



FORT WORTH
BOTANIC
GARDEN

ANNUAL REPORT
2025



Explore, Discover & Engage

The Mission of The Fort Worth Botanic Garden is:

To explore the critically important world of plants, collaborate to discover the role they play in our cultural and natural environments, and engage people to conserve nature and improve the human experience.



PATRICK NEWMAN



KRISTY ODOM

A garden is never finished. It is always growing.

In 2025, the Fort Worth Botanic Garden leaned fully into that truth — tending what is here, planning what is next, and trusting that the work we do today will flourish for generations to come.

This was a year of remarkable momentum. Guests arrived in record numbers, with nearly half a million visitors walking our paths, an 8.6% increase over 2024. Our membership grew to more than 10,400 households, a testament to the deep connection this community feels to this place. Across our special events, from *Butterflies in the Garden* to *Christmas in the Garden*, the Garden served as a gathering point for joy, discovery, and belonging.

Construction on the Baker Martin Family Garden continued throughout the year, with the Discovery Center reaching substantial completion and key features of *The Wilds* and *Imagine That!* sections taking visible shape. Every week, the vision of a two-acre “garden of yes” becomes more real and the March 2027 grand opening feels closer with each milestone reached.

In 2025, our researchers described five new species, published 24 peer-reviewed papers, and completed landmark digitization projects that make the work of conservation accessible to the world. Our educators reached nearly 14,000 students and educators through school programs and more than 21,000 learners across all programs — planting seeds of curiosity that will grow well beyond our walls.

We are grateful for our donors, members, volunteers, guests, and partners who make all of this possible. Because of you, the Fort Worth Botanic Garden continues to grow.

A stylized, handwritten signature of Patrick Newman in black ink.

Patrick Newman,
President and CEO

A handwritten signature of Kristy Odom in black ink.

Kristy Odom,
Chairwoman of the Board

By the Numbers 2025



497,456 Guests visited the garden in 2025



Member households

10,444

+ 910 Households from 2024

+9.5%

Students & educators served (school programs)

13,986

+ 1,458 served from 2024

+11.5%

New species described

5

from 9 in 2024

36,667 Volunteer hours

from 37,854 in 2024



Plant specimens digitally imaged

14,821

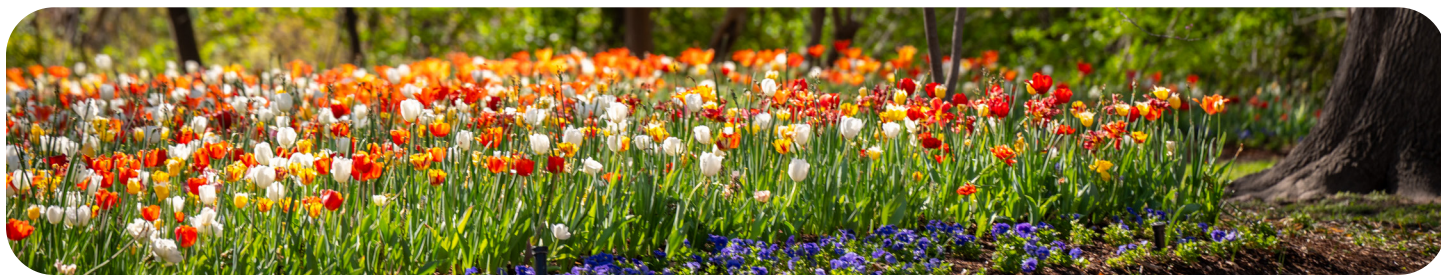
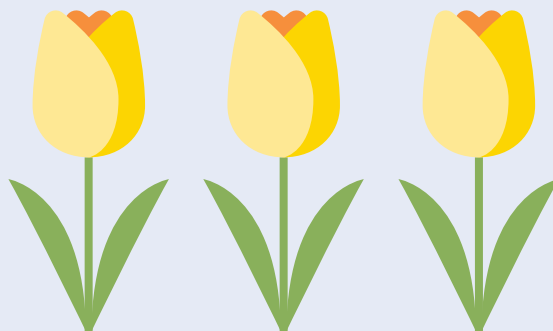
from 34,921 in 2024

Bulbs in the ground

154,000

+ 25,000 from 2024

+19%



2,140

Events hosted
at the garden
from 2,164 in 2024

67,500

Included tulips



New books
published by
BRIT Press
from 4 in 2024

Baker Martin Family Garden

In 2025, early construction efforts focused on major buried utilities and significant earthwork, laying the foundation for everything to come. By year's end, the Discovery Center had reached dry-in status, a major milestone, and is on track to earn LEED Platinum designation thanks to geothermal cooling and clerestory windows added through a generous donation.

