

Ganna  
Walska



# LOTUSLAND

NEWSLETTER | SUMMER 2025

## Regeneration in Action

LOTUSLAND'S ROLE IN CULTIVATING  
THE FUTURE

LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES

*Jardin des Rêves*

Upcoming Events and  
Educational Opportunities



RESILIENCE THROUGH NEW CHALLENGES

Dear Friends,

For the first time in our history, we received federal funding from federal sources in 2024—a proud moment that recognized our growing national leadership. These were small yet important federal grants enabling partnerships and projects this year including:



- A grant for non-living collections risk assessment for disaster planning ensuring Lotusland’s fragile archives remain an institutional resource, even when a disaster occurs.
- In partnership with the Atlanta Botanical Garden Lotusland was a member of a group of gardens across the country to advance conservation as a part of *metacollections* efforts, with our work focusing on cycads—one of the world’s most endangered plant groups. Lotusland participated in national meetings, workshops, documentation review, and contributed to managing accession data.
- Lotusland applied to the *Museums Empowered* program, seeking funding for a new digital educational platform to modernize volunteer training, following encouragement and an invitation extended via the American Public Gardens Association annual conference in 2024. This represented months of preparation and organization of partnerships and vendors and is no longer a possibility.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) plays a vital role in strengthening gardens, museums, and libraries across the country, making up less than 0.005% of the federal budget. Their grants empower institutions like Lotusland to innovate, grow, and serve our communities. Sadly, on April 1, we received a *stop work order* following an Executive Order by President Trump to significantly reduce funding for IMLS. This is a difficult blow, especially after our early successes and fruitful collaboration.

We are moving forward—adjusting plans to continue building our volunteer training platform and contributing to national and global plant conservation efforts with private philanthropy fueling this work.

Although the political landscape has shifted, the message is clear: Lotusland’s vision and impact are nationally recognized. And with your support, we will continue to innovate, grow, and thrive—no matter the challenge. Thank you for standing with us.

Warmly,

*Rebecca*

**Rebecca Anderson, M.A.**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ganna Walska Lotusland



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LOTUSLAND WELCOMES AMY STEINFELD TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES



*“As a water lawyer  
and avid gardener,  
I find deep inspiration  
in Lotusland’s stewardship  
of natural resources.”*

—Amy Steinfeld, JD  
Ganna Walska Lotusland Trustee

We are delighted to welcome **Amy Steinfeld, JD** to the Board of Trustees of Ganna Walska Lotusland. Managing Partner at **Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck’s Santa Barbara office**, Amy is widely recognized as a leader in her field and was recently named one of the **Top 50 Women in Business** by *Pacific Coast Business Times*. Her distinguished legal career has focused on helping both public and private sector clients navigate complex regulatory landscapes—insight that is invaluable to Lotusland as we move forward with our long-range planning and environmental goals. Amy’s thoughtful approach to governance and her passion for conservation make her a tremendous asset to Lotusland.

Amy joined the Board in **January 2025**, bringing with her deep expertise in land use, environmental law, and water policy, along with a lifelong commitment to community stewardship and sustainability. Amy was named a 2025 Woman in Water by WaterWorld, an honor recognizing professionals working in landmark capacities. Amy’s legal insight is matched by her dedication to supporting nonprofit initiatives. Amy also serves on the boards of the Santa Barbara County Chamber of Commerce and co-founded the H2O Women Conference, advancing collaboration among women in the water industry. We are honored to have her join us in shaping the future of this treasured garden and advancing our mission of horticultural excellence, environmental education, and sustainable land stewardship.

A passionate gardener, Amy is inspired by Lotusland’s pioneering use of sustainable irrigation, conservation efforts, and educational programming. “As a water lawyer and avid gardener, I find deep inspiration in Lotusland’s stewardship of natural resources,” she shared.

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Horticulture Happenings Page 6

LOTUSLAND’S MISSION IS TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE DISTINCTIVE BOTANICAL GARDENS AND ESTATE OF MADAME GANNA WALSKA. LOTUSLAND EDUCATES AND INSPIRES VISITORS WITH ITS COLLECTIONS, SUSTAINABLE HORTICULTURE PRACTICES, AND PLANT CONSERVATION.





PHOTO: KIM BAILE

## REGENERATION IN ACTION:

## Lotusland's Role in Cultivating the Future

By Dr. David White

**Lotusland stands as a vibrant example of regeneration in action.** Beneath its serene beauty lies a living system powered by ecological intelligence—where plants, soil, fungi, and microorganisms interact in harmony. This is not only a place of cultivated splendor; it's a model for how we can care for the Earth through natural systems thinking, circular practices, and soil-based solutions.

What first connected me to Lotusland was its compost program—pioneered by former Manager of Sustainability Corey Welles—who transformed the garden from a chemically dependent landscape into the thriving, biologically

rich ecosystem that it is today. That transformation is rooted in the understanding that nature already knows how to care for itself. Our role is to listen, observe, and participate.

