scientific name: *Cananga odorata* (Annonaceae)



33. Star Fruit

Also known as carambola, the tree is native to Southeast Asia and can reach 30 ft (9 m) high. When mature, the fruit is yellow, with a crispy texture. They appear star-shaped, when cut in cross-section. The fruit is eaten raw or made into juices, relishes and stews. Catherine Sweeney used them in salads.

Scientific name: *Averrhoa carambola* (Oxalidaceae)

34. Pomelo

A collection of citrus varieties at The Kampong was established by Fairchild, in part through a collaboration with an old friend Walter Tennyson Swingle, who had worked with him doing research at the USDA. Native to Southeast Asia, the pomelo has tasty fruit and a thick skin. It is one of the parents that created grapefruit.

Scientific name: *Citrus maxima* (Rutaceae)



35. Buccaneer Palm

Also known as the Florida cherry-palm, this plant is native to the southern U.S., eastern Mexico, and the Caribbean. They are critically endangered in Florida. Globally, they are considered vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). These beautiful palms can reach up to 25 ft (8 m) high. They should only be purchased at native plant nurseries.

Scientific name: *Pseudophoenix sargentii*
(Arecaeae)



36. Jaboticaba

Also known as the Brazilian grapetree, this evergreen tree is native to Brazil. The fruits grow directly on the trunk and taste similar to a muscadine grape. The thick skin of the fruit is purplish-black and the pulp is white or rosy pink. The fruits can be made into jams, juice, and wine. These trees are used as bonsai because of their slow growth.

Scientific name: *Plinia cauliflora* (Myrtaceae)



We are the National Tropical Botanical Garden

Let's grow a brighter tomorrow together

We work across five botanic gardens, preserves, and research centers in Hawai'i and Florida to save tropical plants and all they sustain. We do so through an approach called biocultural conservation, where Indigenous knowledge, cultural values, and community input guide our path forward.

Since 1964, we have pushed limits for tropical plants: from scaling the world's tallest sea cliffs to pioneering drone technology. Our gardens and preserves are sanctuaries for thousands of rare plants. We are a team of scientists, horticulturists, educators, culture keepers, and plant lovers—and that can include you! We are a congressionally chartered 501(c)(3) nonprofit that relies on charitable giving from supporters like you.

Our five gardens

Hawai'i

Florida

Limahuli Garden
& Preserve

Kahanu Garden
& Preserve

Allerton Garden
McBryde Garden

The Kampong



**Ancestral
knowledge**



**Ecosystem
restoration**

Stewardship of storied places



Regenerative agriculture



Critical plant research



Cutting-edge technology



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**Let's grow
a brighter
tomorrow
together**



\$25 Discovery Membership

Discover the deep connections we share with tropical plants and join our mission to save them. You'll receive our NTBG magazine, join our community of plant people, and power a year of impact. Live locally or visit frequently? Next level memberships provide free admission and discounts across our gardens!



Speak to a team member or visit ntbg.org/discovery to join today!