

On Behalf of the FRBC Team

It is with great appreciation for all of the Conservancy's members and donors that we share the accomplishments achieved in the last two years. We can't thank you enough for the significant contributions that keep us going and growing — you make this work possible! We hope you enjoy this look back on 2024 and 2025, and we can't wait to share what's ahead.

Joining the FRBC staff midway through the organization's pivotal year of 2024 greatly deepened my admiration for the keenly determined work behind plant conservation. From that day on, the sense of momentum has been palpable and embodied in the vibrant community near and far, our expanding collection of rare plants, and the extraordinary people who make this all happen.

FRBC's dedicated Board has been focused on setting up strong foundations — for growth, sustainability, and deeper engagement with our community. In the past two years, our Board also has begun streamlining our back-office systems to better provide support for our staff and volunteers, laying the groundwork for FRBC to thrive well into the future.

One of the things I'm most proud of is the growth of our membership, alongside overall increased public participation in our garden tours and webinars. In 2024 and 2025, these efforts took root in meaningful ways: increasing our outreach, digitizing our plant collections, improving our financial systems, and embarking on organizational capacity expansion through strategic staffing.

I hope as you look over the highlights of organizational growth and implementation of the Conservancy's mission, you will be inspired by the vision of FRBC founders Sue Milliken and Kelly Dodson. As you will see there is extreme staff and volunteer commitment to maximizing available resources for optimal conservation impact. You propel us to high level results, and the plants are enlivened by all of your contributions. We all thank you with our heartfelt gratitude!

— Kate Ingram, FRBC Administrator



Conservancy Programming in Review



FRBC's core mission — conserving and distributing rare plants — is at the heart of every organizational initiative.

CONSERVATION

Plant conservation is the essence of FRBC's mission, and is reflected in virtually all our activities and programs. Our approach involves three keystones: Acquisition, Education and Sharing.

ACQUISITION

We seek out plants that are rare or absent in cultivation. This includes both wild plant species (often threatened by habitat loss, human activity, and climate change) as well as cultivated plants grown by only a select few (often a single individual or horticultural entity). We collect seeds, cuttings, and small plants, following sustainable procedures that minimize impacts to wild populations, and bring them back to our nursery for cultivation.

FRBC Collections Manager Silas Zoeller has developed a comprehensive collections management policy as well as starting an on-site fern spore propagation program. He also began identifying many of our wild-collected and new to cultivation fern species.





Our plant collection labeling process made a leap forward with the acquisition, in 2025, of a laser engraver funded by a very generous gift from FRBC member Susan Eggers. Labels have now been created for the 75-foot Roscoeas and Gentian display bed.

EDUCATION

Garden Tours

Monthly guided small tours of the FRBC display gardens during the growing season offered members and their guests a slice of the significant conservation and cultivation work that happens on site. Kelly, Sue, Silas, and Board Director Cody Hinchliff all shared firsthand insight into the provenance of the many plants growing in the Conservancy funded Collectors and Crevice Gardens.





Our monthly small group Display Garden Tours brought in welcome response and revenue from 37 attendees in 2024, increasing to 140 in 2025. The survey of 2025 tour participants was completed by nearly half of the people who attended the five tours that year and the results were exemplary:

“Far Reaches is a treasure and blessing to the horticultural world. I feel so blessed to live close enough to occasionally visit.”

“Crevice garden is amazing! Would gladly have stayed there the whole visit-so much to see. Thank you”

Additional tours for visiting plant societies (such as the Dutch and German Fern Societies, Hardy Fern Foundation and Northwest Horticultural Society), as well as our 2024 and 2025 Fall Open Days brought new interest in our mission, together with added members and donations.



WEBINARS

FRBC's 2024 Winter Webinar series of four "Dispatches from the Far Reaches" featured talks by Martin Hajman on "Tromsø Arctic-Alpine Botanic Garden", John Anderson on "The Gardens of Windsor Great Park", "A Phylogeny of Trillium: What We've Learned" with Dr. Aaron Floden, and Amy Stewart on her book, *The Tree Collectors: Tales of Arboreal Obsession*.

The following fall, FRBC produced the deep-dive webinar symposium by Dr. Aaron Floden featuring an intensive overview of *Polygonatum* (Solomon Seal) and the allied genera *Disporopsis* and *Heteropolygonatum*. Dr. Floden is the world expert on these related genera with *Polygonatum* or Solomon Seals being the most familiar in gardens. The diversity of species is astounding, particularly in *Polygonatum*, and this presentation focused in-depth on the phylogeny, morphology, and distribution of these three related genera, with fieldwork in Vietnam, India, and China.