Nature is successful because it has been refining itself for over 3.8 billion years. Plants alone have existed for more than 300 million. These ancient beings are our quiet allies—transforming sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide into life. They don't just feed themselves; they cool the air, filter water, stabilize soils, and provide the oxygen we breathe. In every way, plants support life, and they do so with astonishing generosity.

At Lotusland, that reverence for plant intelligence is paired with an equally deep understanding of soil. The garden uses compost teas—liquid extracts brewed from mature compost—as its primary method of plant and soil health care. These teas teem with beneficial microbes that fortify soil life, suppress disease, and enhance plant vitality. This approach, inspired by the teachings of soil biologist Dr. Elaine Ingham, is based on the concept of the Soil Food Web—a complex, interconnected system of fungi, bacteria, protozoa, nematodes, and microarthropods.

These microscopic creatures, sustained by root exudates (what I like to call “liquid sun”), are essential to plant health. As they feed, grow, die, and decompose, they release nutrients in forms that plants can use. It's a living, breathing cycle—one that mimics nature's own design, where the waste of one organism becomes the nourishment for another. This is the essence of circular ecology, and it's exactly what's being practiced here at Lotusland.

Healthy soil doesn't just grow beautiful plants—it builds resilience. Structurally sound soils, rich with biological life, form aggregates or “peds” that create air pockets and retain moisture. These living soils act like sponges, soaking up rainfall and holding onto water through drought. The more life in the soil, the better it performs as both a carbon sink and a water reservoir—making soil regeneration a direct response to the climate crisis.

Fungi are key players in this web of life. They've been on Earth for over 400 million years and played a critical role in the evolution of plants. Most plants have mycorrhizal relationships—symbiotic bonds between roots and fungi—that enable the exchange of water, nutrients, and carbohydrates. Fungi can mine minerals, decompose toxins, and even adapt to modern pollutants. They're astonishingly resilient. As Merlin Sheldrake writes in *Entangled Life*, fungi can grow toward radioactivity and digest cigarette butts. We're only beginning to understand their potential for healing both soil and society.

These natural patterns—reciprocity, circularity, and adaptation—are models for how we must design our gardens, farms, and communities. And they are all embodied at Lotusland. Instead of importing chemical inputs, the garden cultivates its own fertility. Instead of exporting waste, it returns organic matter to the soil, closing the loop and nourishing decomposers. This is regeneration in action—and a hopeful, tangible climate solution that lives in the hands of every gardener, every land steward, and every visitor who walks these paths.



We are currently living through the accelerated loss of biodiversity, biomass, and soil organic matter—all of which took millennia to build. But in reconnecting with nature's designs, we can restore what's been lost. That begins with education, access, and exposure—especially for younger generations, who will inherit the outcomes of our actions today.

Lotusland's own educational programming continues to evolve in ways that encourage curiosity, observation, and relationship with the land. Experiences that foster awe—whether watching a butterfly land on a flower or discovering life in compost—lay the foundation for stewardship. These moments teach us not just about ecosystems, but about our place in them.

Indigenous cultures around the world have long understood these relationships.

Here in Santa Barbara County, the Chumash people have lived for over 13,000 years with deep knowledge of native plants, water systems, and seasonal cycles. That knowledge—largely lost through colonization—remains vital. In my own lineage, I trace ancestry to Neolithic Scots who built stone circles thousands of years ago in Aberdeenshire. Though we don't know all they understood, we do know they gathered in circles, honored fire, and marked sacred time with landscape. These are threads of memory we must weave back into our cultural fabric.

Regeneration begins with connection—connection to soil, to plants, to children, to ancestors, and to future generations. Whether through composting in a backyard, supporting school gardens, or walking the paths of Lotusland, each of us plays a part. In nature, nothing exists in isolation. Every breath, every leaf, every step on the soil is part of a greater cycle.

As climate and conservation challenges grow, Lotusland continues to serve as a global case study in what's possible when gardens are guided by nature and not just aesthetics. The work being done here speaks far beyond its walls.

Let us honor it—and grow it.



*“The more life in the soil, the better it performs as both a carbon sink and a water reservoir—making soil regeneration a direct response to the climate crisis.”*



PHOTO: KIM BAILE

## ABOUT DR. DAVID WHITE

Dr. David White was born and raised in Scotland. He studied biological sciences at Edinburgh University and earned a PhD in cell biology. After conducting research at Cornell Medical School and the University of Idaho, he shifted his focus to regenerative land management and nature-based education in Ojai. He currently consults on soil health and sustainable systems and has worked with organizations including the Keep, the Sespe Wild Committee, Food for Thought Ojai, White Buffalo Land Trust, the Captain Planet Foundation, and the Ojai Valley Green Coalition. He co-founded the Center for Regenerative Agriculture in 2002 and led it for two decades. Since 2010, he has directed the Once Upon a Watershed education program, which serves public schools throughout Ventura County. In 2020, he launched the OAKtober Initiative to connect communities and children with native oak trees. We thank Dr. White for his collaboration with Lotusland, as guest speaker for our 2025 Annual Meeting and co-host for our recent compost tea workshops with Sustainability Program Manager Chris Ziliotto.







