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Corpse flowers 2020

Two corpse flower (*Amorphophallus titanum*) plants, also known as titan

the U.S. Botanic Garden. It was the first bloom for both plants, which were 8 and 4 years old. Photo at right shows the two blooms' growth as of Septembe

As the Conservatory was closed, visitors were able to watch the corpse flower blooms growing on high-definition live video camera feed below posted.

About the 2020 Corpse Flower Plants

2020 Bloom #1

The first *Amorphophallus titanum* to begin blooming in 2020 (on right in live video feed, USBG accession #2012-0297) was acquired by the U.S. Botanic G January 9, 2012 from a donation by plant grower Gary Meltzer of Hawaii. The seed parent is from the Milwaukee Public Museum and the pollen parent is f University. The U.S. Botanic Garden has three plants grown from the three seeds from this acquisition. One of the other plants from this group bloomed in colored bloom). The third plant has not yet bloomed.

The 102-inch-tall inflorescence began opening around 2:00 pm on September 7, 2020. The spathe measured 57" across at peak, and the spadix reached degrees F. The strongest smell was noted at 12:30 a.m. Sept 8, and the spathe began closing at 5:30 am. The female flowers were hand-pollinated at 6:0 pollen parent plants (two plants from Chicago Botanic Garden and one from Lauritzen Botanic Garden). Pollen was collected from the male flowers and se Garden for preserving for future conservation use.

2020 Bloom #2

The second plant to begin blooming this year (USBG accession #2012-0296 A) was an offshoot (a clone) from the dark-colored bloom at the U.S. Botanic accession #2012-0296). This offshoot was separated from the parent corm in 2016, when that parent corm was 5 years old. This plant is a clone of the sib flower currently in bloom.

The 107-inch tall inflorescence opened on September 15, 2020. The female flowers were hand-pollinated at 7:00 p.m. the same day, using pollen from the Gardens. Pollen was collected from the male flowers on Sept. 17, and send to Chicago Botanic Garden for preserving for future conservation use.

Corpse Flower and Aroid Conservation

The corpse flower (*Amorphophallus titanum*) is listed as Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with an estimation of fe individuals remaining in the wild. IUCN estimates the population has declined more than 50% over the past 150 years. The main reasons for the decline ar conversion of the plant's native forest habitat to oil palm plantations.

The U.S. Botanic Garden is participating in conservation work related to *Amorphophallus titanum* and aroids plants. Diversity amongst the gene pool is imp conservation of endangered plants held in *ex situ* conservation collections such as at botanic gardens. The U.S. Botanic Garden helped fund a conference Botanic Garden Conservation International on aroid conservation in 2018 that was attended by botanic garden professionals from around the world. As an botanic gardens are participating in a national *A. titanum* conservation project that is underway, headed by Chicago Botanic Garden.

The goal of the project is to identify and create a database of the genetic makeup of *A. titanum* plants currently in botanic garden collections. This informat a broadening of the gene pool by creating diversity amongst new offspring by cross-pollination of diverse parent plants. The USBG has gathered and subm our *A. titanum* collection to be added into the database. We hope to be able to acquire pollen based on this project to create diverse offspring. The Garden pollen from this plant to store for future use by other botanic gardens in this project.

What Makes the Corpse Flower Special?

The allure of the corpse flower comes from its great size (it is the largest unbranched inflorescence in the plant kingdom), powerful stink, and fleeting prese frequently grow up to 8 feet tall in cultivation. Referred to as the corpse flower or stinky plant, its putrid smell is most potent during peak bloom at night into odor is often compared to the stench of rotting flesh. The inflorescence (a collection of flowers acting as one) also generates heat, which allows the stench combination of heat and smell efficiently lures corpse-attracted pollinators, such as carrion beetles and flies, from across long distances.

The corpse flower does not have an annual blooming cycle. The bloom emerges from, and energy is stored in, a huge underground stem called a "corm." when sufficient energy is accumulated, making time between flowering unpredictable, spanning from a few years to more than a decade. It requires very s including warm day and night temperatures and high humidity, making botanic gardens well suited to support this strange plant outside of its natural range

