

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN LIVING COLLECTION POLICY

12 July, 2007

Mission Statement:

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden is devoted to the collection, cultivation, study and display of native California plants and to graduate training and research in plant systematics and evolution. Through all its programs, the mission of the Garden is to make significant contributions to the appreciation, enjoyment, conservation, understanding, and thoughtful utilization of our natural heritage.

Collection Policy:

In accordance with its mission statement, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden will develop, assemble, document, maintain and exhibit a Living Collection of California plants. The purpose of this document is to guide, direct and manage the development of this collection at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden.

Legal & Ethical Consideration:

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden's collections, collecting policies, procedures, and activities strive to comply with all relevant international, national, state and local laws, and trustee policies and directives regarding the collection, propagation, and distribution of plants (e.g. CITES, ESA, Trademark, Patent, etc.) and their components (propagules, DNA samples, roots, leaves, flowers, pollen, seeds, wood samples, etc.). All collections and collecting activities will comply and be consistent with the Trustee approved Code of Ethics (1998 revision).

Purpose:

The Living Collection supports the Garden's programs in horticulture, conservation, education and research. All elements of the Living Collection have biological, horticultural, educational, historical, cultural, research, and/or conservation content and value. Collectively, and individually, the Living Collection forms RSABG's garden and as such has aesthetic, intrinsic, historic and cultural value. The Living Collection documents natural variation among plants as well as the geographic and ecological distribution of plants. The Living Collection is the living counterpart to the Herbarium Collection.

Scope of the Collection – Provenance:

The Living Collection is composed of plant species, subspecies, varieties and hybrids that were growing in California prior to the 1492 arrival of Europeans to North America as well as Californian floristic elements growing outside California. Strong emphasis shall be placed on documented wild origin Californian and Sonoran elements. Cultivars, selections and other derivatives should have a specific link to California. This collection is interpreted to include those materials owned outright by the Garden, as well as materials on indefinite loan from others.

Exceptions:

Plants meeting one or more of the following criteria, preferably at least two, may be accessioned into the Living Collection at the discretion of the Director of Horticulture and/or the Curator of the Living Collection and are evaluated on a case by case basis.

- A. The plant is critically endangered.
- B. The plant is from Baja California.
- C. The plant is from the Sonoran Floristic Province.
- D. The plant is from the Great Basin Floristic Province.
- E. The plant is from the Vancouverian Floristic Province.
- F. The plant is a non-California species of a genus or section thereof that predominates in California or to which the garden has a collecting commitment.
- G. The plant is from one of the other Mediterranean climate areas of the world.
- H. The plant is a subject of a RSABG sanctioned research project.
- I. The plant is a non-California parent of an intergeneric or interspecific hybrid with a California native plant parent.
- J. The plant is present in the fossil record in California.

Categories of Collections and Prioritization:

In accordance with the vision of our founder, Susana Bixby Bryant, RSABG attempts to grow the widest variety of taxa appropriate to the Scope of Collection. All taxa and accessions are considered important, however resources are limited. RSABG's Living Collection primarily supports the research and conservation mission of the Garden, and secondarily fulfills display and public horticulture functions. As such, the highest priority for collection acquisition and care shall be species of conservation concern from southern California, followed by species of conservation concern from the Californian and Sonoran floristic provinces. Other well-documented, high genetic diversity wild collections will also be a high priority. While annual and other temporary display plantings will have a lower collection priority, they will require a higher level of care by their nature.

Acquisition:

New accessions are acquired by the Garden through staff and affiliate/collaborator collecting activities in the field, on-site garden projects, exchanges with other institutions and individuals, contracts, gifts or purchases.

Utilization:

The Living Collection is to be used to support Garden sanctioned horticulture, conservation, education and research activities. Use and utilization of the Garden's collections will be consistent with the community norms and standards for living collections. In general, destructive sampling will be permitted only to an extent that ensures no significant reduction in the overall quality of the accession/specimen will result from such utilization.