Horticultural Happenings

Paul Mills presenting at the Growing Metacollections workshop at Atlanta Botanical Gardens

# Connecting Collections

By Paul Mills, Director of Conservation and Curator of the Living Collection

In the age of biodiversity crisis, no single garden can act alone and more and more the 3,000 botanic gardens across the globe are working to act as one. This is the power behind a recent movement among gardens to develop metacollections—coordinated multisite plant collections managed collaboratively by multiple institutions. Increasingly, botanic gardens are teaming up to combine their individual collections as a common resource ensuring the best coverage of any given plant group for its *ex situ* conservation and protection. Holding a critical plant or plant collection at one institution is no longer considered a best practice and there are already well established, accredited metacollections through American Public Garden Association’s (APGA) Plant Collections Network (PCN) and Botanic Garden Conservation International’s (BGCI) Global Conservation Consortia (GCC) with Lotusland being involved in both.

Earlier this year, professional development opportunities allowed me

to visit six botanic gardens, multiple US states, one foreign country, a workshop, a botanical congress and innumerable meetings with colleagues to explore how Lotusland can further our involvement in global plant conservation and metacollection development.



A conservation greenhouse at Atlanta Botanical Garden

## Workshop in Atlanta

The first stop was Atlanta Botanical Gardens for a workshop titled “Growing Metacollections and Strengthening Gardens for a Conservation Consortia Future” which was part of a multiyear project funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) until recent government cuts. Lotusland was named a “Garden Partner” on this project because of our involvement with BGCI’s Global Conservation Consortium for Cycads, one of the three represented at the workshop, together with the GCC Oaks and the GCC Magnolia. These three consortia represent plant groups that are referred to as “exceptional,” those whose seeds cannot be frozen for future use and must be maintained as living plants. To kick off the workshop three case studies were shared, including Lotusland’s work as a Species Steward for the Extinct in the Wild cycad, *Encephalartos heenanii*, Patrick Thompson from Auburn University presented his work with *Quercus boyntonii* (Alabama sandstone oak) and John Berryhill from Smith



Botanic gardens are the greatest force working towards safeguarding the Earth’s flora and more than ever, as a global network with a shared vision.

College working with *Magnolia fraseri*. Three days were spent exploring ways for further collaboration, best practices for metacollection development and management across institutions and the creation of an innovative gap analysis tool to help with targeted collection development. One of many outcomes from the workshop was Lotusland now joining as a member of the Global Conservation Consortium for Oaks in addition to that for cycads.

## Visiting South Florida Gardens

My next stop was to visit gardens in the Miami area with which Lotusland has collaborated for decades, including Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Montgomery Botanical Center and The Kampong. Fairchild is a garden of incredible botanical diversity and awe-inspiring landscapes. I spent the afternoon admiring the palms, cycads and tropical plants from around the world while having the pleasure of meeting with Brett Jestrow, Director of Collections and renowned Chief Explorer, Chad Husby. Lotusland has a number of plants in the collections that originate from Fairchild and we discussed our continued collaborations.

Montgomery Botanical Center, with whom we’ve partnered on two cycad collecting trips to Mexico (2001 and 2004) and have received many seeds of palms and cycads, focuses its collections and collecting trips on palms and cycads of the highest scientific value. Most recently Lotusland has received cycad seeds of the genus *Cycas* from an MBC collecting trip in Australia. Together with Lotusland and two other institutions, Montgomery



Horticultural Happenings

The incredible palm collections at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Botanical Center is part of the APGA PCN Multisite Cycad Collection, a metacollection dedicated to cycad conservation and halting further decline of this most threatened plant group. While at Montgomery I was privileged to attend their annual Members Meeting with presentations by board members, Director Patrick Griffith on recent collecting expeditions and finally on the fascinating and pioneering work in the study of cycad pollination biology by Dr. Shayla Salzman.

The Kampong, which is part of the National Tropical Botanical Garden network and was the residence of David Fairchild, has long been on my list of must-visit gardens. Fairchild was an American botanist and one of the great plant explorers introducing over 200,000 plants into cultivation. Working

for the USDA and managing the Office of Seed and Plant Introduction, Fairchild is credited with introducing some of the most important food crops and plants of economic importance to the Americas. His home on Biscayne Bay still has remnants of the myriad plants he planted there as told in his book, *The World Grows Round my Door*.

## Latin American Botanical Congress

The final leg of my travels took me to Havana, Cuba for the XIII Latin American Botanic Congress. This five-day congress focused on all aspects of the flora of Latin America, an extremely biodiverse part of the planet, and was an amazing opportunity to reconnect with colleagues in Cuba and beyond.