Polygonatum species - Sikkim

The *Polygonatum* presentation is essentially an audio book of the current understanding of these valuable ornamental perennials. Its entire 3+ hours as well as each of the Winter Webinar series are freely available on the FRBC website to anyone with a serious interest in plant exploration, conservation and great gardens.



In December, 2025, the FRBC webinar "FRBC 2025 Trip to Northeast India — From Gak to Yak" with Sue, Kelly, and Silas presented a pictorial adventure to the Himalayan plant paradise of Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India. They retraced their July 2025 three-week journey from the tropics all the way to the high alpine zone at over 14000' of altitude.



Tropaeolum incisum

EXPEDITION TOURS

Argentina & Chile, December 2024 - January 2025

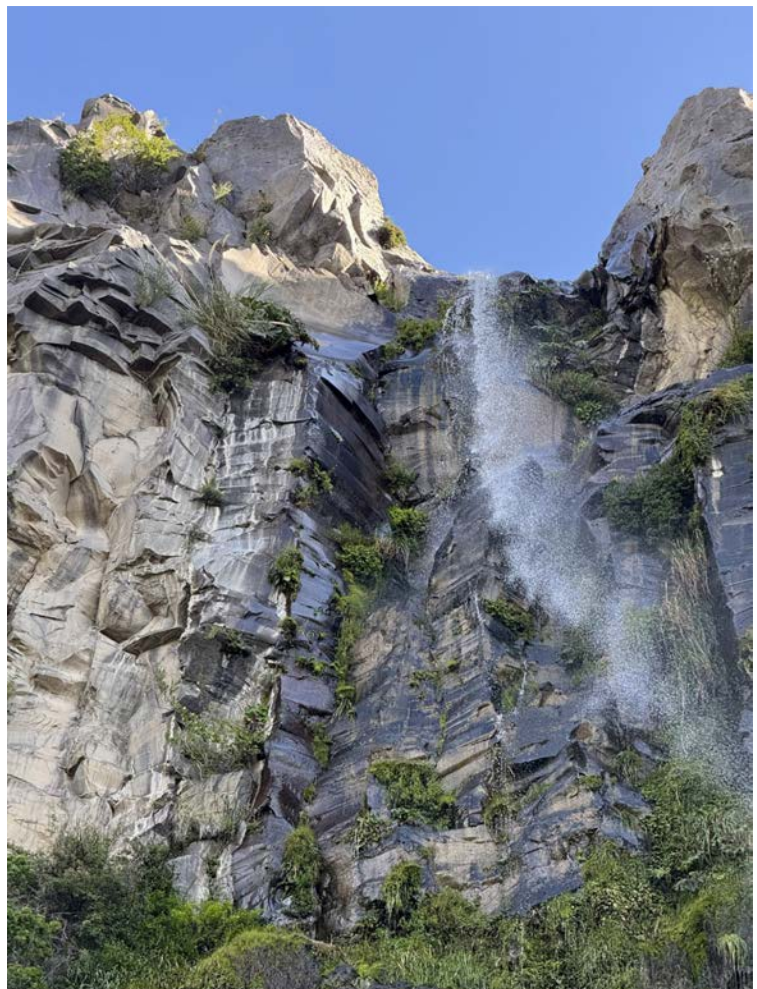
At the close of 2024, FRBC members travelled to Argentina and Chile visiting Andean alpine habitat, ancient Araucaria forest, and much more, in the company of renowned botanist Marcela Ferreyra. The itinerary began in Mendoza, Argentina and proceeded south to visit several spectacular areas of the high Argentine Andes. Part two began nine days later crossing from Argentina into Chile via the high pass above Portillo, and continuing on to visit a diverse array of Chile's special ecosystems over the following 13 days. Tour participants could choose to join either or both legs.

FRBC director Cody Hinchliff and founders Sue Milliken and Kelly Dodson were excited to be visiting an entirely new area (further north as compared to 2023's trip to Patagonia, and with higher plant diversity). Twenty FRBC members traveled with FRBC Directors Sue Milliken, Kelly Dodson, and Cody Hinchliff to Argentina and Chile to visit Andean alpine habitat, a seldom-visited relict Araucaria forest, and much more during the Southern Hemisphere's peak botanizing season.



Pozoa volcanica growing in volcanic scoria in Laguna del Laja National Park

These unique places and their distinctive plants, animals, and other resident organisms are well worth protecting. Modern Chile is figuring that out, leveraging a thriving eco-tourism economy, an extensive national parks system, and a robust network of private reserves to both preserve native ecosystems and enable the awareness and access needed to build the cultural appreciation that will keep these places and their native flora and fauna protected into the future, whatever surprises it will inevitably bring.