- A. Distribution of material from the Living Collection is encouraged as long as such activities will not compromise the value or purpose of the accession.
- B. Consumptive use is defined as an activity that actively compromises the purpose or the long-term viability of a specimen or of an accession, and is allowed only with written approval of the Curator of the Living Collection, Director of Horticulture and/or of the Garden Executive Director.
- C. Non-consumptive use is encouraged and is defined as an activity that does not actively compromise the long-term viability of a specimen or of an accession.

Access:

The content / catalog of Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden's Living Collection should be as widely accessible as possible. However, given the sensitive nature and security issues involved with some of these collections, access to the Living Collection and its associated records will be governed by each collection's collection policy and the Director of Horticulture or the Curator of the Living Collection. Physical access to the Living Collection in the Garden's displays on the grounds is unrestricted during normal hours of operation. Detailed information and records relating the Living Collection is typically freely available to those involved with Garden sanctioned horticulture, conservation, education and research activities. Access for other individuals will be governed by the sensitivity of the information requested, the amount of staff time necessary to answer questions or generate reports, and the qualifications of the person making the request – such requests will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Director of Horticulture or the Curator of the Living Collection. The Garden's philosophy is to encourage and facilitate access to, and use of, the Living Collection to the greatest extent possible.

Documentation, Records & Inventory:

As collection documentation adds value to the objects in the collection documentation should be as thorough and accurate as resources allow. Computerized records (currently in BG-Base and BG-Map) and separate accession book listings will be maintained. Inventories and mapping efforts are conducted on an ongoing basis. Collection records include (but are not limited to) documentation of provenance, accessions, deaccessions, exchanges, gifts, purchases, and loans. The development of a comprehensive, readily accessible catalogue, including digital images and other relevant technologies, for each of the Garden's collections is an institutional goal.

Collection Conservation and Stewardship:

The Living Collection expects to meet museum and other professional standards and to hold its collections in public trust. RSABG's Living Collection constitutes a significant scientific, horticultural, educational, and conservation resource for a community and region where species and habitat loss are critical issues. Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden will strive to fully implement and comply with the Trustee approved Long Range Conservation Plan (2002 revision).

Deaccession:

Accessions in the Living Collection may only be deaccessioned by either the Director of Horticulture or the Curator of the Living Collection under any of the following conditions. All data relating to such accessions will be maintained in perpetuity.

- A. When it has been determined that a plant that was thought to be a Californian taxon is found not to be a Californian taxon. These specimens will be sold through Garden venues or donated to another institution. Voucher specimens may be deposited in the RSABG Herbarium.
- B. When the accession harbors a disease or pathogen that is likely to spread to other accessions in the Living Collection. These specimens will be destroyed. Voucher specimens may be deposited in the RSABG Herbarium.
- C. When the plant is overly aggressive and has the potential to escape and become a pest plant in our local area. Specimens on the grounds will be destroyed. Voucher specimens may be deposited in the RSABG Herbarium. Seed collections of these plants may be retained in the seed collection.
- D. When the accession/specimen is no longer appropriate to the scope of the collection.
- E. When the accession/specimen is damaged beyond reasonable recovery.
- F. When the accession/specimen is missing (lost, stolen, or destroyed).
- G. When the accession/specimen no longer retains value for its intended purpose.
- H. When the plant(s) are unnecessary duplicates.
- I. When the legal owner requests return of material on indefinite loan.
- J. When they are dead.

Deaccessioned material may be disposed of in the following ways:

- A. Deaccessioned material may be exchanged with an individual, corporation, nonprofit or government entity.
- B. Deaccessioned material may be sold. Proceeds from the sale of deaccessioned material and/or collection assets will be used to provide for the direct care of the affected collection.
- C. Deaccessioned material may be given to an individual, corporation, nonprofit or government entity.
- D. As a last resort, or in the case of dead plants, deaccessioned material may be thrown away.