The character of the family garden began to emerge through the summer and fall. Decorative concrete cliffs forming *The Wilds* canyon, raised activity areas in *Imagine That!*, retaining walls around major features, bridges across the stream, concrete walks, and shade structures for Jammin Jupiter and Jimmie's Farm all gave a clear and exciting sense of the future guest experience.



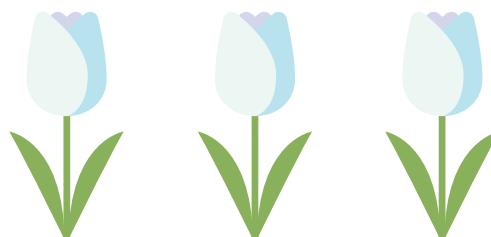


Horticulture

Throughout 2025, several major garden renovations and restoration projects enhanced both resilience and historic character across the campus. The Rose Ramp and Lower Rose Garden were redesigned with a more durable plant palette while preserving their formal layout. The Fuller Garden's Blue Bed was refreshed to better reflect its original vision, and two Montezuma cypress trees replaced a damaged American elm.

The Cactus Garden was transformed with new sandstone and limestone crevice beds planted with arid-adapted species from around the world. The inner Horseshoe Garden was replanted following soil aeration around the live oaks, completing a renewed design inspired by southern blue-and-white gardens. Restoration of the Rose Horseshoe Court also honored the garden's original east-west axis.

A prescribed summer burn strengthened the health of the BRIT prairie, while a \$5,000 H-E-B Trees for Texans grant funded new canopy and midstory trees along the Native Boardwalk, restoring shade and tree diversity. The Garden also earned BGCI Botanic Garden, BGCI Conservation Practitioner, and ArbNet Level III accreditations. Additionally, the new Garden Explorer website launched for public use, and more than 75,000 plants were grown by staff in the Rolling Hills facility for the Family Garden and seasonal displays.



Infrastructure

City of Fort Worth 2022 bond-funded projects continued across the Garden. Work began in May to renovate the Rose Garden Turnaround, with upgrades that significantly improved accessibility. This work included the removal of curbs and steps leading into the Shelter House, creating a more welcoming approach overall. Removing obsolete parking spaces and improving pavement width made room for new plantings featuring blooming shrubs and an avenue of maple trees, while paving was upgraded from asphalt to stone and concrete.

Electrical upgrades throughout the Garden Center improved reliability for guest services and events, and a new backup generator now protects the Conservatory and key information networks. New bronze finials and fittings put finishing touches on the Full Moon Bridge, while path improvements and pond pump upgrades were completed in the Japanese Garden.



New Garden Features

In collaboration with the Learning & Engagement department, a new pergola designed by Michael Pavlovsky was created and installed in the Backyard Vegetable Garden, providing a covered space for visitors to rest and enjoy the shade.

Through an ongoing partnership with Tarrant Regional Water District, a decorative rain barrel painted by FWBG horticulturist Fernando Figueroa, was installed in the Backyard Vegetable Garden. The installation enhances educational programming by teaching visitors about rainwater harvesting.

Special Events

The Garden hosted several large-scale events throughout the year that drove strong seasonal attendance and broad community engagement.



Butterflies in the Garden ran from March 1 through April 30, welcoming 53,012 guests over two months and remaining one of the most beloved springtime experiences in the region. The *Japanese Festival* continued its long-standing tradition with spring and fall events — spring drew 14,188 attendees, while fall welcomed an additional 8,173 guests. Both events celebrated Japanese heritage through performances, ceremonies, art, and food.