(Continued)



Connecting Collections (Continued)

A large portion of Lotusland’s plant collections hail from Latin America and the botanical congress was an invaluable opportunity to learn about the most recent developments from our dedicated Latin American colleagues. A cycad symposium was planned by Cuban botanist Ramona Oviedo and Michael Calonje of Montgomery as part of the congress at which I presented on Lotusland’s work with this enigmatic plant group. A mid-week field trip was undertaken to visit Vinales Valley, home to *Microcycas calocoma*, a large, arborescent cycad found only in a small area of western Cuba. Also seen in this

amazing limestone habitat was *Quercus sangraeana*, endemic to western Cuba and the only species of oak tree found in the Caribbean.

Botanic gardens are the greatest force working towards safeguarding the Earth’s flora and more than ever, as a global network with a shared vision. One garden cannot conserve the world’s flora, but through the development of metacollections and stewarding plants together we have a better chance. The conversations, collaborations, and collections I encountered reaffirm that our collective strength is not in isolation but in connection.



*Microcycas calocoma*, a Critically Endangered cycad from western Cuba, with female cone

Collection News

Endangered California Oaks Preserved at Lotusland

by Anna Bower, Assistant Curator of the Living Collection

California is home to over twenty species of native oak with nine under threat of extinction, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) 2020 Red List. The Global Conservation Consortium for Oak (GCCO), led by the Morton Arboretum and collaboration with Botanic Gardens Conservation International, mobilizes a coordinated network of botanical institutions and experts to develop and implement a comprehensive conservation strategy to prevent the extinction of the world’s oak species.

Lotusland is in the early stages of establishing an oak collection. Our garden will serve as an *ex situ* site for oaks of conservation concern, particularly from California and Mexico, as identified by the IUCN and GCCO.

California Oaks (Continued)

This spring, we welcomed two new oak taxa into our living collection, both listed as Endangered by the IUCN. All new accessions have collection data, including geographic coordinates, making them an invaluable botanical resource.

We received ten *Quercus engelmannii* seedlings, all wild—collected as seed at Camp Pendleton in north San Diego County in 2023 by staff at the Los Angeles County Arboretum. *Q. engelmannii*, or the Engelmann oak, is considered the most threatened oak species in mainland California due to habitat loss and fragmentation from development, particularly in the San Diego area. Its native range extends from northwestern Baja California north to the San Gabriel Mountains, with a small population occurring on Catalina Island. The seedlings we received represent nine “maternal lines,” meaning they were collected from nine individual oaks. The second taxon, *Quercus pacifica*, was shared by the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance. These fourteen trees, collected as seed on Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz Islands, represent nine maternal lines. *Q. pacifica*, Pacific oak or island scrub oak, is a shrubby species endemic to three of California’s Channel Islands (the third being Catalina Island). It is considered Endangered due to its island endemism.

Together with our other botanic garden collaborators, we are excited to contribute to the global oak metacollection with the goal of preserving these threatened species.



Health Below the Soil

by Chris Ziliotto, Sustainability Program Manager

In January 2025, Lotusland, in partnership with The Soil Inventory Project (TSIP), launched a comprehensive soil sampling campaign to assess soil carbon stocks and soil health across the Garden. Lotusland grounds staff, under the guidance of Morgan McClure, a data scientist from TSIP, went about collecting 272 soil carbon samples from 136 distinct locations, with an additional 34 soil cores taken for soil health analysis.

After more than 20 years of practicing sustainable horticulture, practices, this was Lotusland’s first attempt to quantify soil health Garden wide, going beyond the annual handful of standard soil testing in select garden areas. The data collected through this partnership shows a positive correlation between soil health score (calculated using a variety of parameters including structure, porosity, soil respiration, nutrients, etc.) and total soil carbon. This means that the amount of carbon stored in the soil directly influences the overall health of the soil, and by extension, the plants growing in it. In other words, the more carbon we can capture in the soil, the healthier the Garden will be.

We saw several trends throughout the garden, showing that Lotusland’s horticultural practices are statistically linked to both soil health and carbon levels. For example, areas where ground staff routinely apply organic mulches are associated with higher soil carbon and higher health scores. The same is true for areas that receive regular inputs of organic fertilizers and compost tea. On the other hand, areas with lava rock—where organic inputs are minimal and natural mulch build-up is absent—displayed significantly lower soil health scores.

Mature landscape areas with minimal intervention, such as Olive Allée and Dracaena Circle, scored particularly high in soil carbon concentration and overall soil health, highlighting the benefits of natural, low-intervention practices.

The insights gained from this collaboration provide an invaluable “below the surface” look at the Garden, which will serve as a baseline for future evaluation of changes in management. Now, we can track the impact of new fertilizers like Get Hooked’s fish hydrolysate. The data also affirms the success of some of our long used horticultural practices like the use of organic mulches, fertilizers, and compost tea. Furthermore, it has helped us identify areas where additional organic inputs could be beneficial, enabling us to proactively manage for soil health and carbon levels moving forward.





## LOTUSLAND SHINES BRIGHT WITH TRANSFORMATIONAL GIFT

Ganna Walska Lotusland is thrilled to announce an innovative philanthropic gift that will help propel the Garden into a new era of growth and sustainability. Philanthropists Eric and Wendy Schmidt have contributed \$3.5 million marking a significant milestone in the *Lotusland Forever* Campaign and the Garden's history.

