



**New England
Botanic Garden**
AT TOWER HILL

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

New England Botanic Garden Honors Influential Botanist Peter Del Tredici with The Cary Award, a Recognition of Career Excellence

BOYLSTON, MA, June 30, 2025 – [New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill](#), a nearly 200-acre public garden in Boylston, MA, recently recognized influential botanist and author Peter Del Tredici, with one of the organization's top honors for lifetime achievement and excellence in the field of horticulture, The Cary Award. Owned and operated by the Worcester County Horticultural Society (WCHS), the Garden presented Del Tredici with the award on June 26 at the Society's 184th Annual Meeting.

"The Cary Award honors individuals who have dedicated their careers to deepening our collective knowledge of plants. Their passion inspires others and moves the field of horticulture forward," says Grace Elton, CEO of New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill. "We are proud to spotlight Peter with this special honor."

Del Tredici, a native Californian, has worked with woody plants for nearly fifty years. He began his research in 1972 at the Harvard Forest in Petersham, MA, where he started out as a research technician. He earned his Ph.D. in Biology from Boston University and went on to lead a storied thirty-five-year career at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. He worked through 2014 as Plant Propagator, Curator of the Larz Anderson Bonsai Collection, Editor of *Arnoldia*, Director of Living Collections, and finally as Senior Research Scientist. During his time at the Arnold Arboretum, he also made numerous seed collecting and ecological research expeditions to China, Japan, and Korea. He has published over 100 scholarly articles and received many awards for his work. He is the author of *Wild Urban Plants of the Northeast: A Field Guide (2nd edition, 2020)* and is considered a world authority on the ecology and cultivation of the Ginkgo tree.

"My whole career has been about paying attention to what plants are telling us about what is happening to the world," says Del Tredici. "If you understand what they have to say, their message is very clear, 'Adapt or die!'"

Presented on a biennial basis, the Cary Award celebrates the legacy of Ed Cary, a Shrewsbury, MA, nursery owner and horticulturist who, like Del Tredici, possessed an enthusiasm for sharing plant knowledge.

“Peter is the rare individual who has an endless curiosity in the plant sciences: a skilled plant propagator, teacher, and boundless researcher across multiple disciplines. Through his passion for plants, he exemplifies the endless pursuit of knowledge. As colleagues and long-we admirers, we are thankful for a remarkable career,” says Tim Boland, Executive Director of the Polly Hill Arboretum and member of the Cary Award Selection Committee.

Upon accepting his award, Del Tredici presented a keynote lecture to the audience. He discussed the topic of basal sprouting in trees—the ability of trees to rejuvenate themselves by producing secondary trunks—and the implications of this adaptation in fields of forestry, arboriculture, ecology, and conservation. Sprouting helps trees survive natural disturbances as well as those caused by people. Del Tredici emphasized to the audience that trees with a strong ability to resprout have an important role to play in stabilizing landscapes impacted by the unpredictability of the current climate crisis.

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Photo Caption and Credit: (From left to right) New England Botanic Garden Director of Horticulture, Steve Conaway; 2025 Cary Award Winner, Dr. Peter Del Tredici; New England Botanic Garden CEO Grace Elton. *New England Botanic Garden/Megan Stouffer*

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 nearly 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. In 2023, 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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