Neighbors in Nature: An Earth Day Celebration, held April 25, offered our community free admission, attracted 6,171 guests, and reaffirmed the Garden's role as an accessible resource centered on environmental connection. The year concluded with the Garden's largest annual event, *Christmas in the Garden*, which ran from November 21, 2025 through January 4, 2026, welcoming 79,204 guests and illuminating the season for families across the region.

Guest Statistics

497,456

Total guests 2025

457,914

Total guests 2024

+8.6%

Year-over-year growth

Completed Research Projects

In 2025, the BRIT Herbarium wrapped up the Texas Oklahoma Regional Consortium of Herbaria (TORCH) Thematic Collection Networks project, a seven-year effort that resulted in the imaging of 1.2 million specimens and the complete label transcription of 400,000 specimens across herbaria in Texas and Oklahoma. The project stands as a landmark achievement in regional botanical digitization.

The Texas Plant Conservation team completed a project funded by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) focused on databasing and mapping rare plants in Texas. These resources are now bolstering future seed collection efforts and expanding public access to information about rare plant conservation across the state.



Research by the Numbers

24

Peer-reviewed
papers
published

Paid
undergraduate
internships

8

Graduate
students
mentored

11





Grant Awards

New in 2025

- North Texas Community Foundation Seed Lab Funding (to be spent in 2026): \$10,035
- TPWD Texas Plant Conservation Initiatives (granted and spent in 2025): \$47,406

Continued in 2025

- NSF TORCH: \$233,498 (grant concluded)
- NSF Carlquist: \$133,225
- NSF Ferns of Colombia: \$141,435
- NSF Sundue (auxiliary to Ferns of Colombia): \$76,955
- NSF Vernoniae: \$178,554
- TPWD Isoetes: \$11,108



Other Publications

In addition to peer-reviewed research, the BRIT Press published four issues of JBRIT, comprising 43 peer-reviewed articles and 644 pages of content. Three new book titles were published: *Anatomy of Hardwoods of the United States and Canada: An Atlas of Photomicrographs of Selected Trees, Shrubs, and Vines*; *A Conspectus of the North American Isoetaceae*; and *Nevada Plants: An Annotated Checklist of the State's Botanical Diversity*.





New Species Discoveries

The Research team described five new species in 2025, with four belonging to the Heath family (Ericaceae). Two blueberries from Asia were discovered: *Rigiolepis bungeputih* was described from Indonesia, and *Vaccinium biduopense* was documented from specimens collected in Vietnam and Laos. Also, *Agarista eugeniifolia* and *Agarista mexicana* var. *mexicana* were described from the Peruvian Andes.

The fifth new species, *Begonia subaequifolia* of the begonia family (Begoniaceae), was discovered through specimens collected as part of National Science Foundation-funded expeditions to the Philippines. Each of these discoveries reflects the global reach of our scientific work and the irreplaceable value of our herbarium collections.



At the heart of our mission is the belief that connection to the natural world changes people for the better.

In 2025, the Learning and Engagement team deepened that connection through expanded programming, new initiatives, and a growing network of community partnerships.

FWBG's school programs served 12,876 students and 1,110 educators through field trips and early childhood campus outreach, PreK through 12th grade. Across all programs — school, homeschool, family, adult, camp, Nature Rx, educator professional development, outreach, and more — the Garden reached 21,265 learners in 2025, reflecting the breadth of our educational mission.

In total, 529 programs were offered across all categories, including classes, field trips, camps, and outreach.



Grant Awards

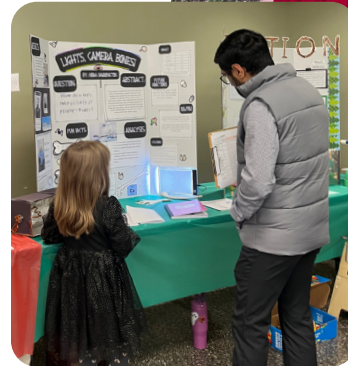
- Meta Fort Worth Data Center: \$28,500
- Rainwater Charitable Foundation: \$17,500 (Early Childhood) + \$50,000 (Green Revolution)
- PNC Foundation: \$45,000
- Fash Foundation: \$2,000
- Central Market: \$15,000

New Initiatives

The Homeschool Science Fair, funded by Meta Community Action Award was a standout new initiative in 2025, connecting children and families who choose home education to hands-on scientific practice and research. With 90 participants, it marked a meaningful expansion of how the Garden engages home-learning communities.

