

PHANTASEA TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

January 2015

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Garden News

WHAT'S HAPPENING

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WHAT IS A BOTANICAL GARDEN ?

- A garden where a large variety of plants are cultivated for exhibition and scientific purposes.
- Plants in a Botanical Garden are documented and labeled.
- Botanical gardens are open to the public for the purposes of education, and public display of conservation principles.
- Botanical Gardens provide classes and workshops which promote gardening information and education.

As the sun travels to its further point to the South the garden becomes very shady and cool. The cooler nights have caused the phalaenopsis orchids to begin to set their spikes. But the predominance of shade elsewhere is allowing few other plants to come into bloom at this time.

The frequent rains are providing welcome moisture especially for all the orchids as they begin to set their buds for what promises to be a Springtime full of colorful blooms.

We have completed construction on all the buildings and the parking lot is nearing completion. Our new signs go up this week and we hope to be open in mid-January sometime soon.

Our website is now up and running so check back often to: www.stthomasbotanicalgarden.com.

Com.



WHAT'S NEW

Construction is almost completed! The curiosity of the all the passing traffic has increased and the safari's are stopping to ask when we will be open.

The local tourist publications for 2014 are in distribution now. Phantasea Tropical Botanical Garden is an advertiser this year

in the 'Destinations' magazine-distributed on all the incoming airlines and in the "Places To Explore" publication which is located throughout the island.



Our "Gate House" and parking

Pitcairnia integrifolia

Plot 10



Guzmania hybrid

Plot 12

WHAT'S BLOOMING—BROMELIADS

The genera *Guzmania* is named for a Spanish naturalist Anastasio Guzman. Guzman traveled throughout South America extensively and died while on an expedition in Ecuador in 1807. A short time after his death colleagues named the genera of bromeliad in his honor.

Most *Guzmania* are epiphytic meaning they use their roots to attach to a host plant such as a tree rather than grow in the ground. Epiphytes do not cause any damage to their host.

Like all bromeliads *Guzmania* flowers once usually with a very long-lived flower and then begins to

produce pups (baby plants) before it dies. The pups can be removed from the plant and transplanted to their own pot or they can be allowed to grow in clumps attached to the mother plant.

They survive well in low light conditions and tolerate artificial light well. They cannot be exposed to intense direct sunlight.



Epidendrum ciliare



Dendrobium 'Andre Millar'



Phalaenopsis hybrid

WHAT'S BLOOMING—ORCHIDS

Epidendrum ciliare is a warm growing orchid native to the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Typically blooming around the end of the year it is known locally as the "Christmas Orchid." *Epi. Ciliare* typically grows as a lithophyte, meaning that it grows in rocky crevices in leaf litter, and prefer slight shade. Plot 2

The cool nights have triggered the **phalaenopsis** to begin spiking.

Several are already beginning to open but the best show for these orchids will be late February-early March. Plots 8,10,18

Several small **oncidiums** are also beginning to bloom as well as the dendrobiums which will all increase in blooming once the sun begins to travel further northward and brings more light into the garden. The far southern angle of the sun has reduced the

orchid blooming during the winter months. Plot 6

Dendrobium hybrid



MORE BLOOMING—ELSEWHERE IN THE GARDEN

Odontonema strictum, also known as 'Firespike' is a low growing perennial shrub with up to a foot long showy red flower spikes. It is native to South America and hardy up to zone 8B in the US.

The red flowers of this plant attract hummingbirds and several species of butterflies. It blooms year-round

Odontonema strictum can grow in full sun to part shade and pre-

fers loose moist soil. It will wilt in dry conditions and is not very salt tolerant. The more sunlight the plant receives, the more flowers it will produce.

Propagation is by divisions or cuttings. Plot 11



Calliandra haematocephala Commonly known as Red Powder Puff. Native to Borneo. Plot 11



Odontonema strictum

MORE BLOOMING - ELSEWHERE IN THE GARDEN

Clerodendrom quadriloculare,

also known as ‘Starburst Clerodendrum’ is a member of the verbena family. It is native to New Guinea and the Phillipines.

It is a fast growing shrub and spreads through shoots appearing from roots in all directions. It can become invasive is not monitored.

When not in bloom the leaves still put on a nice display. They have a “discolor” design - green on the top and purple on the bottom. Although the plant prefers lots of sunlight it will grow and bloom in shade conditions. Lack of water will cause the plant to wilt and lose its leaves, but new ones quickly appear once water is applied.



