



**New England  
Botanic Garden**  
AT TOWER HILL

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

# **New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill Announces Property Expansion**

**Acquisition preserves open space and protects valuable ecosystems for future generations**

**BOYLSTON, MA, January 8, 2024** – [New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill](#), located in Boylston, MA, recently announced that a parcel of land previously owned by the Town of Boylston has come under the Garden’s care in an expansion that marks the third in CEO Grace Elton’s tenure with the organization. Since taking the helm in 2017, Elton has added over 50 acres of neighboring land to the Garden’s map. The newest 14-acre acquisition increases the botanic garden’s total footprint to nearly 200 acres. As much of the land contained within the newly acquired parcel is wetland or wetland buffer, the addition enables New England Botanic Garden to preserve ecologically valuable land and protect it for the benefit of future generations.

“Environmental stewardship is a vital part of New England Botanic Garden’s mission to create experiences with plants that inspire people and improve the world,” says CEO Grace Elton. “Expanding our footprint with this new acquisition represents an important opportunity to continue our conservation of natural areas, increasing the diversity of native plants grown onsite, educating visitors about these plants, and fostering appreciation for our local ecosystems.”

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill, owned and operated by the Worcester County Horticulture Society, first opened its doors in Boylston, MA, in 1986. Today, more than 200,000 people visit New England Botanic Garden each year to explore unique formal garden spaces and miles of wooded walking trails as well as art exhibitions, public events, educational classes, and more.

The recent land acquisition was made possible thanks to a generous donation from a New England Botanic Garden volunteer and former horticulturist for Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary, Leslie Duthie. An advocate for open space preservation, Duthie also helped initiate the acquisition process. Preserving land for native species, habitat, and people has been a focus in her life for many years.

“Preserving this land is important to the future of New England Botanic Garden as it buffers the core of the Garden from development and protects natural resources that help mitigate the effects of climate change,” says Mark Richardson, New England Botanic Garden’s Director of Horticulture. In addition to containing beautiful natural features, the newly acquired property provides critical habitat for native wetland plant and animal species, including unusual plant species such as false hellebore and nodding trillium, Richardson explains.

A conservation restriction will guard against any future development on the new property. However, in accordance with this restriction, the organization will be able to build low-impact hiking trails. The Garden looks forward to expanding its current trail system onto this property so that visitors may experience the beauty of the landscape and connect with nature by exploring a relatively undisturbed habitat.

New England Botanic Garden is open to the public seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. To learn more about New England Botanic Garden’s recent expansion or its mission, visit [nebg.org](http://nebg.org).

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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 200 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](http://www.nebg.org).

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