



Media Kit

The Jungle Garden: Preserving a Tropical Landscape

A Lavish New Volume from Rizzoli Celebrates the Centennial Legacy of McKee Botanical Garden

Book at a Glance

Title: The Jungle Garden: Preserving a Tropical Landscape

Publisher: Rizzoli New York

Publication Date: October 1, 2026

Retail Price: \$60.00 (USD)

Format: Hardcover

Available for purchase: Mckeegarden.org and in our Book Store & Gift Shop, amazon.com, Rizzoli.com

ISBN: 978-0-8478-7740-9

Pages: 240

Photography: Ngoc Minh Ngo

Author: Heather O'Shea

Foreword: Julian Fellowes

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About the Book

Vero Beach, Florida This October, internationally renowned publisher Rizzoli will release *The Jungle Garden: Preserving a Tropical Landscape*, a richly photographed commemorative volume chronicling more than a century of vision, decline, rescue, and renaissance at McKee Botanical Garden.

Photographed by celebrated landscape photographer Ngoc Minh Ngo and written by author and former editor-in-chief of Vero Beach Magazine, Heather O'Shea, with a foreword by Julian Fellowes, the book captures the extraordinary evolution of a Florida wilderness into one of America's most enchanting tropical gardens.

Founded in the 1920s by visionary horticulturist Arthur G. McKee and his business partner Waldo E. Sexton, the original McKee Jungle Gardens quickly became an internationally admired destination, famed for its cathedral-like royal palms, rare orchids, waterlilies and immersive subtropical plantings. After decades of popularity, the Garden closed in 1976, facing near destruction from development.

What followed was an unprecedented grassroots rescue. In the 1990s, a passionate coalition of local citizens mounted a bold campaign to save the historic core from bulldozers. Their efforts culminated in the formation of the Indian River Land Trust and the Garden's triumphant reopening in 2001 as McKee Botanical Garden, today recognized on the National Register of Historic Places and celebrated as an award-winning model of horticultural preservation.

The Jungle Garden is both visual feast and historical narrative. Through luminous photography and deeply researched storytelling, the book explores:

- The Garden's founding vision and early heyday
- Its mid-century acclaim as a subtropical showplace
- The dramatic community-led restoration
- The careful stewardship of rare orchids and waterlilies
- Its emergence as a modern, award-winning botanic garden and living museum

With more than 200 photographs, archival imagery, and deeply researched prose, the volume honors not only the Garden's founders, but also the generations of horticulturists, volunteers, and philanthropists who safeguarded its legacy.

"This book is a tribute to resilience, of landscape, of community, and of vision," said Rochelle Wolberg, Executive Director of McKee Botanical Garden. "It preserves the story of how a wild and wondrous place was saved for the enrichment, education and enjoyment of future generations."

The book was developed over four years by a dedicated committee working in close collaboration with Rizzoli's editorial and design team, ensuring a publication worthy of the Garden's dual milestones: the Centennial of the living collections and the 25th Anniversary of the reopening.

The Jungle Garden: Preserving a Tropical Landscape will be available in October 2026 through Rizzoli, major booksellers nationwide, and at McKee Botanical Garden. Price is \$60.

About McKee Botanical Garden

Located in Vero Beach, Florida, McKee Botanical Garden is an 18-acre historic tropical garden listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Originally established in the 1920s as McKee Jungle Gardens, the property was rescued from development through a remarkable grassroots preservation effort before reopening as a nonprofit botanical garden in 2001.

Today, McKee welcomes more than 100,000 visitors annually and is internationally recognized for its nationally accredited waterlily collection, exceptional orchid collections, educational programming, and historic landscape designed by William Lyman Phillips.

Website: www.mckeegarden.org

About Heather O'Shea, Writer

A freelance writer and former teacher and editor in chief of Vero Beach Magazine, Heather has researched and written about the rich history of McKee Botanical Garden for years. Following undergraduate work in English, Economics and Theology at the University of Notre Dame, Heather earned a Ph.D. in English and an Executive MBA from the University of New Mexico. Her work has appeared in *The Sun*, *the Daily Good*, *the Notre Dame Review*, *Blue Mesa Review*, *Cold Mountain Review*, *the Brevity Blog*, and *Vero Beach Magazine*. *The Jungle Garden: Preserving a Tropical Landscape* is Heather's first book.

About Ngoc Minh Ngo, Photographer

Considered one of the most poetic landscape and botanical photographers in the world, Ngoc's work has appeared in such magazines as *The World of Interiors*, *T Magazine*, *Vogue*, *Architectural Digest*, *Cabana*, and

House & Garden UK. She is the author of six books, five of which have been published by Rizzoli, including her most recent book, *Roses in the Garden*. McKee Botanical Garden is the first tropical garden Ngoc has photographed in Florida.

Doug Turshen, Book Design

For McKee's commemorative volume, the Garden partnered with acclaimed book designer, Doug Turshen and his associates David Huang and Steve Turner. With more than 200 books to their credit, the team is renowned for unfailing taste, patience, and enthusiasm. Working collaboratively with authors and publishers, their studio develops compelling content and visual concepts that both inspire and inform, bringing the stories of accomplished creatives, across architecture, design, cuisine, and culture, to life. Among his many clients are Bunny Williams, Carolyn Roehm, Jeffrey Bilhuber, Kathryn Scott, Gill Schafer III, Suzy Bales, Mark D. Sikes, Suzanne Rheinstein

Newsworthy

- First comprehensive coffee table book devoted to McKee Botanical Garden
- Published by internationally renowned publisher Rizzoli
- Features original photography by internationally acclaimed photographer Ngoc Minh Ngo
- Foreword by Emmy and Academy Award-winning writer Julian Fellowes
- Chronicles one of America's most remarkable preservation success stories
- Commemorates the Garden's Centennial and 25th Anniversary of reopening

Story Angles

- A Garden That Refused to Die – the preservation story.
- Inside the Making of a Rizzoli Book – four years of collaboration.
- The Vision Behind the Lens – Ngoc Minh Ngo's photography.
- America's Historic Tropical Gardens – why McKee is nationally significant.
- Celebrating 100 Years of Living Collections – centennial feature.
- 25 Years of Community Stewardship – anniversary feature.
- Florida's Hidden Botanical Treasure – travel and lifestyle angle.

Interviews Available

Media interviews may be arranged with:

- Rochelle Wolberg, Executive Director
- Heather O'Shea, Author
- Ngoc Minh Ngo, Photographer (subject to availability)
- Christel Morat, Marketing Manager

Photography & Media Assets

Available upon request:

- Book cover
- Interior spreads
- Author portrait
- Photographer portrait
- Historic archival photographs

- Contemporary Garden photography
- Executive Director portrait
- Book launch photography
- High-resolution images are available for editorial use.

Social Media

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@rizzolibooks

Learn More

Visit: <https://mckee garden.org/the-jungle-garden-commemorative-book/>

For additional information, downloadable media assets, and interview requests please contact cmorat@mckee garden.org