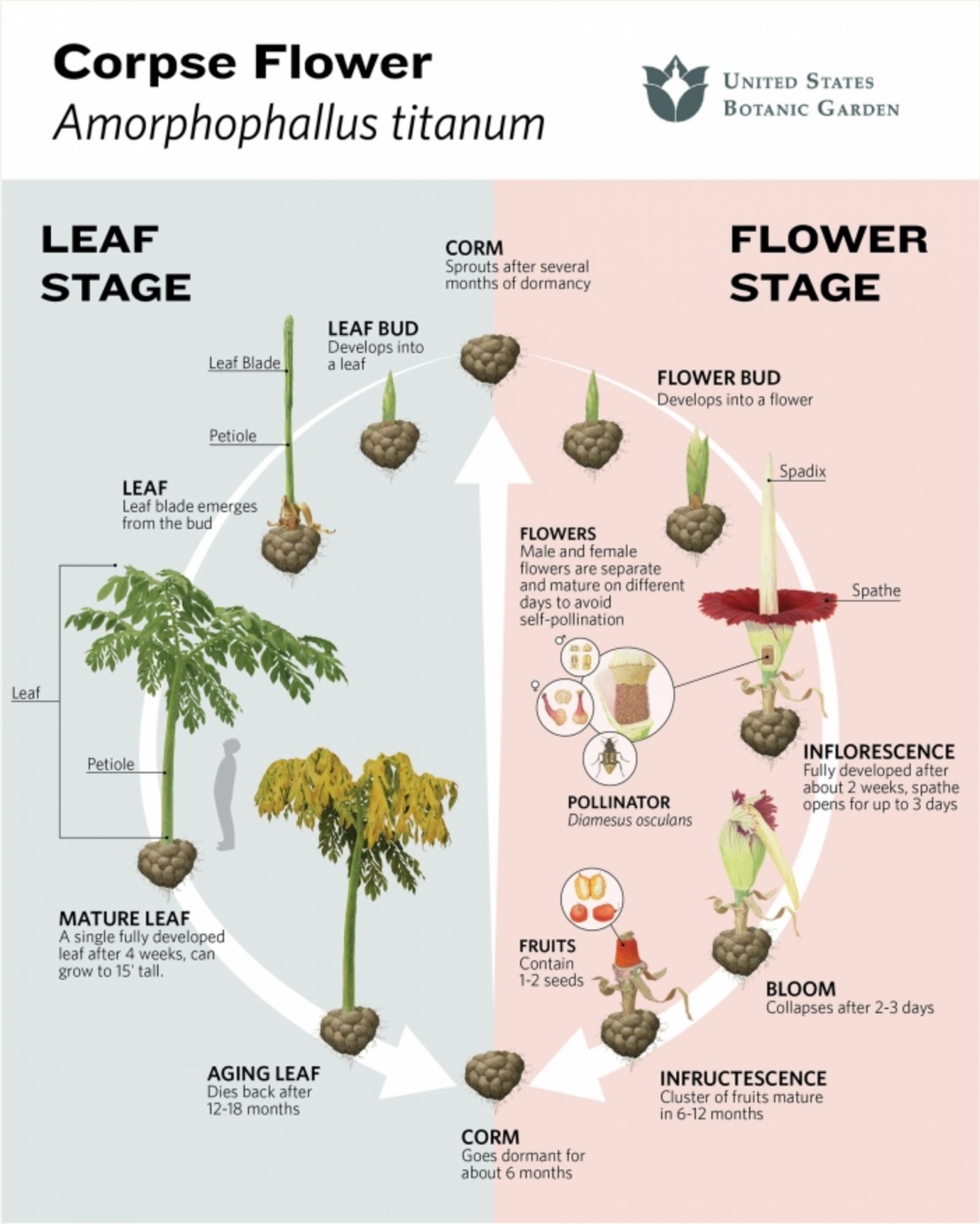
This plant is native to the tropical rainforests of Sumatra, Indonesia, and first became known to science in 1878. In its natural habitat, the corpse flower car Public viewings of this unique plant have occurred a limited number of times in the United States. The U.S. Botanic Garden has displayed blooming corpse 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2017 (three blooms), and 2020 (two blooms).

Watch and learn -- video archive from the Garden's

Explore recordings of live Q&A programs, pollination, conservation and more in this video archive playlist. See all videos in the playlist in the top below, or by viewing the full playlist on YouTube.

Join gardener Stephen to find out what clues he used to determine this year's bud was a bloom and not a leaf:

Corpse Flower Lifecycle Infographic (click to see large version):



Chemistry of its smell

Want to learn a bit more about the plant and its unique smell? Check out this great video we helped create:

Corpse flower lifecycle and pollination

Check out this great video we helped create about the corpse flower's lifecycle, smell, and reproduction:

We shared the 2016 plant's life cycle via a live webcam, which has now ended. In addition to this video from the morning it started opening, Aug find all the live webcam videos on our YouTube channel. If you visited, find your date and see yourself with the corpse flower!

Photo of 2

The U.S. Botanic Garden has displayed blooming corpse flowers in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2017 (three blooms), and 2020 (two bloo people came to see the 2017 bloom in person, and more than 650,000 viewers accessed the live webstream.

Learn more about the three 2017 blooms.
Learn more about the 2016 bloom.
Learn more about the 2013 bloom.

Source URL: https://www.usbg.gov/corpse-flowers-2020