



Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Plant Collections Records UA.4.2.1

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University Archives and Historical Collections

Conrad Hall
943 Conrad Road, Room 101
East Lansing , MI 48824
Business Number: 517-355-2330
archives@msu.edu
URL: <http://archives.msu.edu/>

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Summary Information

Repository:	University Archives and Historical Collections
Creator:	W.J. Beal Botanical Garden
Title:	Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Plant Collections records
ID:	UA.4.2.1
Date [inclusive]:	1926-2005
Date [bulk]:	1961-1996
Physical Description:	2 Cubic Feet
Language of the Material:	English .

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information:
"Item title, Collection title, Collection Identifier, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan."

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Historical Note

The W. J. Beal Botanical Garden was established by Professor William James Beal, and is the oldest collegiate continuously operated botanical garden in the United States. The garden began in 1873 with just a small collection of 140 species of forage grasses and clovers. As years passed, Beal kept adding seeds and plants that were native to the region that could survive the Michigan climate. By 1882, the garden occupied about one-third of an acre and contained several hundreds of native plants. By the time Beal retired from M.A.C. in 1910, the garden was around 2.1 acres and had over 2,100 species of plants.

Today, the garden is around 6 acres and contains over 5,000 species. As it was in the beginning, the garden is still an outdoor laboratory used by students and the public is welcome to enjoy the beautiful setting. Everything in the garden is labeled with the plants common name, scientific name, place of origin of the plant, and maybe additional background

information. It is broken up into four main collections: Plant Families, Useful Plants, Forest Communities, and Landscape Plants.

The garden since its founding has had many names over the years. It was first known as the "Wild Garden." Beal later referred to it as the Botanical Garden. It is unknown when the garden acquired this name, but for more than half a century, the garden was called the Beal-Garfield Botanical Garden. The other person in the title refers to Charles W. Garfield. Garfield graduated from M.A.C. in 1870 and he served as garden supervisor when Beal began to plant along the Red Cedar River ravine. During the 1970s is when the name was changed to what it is today, the W. J. Beal Botanical Garden.

Along with the Beal Botanical Garden, there are several other gardens, arboretums, and nurseries on campus and the Hidden Lake Gardens located in Tipton, Michigan.

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Scope and Contents

The collection includes the annual reports of the Beal Botanical Garden and Campus Plant Collections. These reports contain general information such as plans to expand the Beal Botanical Garden in the late 1920s, Dutch Elm Disease, new plantings, and the seed exchange and labeling programs. The 1968 report contains a map and brochure of the Botanical Gardens. The 1971 report contains a rare plant list.

Included is the film "MSU Panorama" (circa 1970s), with footage beginning at the Beal Botanical Garden. Interviews take place along the Red Cedar river, and in front of the MSU Library. The actual creator is unknown.

Also included are aerial photographs mostly of the main MSU campus and MSU-owned properties that were transferred from the Beal Botanical Garden. The invoices for the aerial photography photos were kept because they provide the estimated square miles of the land and major roads that were photographed. A flight path index is listed for a few corresponding years.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Permission to publish material from this collection must be obtained from University Archives & Historical Collections, Michigan State University.

Conditions Governing Access

Legal Status: Donor(s) have transferred any applicable copyright to Michigan State University but the collection may contain third-party materials for which copyright was not transferred. Copyright restrictions may apply. Property Rights: Michigan State University.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Botanical gardens
- Nurseries (Horticulture)
- Plants
- Aerial photographs
- Annual reports
- Brochures
- Filmed interviews
- Maps
- Beal, W. J. (William James), 1833-1924
- W.J. Beal Botanical Garden

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances
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Beal Botanical Garden guides and brochures, undated	drawer F.D.	folder 1
"MSU Panorama" with interviews at Beal Garden, circa 1970s <u>Physical Description</u> : 1 Reels (11 min.) sound, color16mm	reel UA-F002616	

Aerial Photos

Title/Description	Instances	
Hidden Lake Gardens Area, November 13, 1960	Box 6508	folder 1
Parts of Pontia and Avon Twp. - Oakland Co. , February 13, 1960	Box 6508	folder 2
Main Campus and Kellogg Biological Station, 1964	Box 6508	folder 3
Main Campus and Akers Golf Course, 1965	Box 6508	folder 4
Main Campus and Surrounding Area, 1967	Box 6508	folder 5-6
Main Campus and Surrounding Area, March 12, 1969	Box 6508	folder 7
Forest Akers Golf Course, April 5, 1971	Box 6508	folder 8
Bear Lake Bog Area and Vicinity, October 15, 1972	Box 6508	folder 9
Main Campus, May 20, 1974	Box 6508	folder 10-12
Golf Course and Parking Lot, February 1, 1975	Box 6508	folder 13
Red Cedar River Flood, April 20, 1975	Box 6508	folder 14
Main Campus and Surrounding Area, April 16, 1980 and April 26, 1984	Box 6508	folder 15-16
Main Campus and Surrounding Area, April 1-18, 1988	Box 6508	folder 17-19
Main Campus and Surround Area, May 4, 1989	Box 6508	folder 20-21
Forest Akers East and West Golf Course, March 5 and 15, 1991	Box 6508	folder 22
Forest Akers West Golf Course, November 19, 1992	Box 6509	folder 1
Main Campus and Surrounding Area, April 5, 1995	Box 6509	folder 2-5
Main Campus, April 10, 1996	Box 6509	folder 6-7
Main Campus and Surrounding Area, undated	Box 6509	folder 8
Flight Path Index for Aerial Photos, 1988-1989	Box 6509	folder 9
Flight Path Index for Aerial Photos, April 10, 1996	Box 6509	folder 10
Invoices that include Areas that were Photographed, 1974-1984	Box 6509	folder 11
Business Brochures for Aerial Photography, undated	Box 6509	folder 12

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Annual Reports

Title/Description	Instances
Published in State Board Reports	volume Bd. of Ag.
1926	
1927	
1928	
1929	
Unpublished	box Annual Reports
1960-1961	
1961-1962	
1962-1963	
1964-1965	
1965-1966	
1966-1967	
1968	
1969	
1970	
1971	

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