



Date: June 8, 2009

**THE MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN RECEIVES
HIGHEST NATIONAL RECOGNITION**
Awarded Accreditation from the American Association of Museums

(ST. LOUIS): The Missouri Botanical Garden has achieved re-accreditation from the American Association of Museums (AAM), the highest national recognition for a museum. Accreditation signifies excellence to the museum community, governments, funders, outside agencies and the museum-going public. The Garden has been accredited for the past three decades.

AAM Accreditation is the field's primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation and public accountability, and earns national recognition for a museum for its commitment to excellence in all that it does: governance, collections stewardship, public programs, financial stability, high professional standards, and continued institutional improvement. Developed and sustained by museum professionals for 35 years, AAM's Museum Accreditation program strengthens the profession by promoting practices that enable leaders to make informed decisions, allocate resources wisely, and to provide the best possible service to the public.

"This is certainly a high honor for our institution," said Missouri Botanical Garden President, Dr. Peter H. Raven. "It demonstrates the important leadership role of the Garden in the public garden field, the local community, and the world. We are delighted to have passed an ever-higher hurdle again to achieve re-accreditation."

Of the nation's estimated 17,500 museums, 775 are currently accredited. The Garden is one of only 11 museums accredited in the state of Missouri.

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Accreditation is a rigorous process that examines all aspects of a museum’s operations. To earn accreditation, a museum first must conduct a year of self-study, then undergo a site visit by a team of peer reviewers. AAM’s Accreditation Commission, an independent and autonomous body of museum professionals, review and evaluate the self-study and visiting committee report to determine whether a museum should receive accreditation. While the time to complete the process varies by museum, it generally takes three years.

The accreditation process takes place every ten years. The Garden was last accredited in 1997. Olga Martha Montiel, vice president of Conservation and Sustainable Development, chaired the accreditation effort and managed the detailed process on behalf of the Garden.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is the oldest continually operating botanical garden in the nation, celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2009. *Missouri Botanical Garden: Green for 150 Years*.

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NOTE: Download media materials at www.mobot.org/press.

The Missouri Botanical Garden’s mission is “to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment, in order to preserve and enrich life.” Today, 150 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a center for science, conservation, education and horticultural display. Missouri Botanical Garden: Green for 150 Years.

The American Association of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. With more than 15,000 individual, 3,000 institutional, and 300 corporate members, AAM is dedicated to ensuring that museums remain a vital part of the American landscape, connecting people with the greatest achievements of the human experience, past, present and future. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in St. Louis, just south of I-44 at Vandeventer-Kingshighway (exit #287B). Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Dec. 25. Grounds open at 7 a.m. every Wednesday and Saturday. Admission is \$8; free children ages 12 and under and Garden members. St. Louis City and County residents are \$4 and free every Wednesday and Saturday until noon (exception: special admission rate events). Park for free on site and two blocks west at the Shaw-Vandeventer intersection. The Garden is easily accessible by taking the MetroLink commuter rail line to the Central West End station and picking up a Metro bus (www.metrostlouis.org). For general information, log on to www.mobot.org or call the 24-hour recording at (314) 577-9400 or 1-800-642-8842. For membership information, call (314) 577-5118 during weekday business hours. For volunteer opportunities, call (314)-577-5187 or visit www.mobot.org/volunteer. The Missouri Botanical Garden is a tobacco-free environment.



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