With this extraordinary commitment, Lotusland has now secured more than \$6 million in new endowment contributions and \$11.3 million in capital gifts and pledges to advance infrastructure and physical improvements in the Garden. Combined with new legacy commitments this philanthropy has catapulted the Garden forward in its goal for a secure future.

An additional \$3.7 million is needed in capital gifts to achieve priority Master Plan projects for Lotusland's glorious gardens and grounds.

This gift from Eric and Wendy Schmidt strengthens Lotusland's endowment and supports stability, ensuring

that the Garden can continue to thrive for generations to come. It also underscores Lotusland's commitment to its vibrant future—recognizing the stewards of its globally significant plant collections and ability to ensure exceptional guest experience and impactful public benefit.

"Lotusland is not only a local treasure but also a global model of sustainability and horticultural excellence," said

*"Eric and I are pleased to support Lotusland in its commitment to stewardship and education, so these beautiful gardens thrive for generations to come."*

—Wendy Schmidt, president and co-founder of the Schmidt Family Foundation and Schmidt Ocean Institute, and a Lotusland Trustee



Eric and Wendy Schmidt, 2024

Wendy Schmidt, president and co-founder of the Schmidt Family Foundation and Schmidt Ocean Institute, and a board member of Lotusland. "Eric and I are pleased to support Lotusland in its commitment to stewardship and education, so these beautiful gardens thrive for generations to come."

This landmark contribution builds on a multi-year Sustainability Program and succession grant previously awarded by Eric and Wendy Schmidt in 2023. That grant enabled Lotusland to document and share its pioneering sustainable horticulture practices, support program leadership, and train the next generation of staff. It also catalyzed an innovative partnership with Get Hooked Seafood, providing a sustainable, locally sourced fish hydrolysate to nourish the Garden's soils—reducing reliance on imported products and strengthening regional collaboration.

"Lotusland's board and staff are incredibly grateful for this extraordinary gift" said Rebecca Anderson, Chief Executive Officer. "The Schmidt's vision aligns with our own—to ensure horticultural excellence, sustainability, and long-term stewardship. As Lotusland continues to evolve, the need for a more sizable endowment has grown to maintain the garden, support its workforce, and capture opportunities for programmatic and community engagement."

Guided by its legacy and mission, Lotusland's institutional goal is to grow with purpose—to protect what is rare, to steward what is living, and to share what is meaningful. This gift from Eric and Wendy Schmidt provides the foundation for that future. While endowment and capital support strengthen the Garden's long-term vision, continued annual giving ensures that its work endures—day by day, season by season.

### ABOUT THE LOTUSLAND FOREVER CAMPAIGN

The *Lotusland Forever* campaign is building an enduring Garden, through restoration and revival of existing infrastructure and gardens, improvements to visitor experience, preservation of Lotusland's plant collections and art and artifacts. Together, we are creating a secure financial future.

To learn more about participating in this campaign, please visit: [lotusland.org/forever](https://lotusland.org/forever) or contact Patricia Sadeghian, Director of Development, at [development@lotusland.org](mailto:development@lotusland.org).



LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES

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Contributors as of June 5, 2025. Thank you to our generous sponsors: The July 19 Garden Gala is fully subscribed.  
Learn about all the ways you can support Lotusland. More info at [Lotuslandcelebrates.org](https://Lotuslandcelebrates.org)

# LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES GARDEN OF DREAMS

A Benefit Exhibition  
Presented by

**Sullivan Goss**  
AN AMERICAN GALLERY



OPENING RECEPTION JULY 3, 2025  
ON VIEW JUNE 27 — JULY 28, 2025

Join us for a benefit exhibition and a chance to take home artwork inspired by the Garden.  
A portion of the proceeds support Lotusland.

### Special thanks to Participating Artists:

Meredith Abbott, Whitney Abbott, Jeffrey Becom, Ken Bortolazzo, Hilary Brock,  
Phoebe Brunner, Patricia Chidlaw, Collette Cosentino, Anne Diener, Robin Gowen, Inga Guzyte,  
Ruth Ellen Hoag, Holli Harmon, Nathan Huff, Cynthia James, Mary-Austin Klein, Phillip Kupferschmidt,  
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ARTWORK: SUSAN MCDONNELL



# LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES AUCTION

ONLINE AUCTION — JULY 9 THROUGH JULY 20

LIVE AUCTION — SATURDAY JULY 19



Caribbean Superyacht Escape Aboard Whisper



Lotusland-Inspired  
Lemon Arbor



Garden Tour & Cocktails  
at Lautner's iconic  
Sheats-Goldstein Residence



Irene Neuwirth  
18k Gold Superbloom Cuff



Jay Leno's  
Big Dog Garage Tour

Don't miss your chance to win more than 30 unique lots,  
featuring one-of-a-kind experiences, travel packages, fine jewelry, and more.

Register now to bid in the online auction or apply for proxy-bidding for the live auction.