Decisions relating to the disposal of deaccessioned material(s) with a commercial value of up to one hundred dollars is the responsibility of either the Director of Horticulture or the Curator of the Living Collection. Disposal of deaccessioned material(s) with a commercial value in excess of one hundred dollars will be made with the consultation and documented approval of the Garden's Executive Director or Board of Trustees.

Loans:

Loans are the formal, temporary transfer of specimens or collection holdings to outside researchers or institutions. Elements of the Living Collection are, under exceptional circumstances, rarely available for loan to outside researchers or institutions. The Living Collection may, under exceptional and rare circumstances, accept loans from outside researchers or institutions. Decisions regarding loans to, or from, Living Collection holdings are made by either the Director of Horticulture or the Curator of the Living Collection.

Exchanges:

Exchanges are the formal reciprocal transfer of specimen(s) or other collection material(s) between Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden's Living Collection and other institutions or individuals. Formal exchange programs are designed to build and augment the Living Collection. Decisions regarding the exchange of

Living Collection holdings are made by either the Director of Horticulture or the Curator of the Living Collection.

Gifts:

Gifts are the unconditional, unilateral transfer of ownership of specimen(s), or other collection material(s) between Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden's Living Collection and other institutions or individuals. Gifts are typically given with the intent of augmenting the holdings of outside institutions, or supporting research and activities consistent with the mission of the Garden. Gifts to the Living Collection at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden are typically accepted with the expressed intent of augmenting the Garden's existing Living Collection in a manner consistent with the Living Collection's collection policy. Decisions regarding gifts to, or from, the Living Collection holdings are made by either the Director of Horticulture or the Curator of the Living Collection.

Risk Management:

Collections, staff and visitors are to be protected to the best of the Garden's ability in the event of an emergency or disaster in accordance with the Disaster Preparedness Policy. The primary threats to the Living Collection are fire, wind, heat, freezing and theft. All threats except theft may be mitigated by maintaining adequate moisture in advance of condition. Additional moisture may be applied in advance of fire, while saturated soil is to be avoided with the others. Trees shall be inspected not less often than once every five years and pruned if they have excessive deadwood as a potential fire hazard or if deemed a wind throw hazard. Freezing may be mitigated primarily by covering plants at risk. New plantings of coastal, island, Sonoran and Baja California plants are most at risk and will be covered first. Theft may be mitigated by increased vigilance on horticulturally coveted taxa, particularly cacti and succulents, and by planting away from exits and parking areas.

Policy Review/Revision:

The Curator of the Living Collection shall review the Living Collection Policy not less often than once every five years. The Living Collection Policy must maintain consistency with the Garden's collection policy. Any revisions to the Living Collection Policy shall be presented to and approved by the Collections Committee. If no revisions are deemed necessary the policy shall be noted as reviewed and dated.

APPENDICES:

- I. Definition of Terms/Glossary.
- II. Examples: Collection Content Exceptions.
Examples: Deaccession.

APPENDIX I TO LIVING COLLECTION POLICY

Definition of Terms/Glossary:

To avoid confusion with other uses of terms for collections at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, the following definitions are provided as they pertain to this document:

