

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 14, 2025



PRESS CONTACT

Erin Bird: 720-865-3552

erin.bird@botanicgardens.org

Viral, Global Waterlily Weigh-Off Returns

August 18-24, 2025

Winner announced August 28



The Waterlily Weigh-Off, led by Denver Botanic Gardens, challenges an impressive list of public gardens and zoos around the world to see how much weight their Victoria waterlily leaves can hold. The third-annual competition will take place August 18-24, 2025 on TikTok, Instagram and Facebook with 40 participants across eight countries (more will likely join). Denver Botanic Gardens will kick off the competition on August 18 and all other public gardens and zoos will enter between August 19-24. Denver will tally the results and announce the winner on August 28.

Missouri Botanical Garden was the **2024 champion**, with their leaf holding 142 pounds before it started to sink! Denver Botanic Gardens mailed them a trophy, and they will pass it on to the 2025 winner.

The playful social media competition garners dramatic follower and engagement growth for public gardens and zoos while educating the public about the fascinating world of aquatic plants, specifically the waterlily species *V. amazonica*, *V. cruziana* and Victoria 'Longwood hybrid'. During the 2024 competition, the Gardens gained more than 10,000 followers on TikTok and went viral on both TikTok and Instagram! Teaser videos for the 2025 competition are performing well above average for participants and many social media users are thanking the algorithm for bringing them back this year, calling it their kind of Superbowl or Olympics. Teaser videos: **Denver**, **Longwood** and **Brookgreen**.

The leaves (lily pads or platters) of these tropical plants can grow up to a diameter of 10 feet and hold the weight of an adult. This is possible due to the upturned leaf rims that keep water out and a network of hollow veins along the bottom of the leaf that are filled with air to support buoyancy. The large size and sharp spines on the underside of the leaves destroy plants that encroach on their space.

CONFIRMED 2025 PARTICIPANTS

Atlanta Botanical Garden (Georgia, USA)

Birmingham Botanical Gardens (England)

Bok Tower Gardens (Florida, USA)

Brookgreen Gardens (South Carolina, USA)

Brooklyn Botanic Garden (New York, USA)

Cambridge University Botanic Garden (England)

Chicago Botanic Garden (Illinois, USA)
Cleveland Botanical Garden (Ohio, USA)
Como Zoo Conservatory (Minnesota, USA)
Conservatory of Flowers (California, USA)
Denver Botanic Gardens (Colorado, USA)
Desert City (Spain)
The Eden Project (England)
Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical
Gardens (Ohio, USA)
Hortus Botanicus Amsterdam (Netherlands)
The Hudson Gardens (Colorado, USA)
The Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens
(California, USA)
Huntsville Botanical Garden (Alabama, USA)
Longwood Gardens (Pennsylvania, USA)
McKee Botanical Gardens (Florida, USA)
Missouri Botanical Gardens (Missouri, USA)
The Morton Arboretum (Illinois, USA)
Naples Botanical Garden (Florida, USA)
New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill

(Massachusetts, USA)
New York Botanical Garden (New York, USA)
Powell Gardens (Missouri, USA)
Royal Botanic Gardens (Ontario, Canada)
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (Scotland)
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (England)
Royal Botanic Garden Sydney (Australia)
San Antonio Botanical Garden (Texas, USA)
San Diego Botanic Garden (California, USA)
Sarah P. Duke Gardens (North Carolina, USA)
Stellenbosch University Botanical Garden (South
Africa)
The Toledo Zoo (Ohio, USA)
University of Bonn Botanic Garden (Germany)
University of California, Davis, Botanical
Conservatory (California, USA)
University of California, Los Angeles, Mathias
Botanical Garden (California, USA)
U.S. Botanic Garden (Washington D.C., USA)
Ventnor Botanic Garden (England)

###

About Denver Botanic Gardens: Green inside and out, Denver Botanic Gardens was founded in 1951 and is considered one of the top botanical gardens in the United States and a pioneer in water conservation. Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, the Gardens has a robust living plant collection, natural history collection and art collection along with temporary art exhibitions. The Gardens is a dynamic, 24-acre urban oasis in the heart of the city, offering unforgettable opportunities to flourish with unique garden experiences for the whole family – as well as world-class exhibitions, education and plant conservation research programs. Additional sites extend this experience throughout the Front Range: Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms, celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2025, is a 700-acre native plant refuge with an active farm in Jefferson County; Mount Goliath is a high-altitude trail and interpretive site on the Mount Blue Sky Scenic Byway. The Gardens also manages programming at Plains Conservation Center in Aurora. For more information, visit us online at www.botanicgardens.org.