The Learning and Engagement team also established a new learning communities department dedicated to off-site programming and representation, including after-school programs, in-school special sessions, and community events. This growing presence addresses a clear need for educational outreach across Fort Worth and surrounding communities.

Additional highlights included the launch of Nature Rx, a program that focuses on access to nature-based wellness for those facing financial or transportation barriers, and the development of a Junior Volunteers program, extending the Garden's reach into new areas of well-being and youth engagement.



746

Active
volunteers
in 2025

36,667

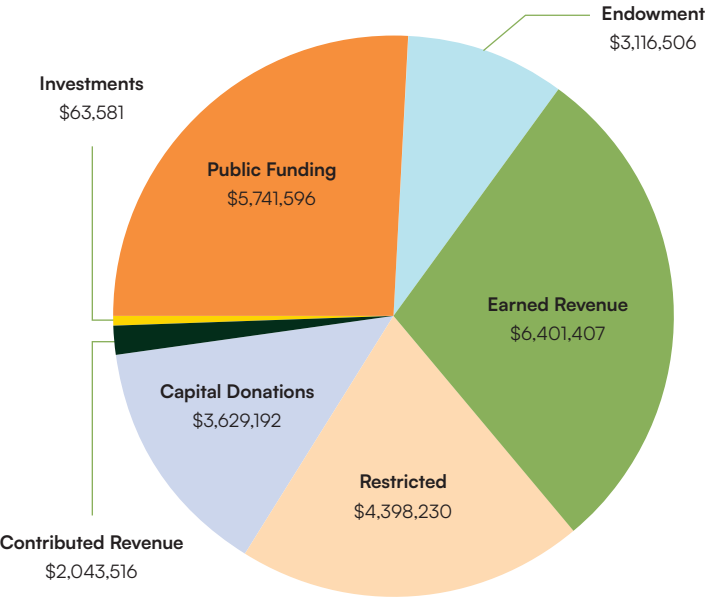
Total
volunteer
hours

Volunteers

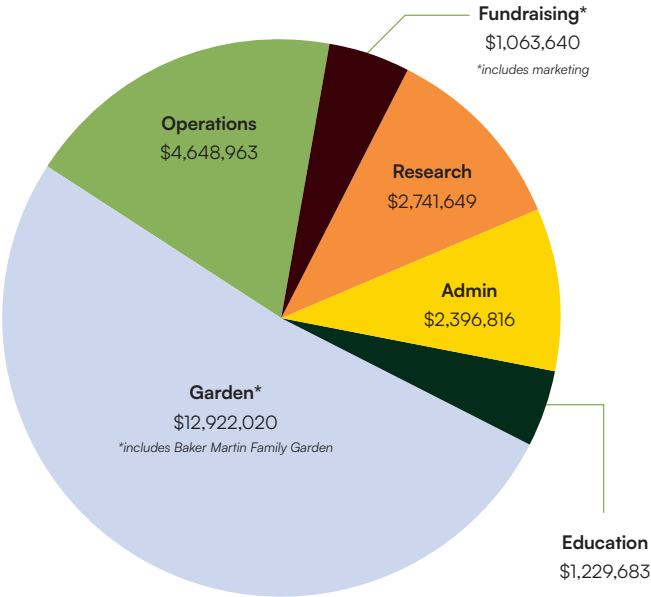
FWBG's Docent and Volunteer program was strengthened through new collaboration with the Garden's Research and Horticulture teams, deepening docents' knowledge of the grounds, plants, and FWBG's local and global research. Docent-led tours and guest education opportunities expanded as a result, enhancing the guest experience throughout the year.