[Lotuslandcelebrates.org](https://Lotuslandcelebrates.org)

## THANK YOU FOR HELPING THE GARDEN GROW!

### RECENT EVENTS — THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Lotusland's Farmer Forward Dinner (May 16) hosted by Matt Kettmann and presented in conjunction with the Santa Barbara Culinary Experience



Music to Welcome Moons into Waves international debut of original score  
for the Japanese Garden (April 18)



Paulo Lima & Kim Hunter at the  
Lotus Society Appreciation  
Cocktail Party (June 7)



En Plein Air at Lotusland,  
An Adult Art Workshop (May 2)  
presented in partnership with  
Santa Barbara Museum of Art



Lotusland interviewed for *Morning in the Garden*:  
A Filoli podcast presented by Willa Brock  
Scan to listen!





# Upcoming Events

Purchase tickets and reserve your space at [lotusland.org/events](https://lotusland.org/events)



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION LUNCH

June 24, 11:30 am–2:30 pm

This annual luncheon honors our active volunteers whose generosity bring this Garden to life. Registered volunteers only. Contact [aheckes@lotusland.org](mailto:aheckes@lotusland.org) for more information.

TWILIGHT TOURS

July 5 & August 30, 4:30–6:30 pm

Open to the Public. Admission is complimentary for Patron Circle members.

Enjoy a self-guided stroll through the Garden and delight in the changing light as the sun begins to set, the heat of the day begins to cool, and wildlife begins to stir.

SUMMER PICNIC

August 9, 2–4:30 pm

with live music by David Segall

Open to the Public. Admission is complimentary for Patron Circle members.

Celebrate the beauty of summer at Lotusland with a delightful family picnic on the Great Lawn. Pack your own picnic, bring a cozy blanket and enjoy an afternoon of live music and the seasonal splendor of the Garden.

LESSONS FROM LOTUSLAND

August 13 & October 8, 5:30–6:30 pm

Join us for our free Zoom webinar series and gain insight into the Garden, horticulture, and more, the featuring leading experts in the field.

- **Pollinators and Plant Disposal Aug 13** with Dr. Bruce Tiffany
- **Home Composting Oct 8** with Dr. David White

LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES

The month of July

Lotusland Celebrates continues throughout the month of July online and in downtown Santa Barbara. Don't miss your chance to celebrate and show your support for the Garden.

- **Garden of Dreams Art Exhibition**  
at Sullivan Goss: An American Art Gallery  
11 East Anapamu Street  
**On view June 27 through July 28**  
**Public Opening 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday July 3, 5–8 pm**  
*A portion of the proceeds support the Garden*
- **Online Auction July 9–20**  
Register now at:  
[lotuslandcelebrates@lotusland.org](mailto:lotuslandcelebrates@lotusland.org)



PHOTO: KIM BAILE



For more information and to reserve events, visit: [lotusland.org/events](https://lotusland.org/events)

MEMBER'S ONLY BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS

Thursdays 10–11:30 am, June 26–September 25

This is a special opportunity to explore specific gardens “in conversation” with the key garden staff who maintain them. Space is limited.

Admission is complimentary for Patron Circle members.

- **June 26: Cycad Garden** with Paul Mills Director of Conservation and Curator of the Living Collections and Tyler Diehl Director of Gardens and Grounds
- **August 28: Aquatic Collections (Cycad Garden pond & Water Garden)** with Anna Bower, Assistant Curator of the Living Collections and Brigid McManus, Section Gardener
- **September 25: Topiary Garden and trimming demonstration** with Niloofar Borojerdian, Section Gardener and Tyler Diehl Director of Gardens and Grounds

WELL-BEING WEDNESDAYS

11:30–12:30 pm at Lotusland, July 23–October 15

Benefit from the restorative power of nature and enjoy the Garden with a fresh perspective. Participants are encouraged to make an additional reservation for the afternoon tour to extend their experience.

- **July 23: Yoga for Gardeners** with Sean Haleen
- **August 20: Tai Chi** with Chao Pang
- **September 17: Mindful Meditation** with Kind Mind
- **October 15: Quigong** with Lind Peng

GOLDEN HOUR WINE WALK

August 22 4:30 – 6:30 pm

Admission is complimentary for Patron Circle members.

Wander the Garden at your leisure in the magical light of the afternoon when the botanical colors and textures come alive. Our featured winemaker is Summerland Winery.

Save the Date: September 6

MEMBERS BBQ

Save the Date: November 5

Join us for another edition of our exclusive *Gardens in Paradise* series. This progressive garden tour will uncover the stories behind several breathtaking Santa Ynez Valley private properties, guided by experts and homeowners, who will illuminate the artistry and vision that shaped these gardens. Participants will engage in botanical and architectural discovery, while enjoying a gastronomical experience and local fine wines generously provided by Mattei's Tavern.

- This experience is limited to 30 people. Advance reservations are required.
- Tickets for this fundraiser are \$2,000 per guest ( \$1,750 tax-deductible).
- Sponsorships are \$5,000 (\$4,500 tax-deductible) and include an additional tour in April 2026.