Clerodendrom quadriloculare

Located in Plot 20

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check back here for upcoming classes, workshops, and events at Phantasea Tropical Botanical Garden and around St. Thomas such as Farmer’s Markets, plant shows and other garden related happenings.

January 17-18, 2014

Rastafarian Agriculture and Food Fair, Bordeaux. 10AM-till



TROPICAL TREATS & MORE

Once we’re open you will be able to treat yourself to one of our fresh baked homemade cookies like Chocolate Chip, Chocolate Chip with nuts, Oatmeal Raisin, Oatmeal Coconut, or White Chocolate Macadamia. And then

enjoy one of our Caribbean juices or other beverages to quinch your thirst.

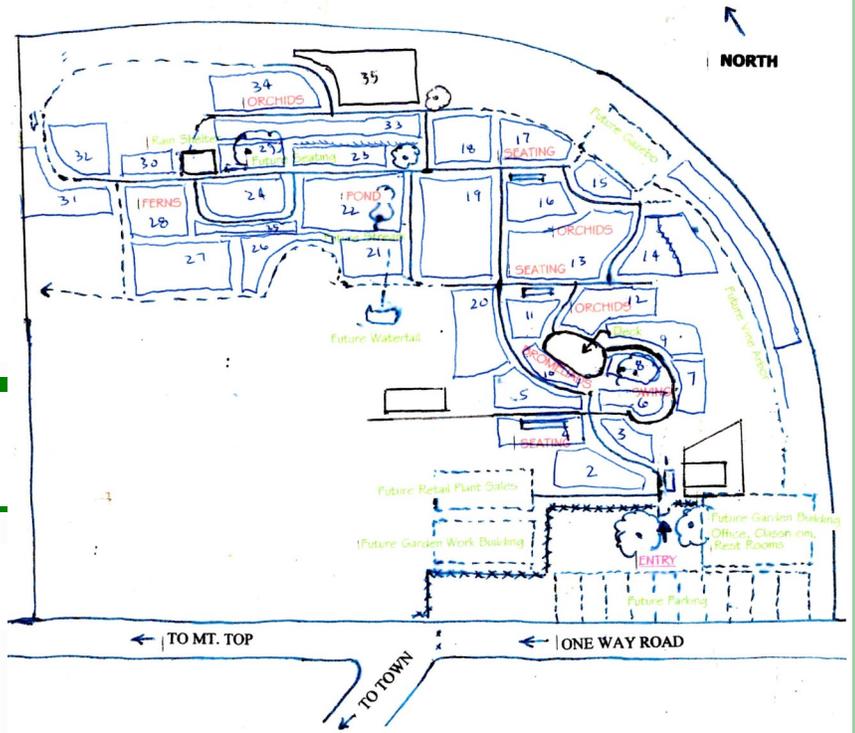
And don’t forget to take home a reminder of your visit to **Phantasea Tropical Botanical Garden** with one of our logo shirts, caps, tote bags and post cards, coffee mugs or magnets.



PHANTASEA TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

Phantasea Tropical Botanical Garden PLOT MAP

7D-5 Lerkenlund
 St. Thomas, VI
 Mailing Address: 6501 Red Hook Plaza, Ste 201
 St. Thomas, VI 00802
 Phone: 340-774-2916
 Fax: 340-774-2911
 email: ptbg@vipowernet.net



We're on the Web!

www.stthomasbotanicalgarden.com

Tell us what you think. Your comments are always welcome.



To unsubscribe to our Newsletter please email us at: ptbg@vipowernet.net



Zamioculcas zamifolia
 Plant: Typically will not exceed two feet in height

FEATURED PLANT- *Zamioculcas zamiifolia*

Zamioculcas (Common name "Z-Z Plant") is a genus of flowering plant in the family *Araceae*, containing the single species *Zamioculcas zamiifolia*. It is a tropical perennial plant native to eastern Africa, from Kenya south to northeastern South Africa.

All parts of the plant are poisonous if ingested.

Best growth is between 65-75° F. Bright indirect light is best but it can be grown in constant shade and as a houseplant.

Over-watering may destroy this plant, so err on the side of dryness to avoid tuber rotting.

Propagation is by leaf cuttings. The lower end of the leaf is set into moist compost and the pot is covered by a plastic bag making a small greenhouse. The leaf may begin to decay but succulent shoots will begin to form. This process may take up to a year.

Located in Plot 2 and 6.



Zamioculcas zamifolia
 Flower: Blooms mid summer to early fall.