2025

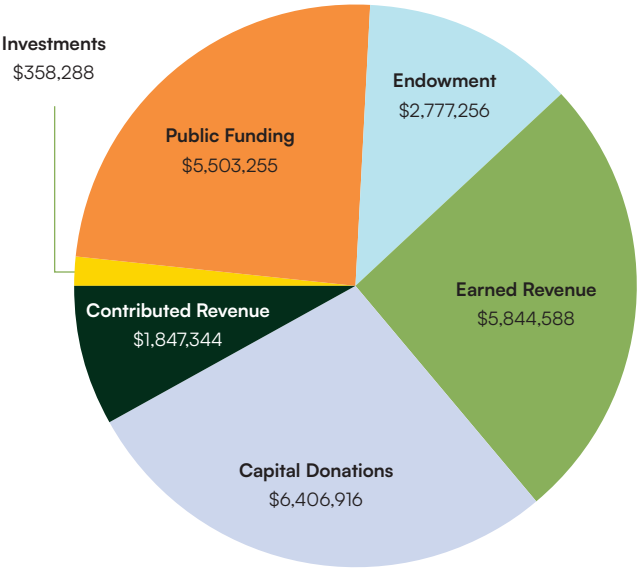


Revenue | Total: \$25,394,030

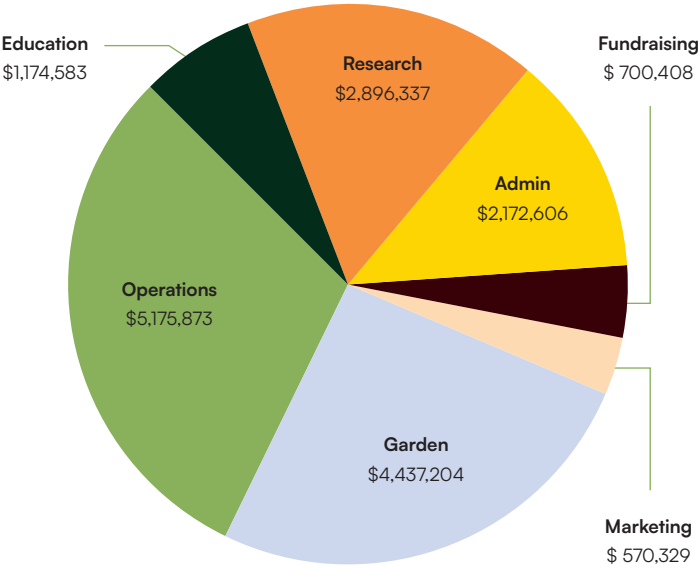


Expenses | Total: \$25,002,774

2024



Revenue | Total: \$22,737,648



Expenses | Total: \$17,127,340

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The Fort Worth Botanic Garden and Botanical Research Institute of Texas gratefully acknowledge members of the Giving Circle for their generous support of the Garden's growth in 2025.

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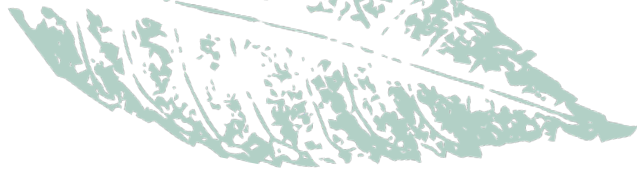
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We thank our corporate, foundation, and individual partners who have supported our exhibits, events, and admissions programs in 2025.

The following gifts are recognized beginning at \$1,000 and are recognized in the year their supported activity took place.

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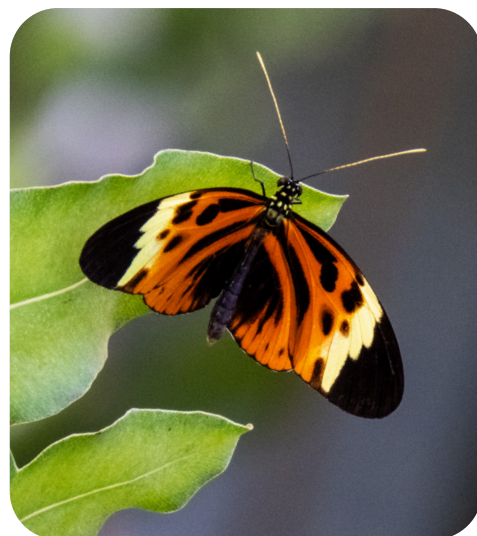
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