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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

NEW ENGLAND BOTANIC GARDEN GIFTS UNH LIBRARY RARE BOTANICAL BOOK COLLECTION

Public viewing of collection slated for September 23 at Dimond Library

BOYLSTON, MA, [September 12, 2023]: New England Botanical Garden at Tower Hill, a Massachusetts-based botanic garden owned and operated by the Worcester County Horticultural Society, recently gifted the University of New Hampshire Library (UNH Library) a rare special collection of botanical books of significant and irreplaceable value. The collection contains more than 500 titles including books, monographs, and periodicals. With many works dating from the early to mid 1800's, 1700's, early 1900's, and a few items dating to the 1500s, the new collection will serve the university's teaching and education mission.

"The UNH Library is honored that New England Botanic Garden selected us as the new home for their magnificent collection," says Tara Lynn Fulton, the UNH Library Dean. "Our Special Collections & Archives team is dedicated to achieving the balance between careful preservation of and community accessibility to these rare materials that was so important to the organization's staff and board in finding the right place to steward the collection into the future. We look forward to hosting scholars and visitors with a passion for the flora and fauna of New England and beyond."

The collection also features important herbals and incredible drawings and lithograph depictions of New England-based fruit and flowers. Other notable titles include the first edition of John Muir's "Our National Parks," and "Incipit Tractatus de virtutibus Herbarium" (1499), an anonymous compilation from classical, Arabic, and medieval sources, originally published in Mainz, Germany in 1484. Many of these works were originally collected by founders of the Worcester County Horticultural Society, one of the oldest societies of its kind in the country.

"The Garden has found a tremendous partner in the UNH," says Grace Elton, New England Botanic Garden CEO. "We know our rare book collection, which preserves important pieces of

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our region's history as well as notable pieces of botanical literature, will be well cared for and utilized in the years ahead. Donating this collection to the university is, for the Garden, a contribution to the scientific community. It's incredibly exciting to think of how these works may inform or inspire research in the future."

"This gift represents a significant enhancement of our rare book collections and provides opportunities for curricular support for various university programs as well as synergies with our current special collections and university archives holdings," says Elizabeth Slomba, Special Collections Librarian at UNH Library. "We are deeply grateful to the New England Botanical Garden for their trust in us to provide access to and preserve this amazing collection."

The UNH Library is hosting a free opening reception on Saturday, September 23 from 1– 5 p.m. at Dimond Library in Durham, NH, where members of the public and media are welcome to attend. During the drop-in reception, guests will be able to view and interact with selections from the rare collection. Small plates and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided. Register for the free event here: <https://bit.ly/NEBGcollection>.

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About New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill is a nonprofit organization located at 11 French Drive in Boylston, Massachusetts. A regional destination, the Garden is operated on 171 acres by the Worcester County Horticultural Society, one of the oldest of its kind in the country, and is open to the public for garden viewing, trail walking, educational programs, private events, weddings, exhibitions, and more. This year New England Botanic Garden was voted "Top Botanic Garden in the U.S." by *TravelAwaits*. New England Botanic Garden is an [AAM-accredited](#) museum that includes an irreplaceable collection of plants and creates opportunities for visitors to experience the wonder of plants, learn about the natural world, and make joyful connections. Learn all about New England Botanic Garden including its history, mission, and its staff at www.nebg.org.

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