The Arboretum has a history of swapping plants and seeds with people and gardens all around the world, and funding trips to search for new plants unknown in North America. As a result, the Arboretum is like a treasure chest full of unusual and rare plants. Plant exploration increases scientific knowledge, expands the plant choices available to gardeners, and conserves endangered plants outside of their native habitats. Today, the tradition lives on: the Arboretum continues to send scientists on collection missions across the globe.

The Explorers Garden is a horticultural “hot spot”—quite literally! Located on the south side of Bussey Hill, the Explorers Garden is exposed to the greatest amount of sunlight and warmth, while the summit of the hill protects the area from harsh winter winds. The gentle slope causes cold air to move down the hill, rather than settling into deadly frost pockets. These features make the Explorers Garden an ideal spot for plants in need of milder growing conditions, as well as for testing the cold hardiness of newly discovered plants.

Tree Key

1. Tsuga chinensis (Chinese hemlock)
2. Albizia julibrissin ‘Ernest Wilson’ (silk tree)
3. Acer griseum (paperbark maple)
4. Rhododendron schlippenbachii (royal azalea)
5. Franklinia alatamaha (Franklin tree)
6. Taxus floridana (Florida yew)
7. Chionanthus retusus (Chinese fringetree)
8. Davidia involucrata var. vilmoriniana (dove tree)
9. Stewartia sinensis (Chinese stewartia)
10. Metasequoia glyptostroboides (dawn redwood)
11. Heptacodium miconioides (seven-son flower)
12. Pyrus pyrifolia (Chinese sand pear)
13. Cedrus libani ssp. stenocoma (cedar of Lebanon)
14. Pinus bungeana (lacebark pine)
15. Malus sargentii (Sargent crabapple)

Use your cell phone to explore the plants on the tour. When you spot this logo, dial 617.895.4085, then enter the tour stop number. (No extra charge, just your airtime.)
You’ve seen plant labels on plants at the Arboretum, but what do they really tell you? Here’s a guide . . .

**Accession Number**
Unique to each plant, connected at first to an index card and now to an extensive database.

**Scientific Name**
Compare this name to the North American native hemlock, *Tsuga canadensis*. They are in the same genus, *Tsuga* (pronounced soo-gah).

**Propagation Material**
PT means E.H. Wilson collected an actual plant. Some other common ways that the Arboretum gets new plants are as seeds (SD), cuttings (CT), or seedlings (SG).

**Source/Collection Data**
Wilson collected this plant in China in 1911. The W means he found the tree in the wild, and 4453 is the number Wilson recorded in his diary to refer to this plant. (Z on a label means “from a garden, of known wild origin,” G means “from a nursery or garden,” and U means “uncertain origin.”)

**Accession Date**
This plant was collected in 1911. Just days after Wilson dug up this plant, the team was hit by a landslide and Wilson was seriously injured. The trip was cut short, but the hemlock seedling survived.

**Keep Exploring!**
With over 265 acres and more than 15,000 plants, you can explore the Arboretum landscape again and again, discovering something new each time.

The plants on this tour have great stories to tell, but every plant in the Arboretum has a story—who discovered the plant? Where in the world is it from? Why is it growing here? To learn the stories behind your favorite plants, consider going on a guided tour, taking a class, or participating in a family activity.

**Guided tours:** See the Arboretum in a new way—take a free guided tour. Tours begin in front of the Hunnewell Building, last approximately 90 minutes, and are geared toward adults. The tour season is April through mid-November.

**Classes:** The Arboretum offers a variety of learning opportunities for adults. Some of the classes include: plant biology, ecology, tree identification, propagation, and garden design. For a full listing of programs or to register, visit my.arboretum.harvard.edu.

**Family activities:** Drop by the Visitor Center on the last Saturday of each month, April through October, 11:00am–1:00pm (Free—no registration required). Activities focus on plant exploration and may include scavenger hunts, science investigations, craft activities, stories, and more.

Stop by the Visitor Center or go to our website to learn more: arboretum.harvard.edu