1. **California Floristic Province** is the Mediterranean climate portion of North America characterized by sclerophyllous vegetation. A rough outline of its geographic extent may be found in Volume 1 of Flora of North America.
2. **Accession** is the unit for a single collection. For the Living Collection, this may represent a single plant clone, a subset of a population of plants that share the same collection method and date, a seed collection from a single plant, a seed collection from a population, etc. Under no circumstances are different materials combined in a single accession: seeds, cuttings, divisions, whole plants, etc. are always separate accessions.
3. **Curation** is the process of managing a collection to ensure its preservation, perpetuation, ease of access and retrieval of data, and to provide for orderly accessions.
4. **Accessioning** is the process of adding specimens to the collection. This process includes assignment of a unique reference (accession) number and entering its collection information in BG-Base (our computerized database). Accession information for all collections is maintained in perpetuity.
5. **Deaccessioning** is the process of actively removing an accession (or a portion of an accession) from the Living Collection. The data about these deaccessioned plants will be maintained in perpetuity.
6. **Seed** (or **Seeds**) is inclusive of all types of seeds, pollen, and spores.
7. **Seed Collection** is a specialized subset of the Living Collection with its own collection policy, protocols, procedures and guidelines. The seed collection is composed of accessioned seeds, pollen, and spores. In addition to RSABG collections, the Seed Collection includes: A) Center for Plant Conservation (CPC) collections, B) Contract collections from individuals and corporations, C) Collections governed by permits from governmental agencies (USFWS, CDFG, etc.). All Seed Collection accessions should have voucher specimens on file in the RSABG Herbarium.
8. **Living Collection** is composed of all accessioned plants and seeds. These include: A) all wild documented collections of plants from California; B) all cultivars of, or involving, plant species native to California; C) all other accessioned plants; and D) seed collections. All Living Collection accessions should have voucher specimens on file in the RSABG Herbarium.
9. **Vouchers** are pressed specimens (directly from the wild when the accession was collected, or subsequently collected from the Living Collection) that are used as permanent record and verification of accessions in the Living Collection. All voucher specimens are part of the RSABG Herbarium and are governed by Herbarium policies, protocols, procedures and guidelines.
10. **Wild Documented Collections** are collected propagules (seeds, cuttings, divisions, spores, small plants, etc.) from wild populations of plants or from an individual plant for which information (documentation) has been recorded on the field record cards and herbarium voucher specimens have been collected.

APPENDIX II TO LIVING COLLECTION POLICY

Collection Content Exceptions – Examples:

- A. The plant is from the Vancouverian Floristic Province.
(example: *Kalmiopsis leachiana*)
- B. The plant is from the Great Basin Floristic Province.
(example: *Arctomecon californica**)
- C. The plant is from the Sonoran Floristic Province.
(example: *Dayia scabra**)
- D. The plant is from Baja California, Mexico.
(example: *Brahea armata**)
- E. The plant is a non-California species of a genus or section thereof that predominates in California.
(example: *Ceanothus azureus**)
- F. The plant is a non-California parent of an intergeneric or interspecific hybrid with a California native plant parent.
(example: *Heuchera sanguinea**)
- G. The plant is a recognized endangered, threatened, or rare species.
(example: *Puya raimondii**)
- H. The plant is present in the fossil record in California.
(example: *Metasequoia glyptostrobis**)
- I. The plant is from one of the other Mediterranean climate areas of the world.
(example: *Gilia valdiviensis**)
- J. The plant is a subject of a RSABG sanctioned research project.
(example: *Cantua quercifolia**)

Deaccession – Examples:

- A. When it has been determined that a plant that was thought to be a Californian taxon is found not to be a Californian taxon.
(example: *Erigeron* ‘Olga’* originally accessioned as *Erigeron glaucus* ‘Olga’, but the plant was incorrectly identified by the seller and is not *Erigeron glaucus*.)
- B. When the accession harbors a disease or pathogen that is likely to spread to other accessions in the Living Collection.
(example: *Ceanothus* ‘Blue Lolita’* this “cultivar” is a diseased form of *Ceanothus* ‘Joyce Coulter’)
- C. When the plant is overly aggressive and has the potential to escape and become a pest plant in our local area.
(example: *Scrophularia peregrina***)

* these plants exist in the RSABG collection.

** this species exists in the RSABG collection. It was formerly a research subject of RSABG graduate student Richard J. Shaw (PhD, 1961). Seed was obtained from the Botanic Garden in Berlin and was cultivated at RSABG in 1958 (see Herbarium specimen). This species is now a major winter annual pest in the Garden.