Waterfall plant communities on volcanic cliffs outside Antuco



TRAVEL TO NORTHEAST INDIA, JULY 2025

At the height of summer, FRBC's Kelly Dodson, Sue Milliken and Silas Zoeller were botanizing in the high Himalayas, together with their notable botanical guide Alistair Adhikari, and three more esteemed colleagues: the inimitable Argentine alpine plant botanist, Marcela Ferreyra, who guided FRBC's expeditions to Patagonia in 2024 and to Argentina and Chile in 2025, and two others, from the UK.

Aaron Marshall (left), who works at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, but this was a personal trip for him, holds a leaf of *Bergenia pacumbis* for Bergenia researcher Scott Galloway. Earlier, Scott was able to examine his first in situ wild species, *Bergenia purpurascens*, on the top of Sela Pass, followed days later by his second – *Begonia pacumbis* in completely different habitat. Happy camper barely describes him!





Happy Camper

The trip included many high points including a rhododendron forest at 10000' and a hike up a coursing waterfall valley in the Nuranang area to breathtaking meadows chock full of *Primula* and mind-blowing numbers of *Meconopsis gakyidiana* plus an encounter with a yak!

Funding to send Silas, and to a lesser extent, Sue and Kelly on this 3-week tour came from FRBC members who designated their contributions during the 2025 Spring Membership Drive.



Meconopsis gakyidiana



GARDEN ENHANCEMENT AND RESEARCH

Among the many institutions receiving our plants in North America a regional sampling includes: The Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, University of Washington Botanic Garden, Bellevue Botanical Garden, University of California Berkeley Botanical Garden, Sonoma Botanical Garden, San Francisco Botanical Garden, University of British Columbia Botanical Garden etc. This sharing to other gardens and gardeners is a key foundational tenet to our conservation strategy which also broadens the palette of fascinating plants for gardens.

Other distribution highlights included:

Clintonia species shared with a plant systematics masters student at the College of Semiconductor in South Korea for work on taxonomic revisions.

Ten *Haberlea rhodopensis* 'Virginalis' shared with University of Nevada Reno researchers studying desiccation tolerance.

Veratrum californicum var. *caudatum* were shared with UC Berkeley for research into potential medicinal uses.

Nine *Bomarea* specimens of wild origin were shared with UW researcher Dr. Carrie Tribble to aid her taxonomic work in the genus and as part of a developing reference collection at the UW botany greenhouses.

Twelve species were shared for inclusion in the collections at the University of Washington Botanic Garden including substantial plantings in the Pacific Connections Garden.

Pyrrosia matsudae and *Davallia perdurans* exchanged with Juniper Level Botanic Gardens.



Fifteen species shared with University of Minnesota's CBS conservatory.

Fokienia hodginsii CDHM were sent to Dr. Joshua Granger at Mississippi State University for arboretum trials.

Cuttings of *Lamiastrum*, *Comanthosphace japonica*, *Rostrinucula dependens*, *Colquhounia coccinea*, *Leucosceptrum stellipilum*, and *Chelonopsis moschata* were shared with researchers in Missouri and New York, working together on federally funded evolutionary genetic studies.

Cuttings of *Athrotaxis*, *Ephedra*, *Keteleeria*, *Amentotaxus*, *Phyllocladus*, *Dacrycarpus*, *Dacrydium*, and *Fokienia* were sent to SUNY Oswego for a study on gymnosperm vascular systems.

Pyrrosia matsudae and other plants were provided to Adam Black for inclusion at Bartlett Arboretum. The *Pyrrosia* was especially appreciated as this collection had been thought lost to cultivation.





IN 2024, FRBC MADE CRITICAL STRIDES TOWARD PROFESSIONALIZING OPERATIONS:

In April, Collections Manager Silas Zoeller assumed a full time role following six months as a contract employee. This commitment on behalf of FRBC anchors the ongoing work that founders Kelly Dodson and Sue Milliken have forged in establishing the nonprofit, in 2017. This important leading role works to maintain the existing plant collections, ensure the plants receive proper attention and care, and establish accurate and detailed documentation of the collection. This is in addition to propagating, repotting, and caring for plants destined for distribution, and maintaining the on-site gardens.



In June 2024, veteran nonprofit manager Kate Ingram joined our team to hold down both administrative and fundraising work, and to oversee administrative operations. Bookkeeping and accounting services were actively evaluated, and strategic planning began around leasing Far Reaches Farm to FRBC for long-term sustainability.

