

## Vallarta Botanical Garden



Vallarta Botanical Garden (VBG) recently received a donation of land from a garden benefactor, Ralph Osborne which changed the scope of their initial project. The purpose of this land donation was to increase conservation action for the region. This allowed VBG to expand their initial plans to a larger project titled: “Partnership for plant exploration and conservation at Vallarta Botanical Garden.” This project consists of ecological surveys to gather data on plant diversity and create a database to record these taxa. The garden will then move forward in creating a conservation strategy for the land, utilizing rare and endemic taxa (particularly focusing on magnolias, cycads, orchids, and bromeliads).

VBG’s primary goal is to collaborate with large gardens in the US to develop this new conservation space within the garden and use it to serve as a local hub for plant conservation. This institutional advancement will allow VBG to develop a successful model of conservation and that can be replicated in other gardens throughout Mexico.

In March of 2018, the Vallarta Botanical Garden’s Science Advisory Board met in Puerto Vallarta to begin work on surveying the recently acquired land. VBG staff collaborated with representatives from botanical gardens throughout the US and with researchers from the Universidad de Guadalajara (Instituto de Botánica and Centro Universitario de la Costa) to document species presence and collect herbarium specimens. Collectors have found a great diversity in the tree canopy and a thriving community of epiphytes on the land. The garden is looking to create new nature trails on the land that will allow for better data collection on the land and increase access to this “little jewel in western Mexico”.