Proceeds for this fundraising program benefit the care of Lotusland's gardens. For more information, please contact Samantha Lloyd-Knauf, Manager of Annual Giving. Telephone: 805.324.8425, Email: [development@lotusland.org](mailto:development@lotusland.org)

PREMIER SERIES SPONSOR

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M





# EXCEPTIONAL PLANTS AUCTION

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, FROM 1:00–4:00 PM

*The Ultimate Plant Party!*

**DON'T MISS OUR EXCEPTIONAL PLANTS AUCTION** and the opportunity to take home unique and sought-after plants all benefiting Lotusland and the Garden's mission.

Join horticulture experts, garden aficionados and plant enthusiasts for a lively afternoon on the Great Lawn with specialty cocktails, light bites and a convivial atmosphere.

Sponsorship opportunities and tickets are now available for the plant party of the year.



*an initiative of the*  
Institute of Museum and Library Services

## Make Lotusland Accessible

TO MORE MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY

In 2024, Lotusland welcomed 15% of its 20,000 annual visitors through free or reduced admission programs that make the Garden accessible to underserved local residents.

One such program is *Museums for All*, a national initiative offering free and discounted museum admission to individuals with an active EBT card. By participating in this program, we are helping ensure that low-income households can experience the beauty of Lotusland with a discounted \$3 admission rate.

Thanks to generous philanthropic support, we're able to offer these deeply discounted admissions while continuing to care for and preserve the Garden.

To reserve a Museums for All visit, please call our Reservations team at 805.969.9990.

If you'd like to help make Lotusland accessible to more members of our community, please consider a donation to support this important program.

For more information contact Phylene Wiggins, Grants and Strategic Partnerships Officer at 805.969.3767 x103 [pwiggins@lotusland.org](mailto:pwiggins@lotusland.org)

## Wish List

IMPORTANT NEEDS THAT SUPPORT THE DAILY LIFE OF THE GARDEN

### Restore Madame's Garden Furniture

Many of the whimsical benches, plant stands, and baskets placed by Madame Walska herself have begun to show signs of rust and wear. With your support, we can professionally powder coat these treasured pieces, preserving their charm and protecting them for years to come.

Your gift of any amount will help us reach our \$10,000 goal.

For more information on how to support Lotusland, contact Patricia Sadeghian, Director of Development at [psadeghian@lotusland.org](mailto:psadeghian@lotusland.org)

Special thanks to Cyndee Howard & Lesley Cunningham, Jeffrey Romano & Stan Shayer, who supported our Fall Wish List and ensured that the Lotusland breakwater flag at the Santa Barbara Harbor flies high through 2026 and Elena Urschel for supporting a new electric cart for the Garden.

### Keep Our Team Connected

Walkie-talkies are essential for staff and volunteer communication—especially during Jr. Botanist school visits, garden tours, and events and public programs. With your help, we will purchase ten new Motorola radios and compatible earpieces.

Your contribution will help us reach our \$500 goal.





# In Memoriam: John Bleck

**John Bleck was a distinguished Santa Barbara plantsman known for his vast plant knowledge and joy in sharing with others.** John came to California to follow his passion for plants working at UCLA Mathias Botanic Garden. In 1973 he and his wife bought the renowned succulent nursery, Abbey Garden, and he later became manager of UCSB Research Greenhouses, retiring in 1992.

John was involved with many plant societies including the Santa Barbara County Horticultural Society, Cactus and Succulent Society, and Bonsai Society. He was among the first to hybridize small *Aloe* species, intent to popularize them as flowering window-sill plants. His *Aloe* hybrids became internationally known and used by other horticulturists in their hybrids.

John had decades of involvement with Lotusland, donating plants, books and journals for the collections and Exceptional Plants auction. In 1985 Lotusland asked him to help appraise the plant collections for insurance purposes after Madame



**John Bleck with Anna Bower, Lotusland's Assistant Curator of the Living Collection**

Ganna Walska's death and in 1987 to join a committee to draft Lotusland's first plant collections policy for the management of the collections. John's legacy will live on at Lotusland with a portion of his succulent collection coming to the garden for future display.



**Climate Toolkit Teen Workshop**

**WHEN:** September 28, 2025, 12-4:00 pm

**WHERE:** Ganna Walska Lotusland

**COST:** \$10 for lunch

**WHO:** 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade Santa Barbara County Students

**Are you passionate about protecting the environment and climate action?** Join us on September 28 for an afternoon at Lotusland for our Climate Toolkit Teen Workshop. Learn how your individual choices make a meaningful difference in addressing the climate crisis.

The Climate Toolkit Youth Network brings together young people from museums, gardens and zoos who are passionate about climate action and environmental justice. Join Lotusland as we share knowledge and best practices around climate action, build community, combat climate anxiety, and celebrate our good work. Gain hands-on experience with compost while investigating the soil-food web. Participate in mindfulness and nature connection to deepen your understanding of how impactful your actions can be.