In early 2025, long time Far Reaches Farm Gardener Miranda Knight-Miles transitioned into fulltime work at the Conservancy, caring for and expanding upon the FRBC display gardens.



Silas Zoller, Sue Milliken and Kelly Dodson in Northeast India.

Outreach & Partnerships



Our founders Sue Milliken and Kelly Dodson remained tireless advocates for conservation and education: They spoke at area venues including Victoria, Port Ludlow, Indianola, and the Tri-Area Community Center. Their lectures supported member engagement and often generated new donors, the lifeblood of our organization.

In October 2024, Silas represented FRBC in Chicago for both the American Public Gardens Association conference and the meeting of the North America-China Plant Exploration Consortium, paving the way for collaborations which have been realized with Sonoma Botanical Garden and the Arnold Arboretum, among others.

In the fall of 2024 FRBC shared over 80 taxa of wild-provenance plants with University of California Botanic Garden, part of a long-running program of sharing underrepresented and frost-tender rare species with institutions in milder climates where they will thrive. In an effort to renew and strengthen ties with these institutions, in early 2025 Silas travelled to the Bay Area visiting both botanic and private gardens to scout out and discuss future collaborations and plant shares to support our common drive to preserve and proliferate at-risk plants of great conservation value.



Maesa chisia

Besides visits to private gardens, Silas met with curators and their teams at U.C. Berkeley, Sonoma Botanic, and U.C. Santa Cruz gardens, as well as San Francisco Botanical Garden and the Gardens of Golden Gate Park.



Tree Ferns at Kells Bay

In early October 2025, Kelly and Sue were presenters at the 10th Kells Bay Southern Symposium, a premier horticultural festival hosted by Billy Alexander at the historic Kells Bay House & Gardens on the Ring of Kerry, Ireland. Thanks to funding from a generous FRBC supporter, Silas was also able to join them for the event. The weekend symposium featured plant-focused talks and garden tours, connecting passionate gardeners with renowned experts.

The Conservancy's visibility increased through newsletters, social media, and the webinar archive shared on the FRBC website. Our past webinars can be found in the "Resources" section of our website. Members can stay informed of upcoming talks via our Newsletter and website Home page.