**Register between June 30-Sept 1**  
Space is limited to the first 40 participants.  
Volunteer Hours eligible.

**For more information, contact Jenna Bowman at [jbowman@lotusland.org](mailto:jbowman@lotusland.org)**

**Lotusland thanks these generous donors whose support helps us grow and flourish all year.**



## GIFTS *for the* GARDEN

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*Gifts of \$100 or more towards General Operations recieved from October 1, 2024 to January 31, 2025*



# Make An Impact

**Membership is more than access**—it’s a statement of commitment to plant conservation, sustainable horticulture, and environmental stewardship.

Members enjoy generous benefits including discounts in our Garden Shop and partnering nurseries, priority access to our limited reservation calendar, as well as invitations to exclusive programs and member appreciation days.

Join today and become a part of the Lotusland community! Additional ways to fuel our mission to preserve and enhance the distinctive botanical gardens and estate of Madame Ganna Walska.

## GIVE TO THE ANNUAL FUND: GIFTS FOR THE GARDEN

**Unrestricted contributions allow us to respond to emerging needs**, nurture innovative programs, and maintain the Garden with the confidence that comes from a strong foundation.

Your Gift for the Garden supports everything that makes Lotusland thrive.

## GROW A LIVING LEGACY: THE LOTUS SOCIETY

**For those looking to make a lasting impact**, the *Lotus Society* was founded to grow the endowment and offers a meaningful way to support the Garden for generations to come.

You are eligible to join the *Lotus Society* when you make a planned gift including Lotusland in your estate plans or commit a single or cumulative endowment gift of \$25,000 or more.

Create your legacy by helping to secure the Garden’s future—forever.

## PARTICIPATE IN BENEFIT EVENTS

**Lotusland’s signature events bring our mission to life** while generating vital funds to support the Garden and its mission. From the Lotusland Celebrates Gala to the Exceptional Plants Auction and Gardens in Paradise Tour Series, each event offers an unforgettable experience.

Secure your sponsorship and make an impact while enjoying all that the Garden has to offer!

[lotusland.org/support](https://lotusland.org/support)

To learn more please contact Patricia Sadeghian, Director of Development, at [development@lotusland.org](mailto:development@lotusland.org).

# 2024 By the Numbers

SEE HOW YOUR GENEROSITY SHAPED 2024

- 20,000 visitors from 20 countries
- 2,330 students discovered nature's wonders
- 243 active volunteers
- 21,164 volunteer hours clocked
- 3,800 plant taxa flourished
- 950 endangered plants protected
- 818 plants planted
- 47 wild collected cycads germinated
- 3,000 square feet of insectary habitat planted
- 15,000 gallons of compost tea applied
- 100% sustainable gardening practices
- 1 extraordinary garden and community treasure



Lotusland operates under a restricted use permit issued by the County of Santa Barbara. This means that each donor, member, and volunteer plays an important role in sustaining this global sanctuary of biodiversity and beauty.







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Santa Barbara, CA 93108

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## Calendar: June–September

For more detailed information about upcoming events, see pages 16-17 or visit [Lotusland.org/events](https://lotusland.org/events).

**Volunteer Appreciation Picnic**  
Tuesday, June 24

**Garden of Dreams Benefit Exhibition**  
at Sullivan Goss  
**First Thursday Reception**  
July 3 (on view through July 28)

**Twilight Tour**  
Saturday, July 5

**Lotusland Celebrates:**  
**Jardin des Rêves Gala**  
Saturday, July 19

**Lotusland Celebrates:**  
**Online Auction**  
July 9–20  
Wednesday–Sunday

**Summer Picnic**  
Saturday, August 9

**Lessons from Lotusland**  
Wednesday, August 13

**Tai Chi**  
Wednesday, August 20

**Wine Walk**  
Friday, August 22

**Twilight Tour**  
Saturday, August 30

**Members BBQ**  
Saturday, September 6

**Meditation**  
Wednesday, September 17

**Behind the Scenes Tour**  
Thursday, September 25

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### SAVE THE DATES:

**Exceptional Plants**  
Saturday, October 11

**Eco-Printing Workshop Friday and Saturday, October 24-25**

**End of Public Tour Season**  
November 15

**Community Access Day**  
Friday–Saturday, November 21-22

**Members Holiday Shopping**  
Saturday, November 29



### 2025 Ticket Release Calendar

#### JUNE–AUGUST RESERVATIONS

**Member Pre-Release**  
April 22

**Public Release**  
May 6

#### SEPTEMBER–NOVEMBER RESERVATIONS

**Member Pre-Release**  
July 22

**Public Release**  
August 5

Ticket release dates are subject to change.  
Additional information is available at  
[lotusland.org/visit](https://lotusland.org/visit)

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Lotusland is open for public visitation Wednesdays through Saturdays with a self-guided or docent-led tour by request. Explore [lotusland.org/visit](https://lotusland.org/visit) to check availability and reserve your space. Space is limited, and advance reservations are required. We recommend making reservations one month in advance of your visit for best availability.