Billy Alexander

Membership & Fundraising

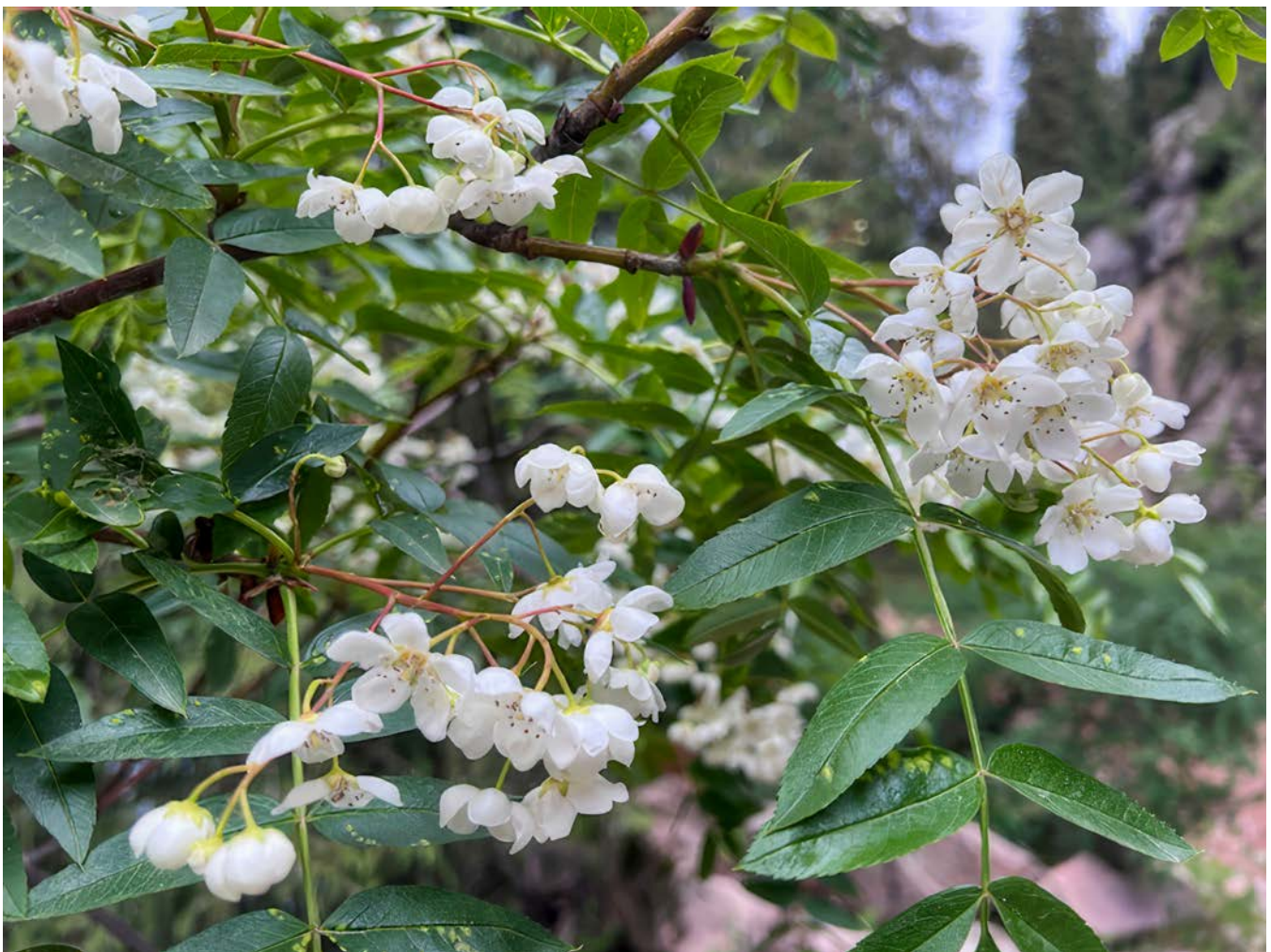


MAJOR CAMPAIGNS - 2024

FRBC participated in the 2024 WA GiveBIG campaign, exceeding the \$7500 goal to bring in over \$9000 from 42 donors.

Annual Fall Membership Drive During the month of October 2024, we added 51 new members and raised over \$8000 in donations, surrounding FRBC's mid-October Open Day event.

2024 Year-End Appeal Launched on Giving Tuesday with a \$15,000 match, we exceeded our goal to double that amount and raised \$35,000.



Sorbus tianshanica

MAJOR CAMPAIGNS - 2025

FRBC initiated a new annual Spring Membership Drive, that brought 90 donors including the 55 new or returning members who joined in support of our work, and a total donation amount of \$39,968.

Annual Fall Membership Drive During the month of October 2025, we added 50 new members and raised \$13,152 from 59 donors, surrounding FRBC's October 17 Open Day event.

2025 Year-End Appeal Effective on Giving Tuesday with a \$10,000 match, we tripled that amount and raised \$30,610 in contributions from 98 donors.



Trillium discolor

Special Gifts The Conservancy Roscoe and Gentiana trial bed has been properly labeled thanks to the generosity of FRBC member Susan Eggers who funded the acquisition of an excellent laser engraver, and to FRBC Collections Manager Silas Zoeller for his behind the scenes work on nomenclature and source verification, database integration and knowing how to run the beast! High excitement and no small relief to see permanent labels put to plants.

Ongoing New donors were cultivated through seasonal display garden tours and offsite presentations by Kelly and Sue. QR code signage and donor follow-up strategies were piloted as part of a long-term plan to strengthen recurring gift revenue.



Financial Overview



FRBC is committed to full transparency in sharing the benchmarks of its financial health via Candid's GuideStar Platinum Transparency certified online profile, linked also from the FRBC website. The organizational 2024 overall fiscal budget of \$291,121, up 23% from \$236,119 in 2023. In 2025, the Conservancy's total budget was \$355,154, a similar annual increase from the year before at 22%.

Our Board remains engaged in discussions on operational efficiencies and external accounting support to ensure continued growth and transparency.

Looking Ahead to 2026



As we reflect on the successful growth years for FRBC in 2024 and 2025, we are setting our sights on several key components in order to continue the expansion:

- 🌀 Increasing outreach through both on-site and off-site events and plant shares.
- 🌀 Continued rollout of our public-facing database of our collections.
- 🌀 Strengthening donor stewardship and grant development.
- 🌀 Expanding the FRBC staff and adding support.
- 🌀 Defining parameters and logistics for acquiring acreage ideally to be donated in order to create an enduring botanical refugium to insulate irreplaceable genetic resources from climate change and sundry uncertainties.
- 🌀 Educational opportunities in the field of rare and endangered plant species.
- 🌀 Strategic planning and research on the part of FRBC's Board in order to shift nursery operations from Far Reaches Farm fully into the operations of the Conservancy.

With the continued help of our members, donors, and dedicated team, we are committed to strengthening and growing FRBC throughout 2026.

