

Fauna & Flora International to bring a slice of Africa to RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2023

International wildlife conservation charity, [Fauna & Flora International](#) (FFI), will make its RHS Chelsea Flower Show debut in 2023, with a show garden designed by Chelsea Gold Medal-winner, Jilayne Rickards, and landscaped by award-winning landscaper, Tecwyn Evans, Living Landscapes.

FFI's show garden is sponsored by [Project Giving Back](#), a charity established to enable charities and not-for-profit organisations to raise awareness of their work by staging a garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show that will live on in a permanent location as a legacy following the show. The show garden will provide FFI with an invaluable opportunity to raise awareness of its global conservation work, including projects disrupted by the global pandemic, at a time when recognising the links between nature protection, climate action and human well-being is more important than ever.

Following the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, 23-27 May 2023, FFI's garden will be relocated to the Tropical Biome of the Eden Project in Cornwall, where it will help educate and entertain around one million annual visitors for years to come.

Offering Chelsea show visitors a window into the spectacular Afromontane landscape of Central Africa, The Fauna & Flora International Garden will celebrate the International Gorilla Conservation Programme, originally established by FFI in 1978 as the Mountain Gorilla Project, with support from Sir David Attenborough, the charity's Vice-President.

The garden maps the journey of an ecotourist on a gorilla trek, tracing a rough track through a succession of lush and changing landscapes on either side of the Protected Forest Area boundary wall, each side showcasing the familiar, unusual and spectacular plants found in the area – from the African tulip tree, to *Lobelia stuhlmannii*, to a range of medicinal plants including *Brillantaisia*, *Moringa*, *Leucas*, *Tagetes* and *Tithonia*.

Along the way will be a medicinal garden shaded by Eucalyptus and banana trees; a typical gift kiosk selling local artisanal crafts; a true-to-life gorilla nest set amongst bamboo; and an entrancing waterfall and viewing rock, surrounded by unusual plants found only at high altitude.

Mark Rose, CEO of FFI, comments: "The RHS Chelsea Flower Show has become, in recent years, not just the flagship event for the gardening world, but a wonderful platform for charities and organisations to raise awareness of wider issues affecting the planet and the people on it. Project Giving Back has funded some fantastic causes in the last year – including Rewilding Britain, Mind and RNLI – and we are delighted to have been selected as one of its 2023 charities. 2023 will mark 120 years since FFI was first founded to protect species and wildlife across the world, so it will truly be a remarkable year for us.

"Focusing on the success of the International Gorilla Conservation Programme in Central Africa, which is the work of multiple conservation partners, our show garden aims to demonstrate that collaborative, community-focused and locally led conservation – that brings together governments, corporates and local enterprise – offers the most sustainable solution to the twin biodiversity and climate crises. We believe that people and collaboration need to be at the heart of conservation efforts and we're looking forward to delivering this message at Chelsea next year."

FFI's garden designer, Jilayne Rickards, has been designing and creating gardens for over 20 years. In 2019, Jilayne made her phenomenal show garden debut with the CAMFED Garden, which won both a prestigious RHS Gold Medal and the BBC/RHS People's Choice Award.

Jilayne's gardens are designed with biodiversity and sustainability in mind and are constructed using methods that reflect her determination to reduce the carbon footprint of her builds. Thanks to Jilayne's collaborative efforts with landscaper, Tecwyn Evans of Living Landscapes, which prides itself on its sustainable and environmental construction practices, The Fauna & Flora International Garden will be entirely cement and concrete free.

In addition, the garden has been designed to be as sustainable as possible, with 95% of building materials sourced from the UK and zero waste sent to landfill, and by recycling and reusing as many materials as possible. The boulders used, for example, are a waste product from agricultural farming.

Jilayne comments: “I am delighted to be working with Fauna & Flora International on its debut Chelsea Flower Show garden; we’re bringing a slice of the Afromontane volcanic mountain forest to central London and, while the garden is centred around the megafauna that is the mountain gorillas, it will also highlight the outstanding plants in the landscape that provide home to a diverse range of species. Over the coming months, we will be sourcing a plethora of exotic and unusual plants with help from the Eden Project, which will be supplying the majority of the plants.”

“Aligning with FFI’s ethos, I have worked with Tecwyn and our suppliers to ensure the garden will be a true model of sustainability, including in its use of materials, recycling and reuse. We therefore hope to provide gardeners and visitors to Chelsea with plentiful ideas for how they can make their own gardens more sustainable, while encouraging them to question their resources and explore how they can better contribute to a circular economy.”

Hattie Ghai, CEO of Project Giving Back, comments: “For almost 120 years FFI has been paving the way for international conservation – its work has been invaluable for the future of so many plant and animal species – and we are thrilled to be sponsoring the charity’s 2023 show garden. PGB was established to help UK-registered charities recover following the global pandemic, including those whose projects were adversely affected by the sudden lack of international travel. At a time when we are crying out for urgent action to address the climate and biodiversity crises, it’s fantastic to be able to provide FFI with a platform to raise awareness of its conservation work, and we’re thrilled the garden will be permanently installed at The Eden Project to help bring the magic of the mountain gorilla habitat to the attention of potential supporters for many years to come.”

To find out more about FFI and its work to protect threatened wildlife and habitats across the world, please visit: www.fauna-flora.org

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Image caption 1: Front perspective of The Fauna & Flora International Garden – Jilayne Rickards

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About Fauna & Flora International (FFI)

Fauna & Flora International (FFI) protects threatened species and ecosystems worldwide, choosing solutions that are sustainable, based on sound science and that enhance human well-being.

Operating in more than 40 countries worldwide, FFI saves species from extinction and habitats from destruction, while improving the livelihoods of local people. Founded in 1903, FFI is the world’s longest established international wildlife conservation organisation and a registered charity. <https://www.fauna-flora.org>

About the International Gorilla Conservation Programme

The International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) is a unique collaboration between Fauna & Flora International (FFI), WWF, Conservation International and protected area authorities in the three countries where mountain gorillas are found: the Rwanda Development Board, the Uganda Wildlife Authority, and the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

IGCP’s mission is to conserve the gorilla and its habitat through partnering with key stakeholders while significantly contributing to sustainable livelihood development.

<https://www.fauna-flora.org/approaches/partnership/international-gorilla-conservation-programme/>

About Jilayne Rickards

An ambitious, dynamic and talented designer, Jilayne has been designing and creating gardens for over 20 years. One of only a handful of UK based female designers registered with both the Society of Garden Designers and British Association of Landscaping Industries, Jilayne's award winning gardens have featured in many magazines. Most recently, her Urban Retreat Garden was recognised by the BALI National Landscape Awards in 2020 with an unprecedented haul of four awards, including a Design Excellence Award, Designer and Contractor Joint Award and Best Use of Reclaimed and Recycled Materials Award. Her gardens are designed with biodiversity and sustainability in mind and are constructed using methods that reflect her determination to reduce the carbon footprint of her builds. She was a judge for the RHS Green PlanIt scheme and a speaker on sustainable gardening at Futurescape 2021, and is currently training to become an RHS Show Judge.

<https://www.jilaynerickards.com/>

About Living Landscapes

Living Landscapes is committed to sustainable and environmental construction practices, which has supported their long history in becoming BALI and RHS multi-award winners.

Living Landscapes collaborates with landscape architects and garden designers who also support its core values. It firmly believes that landscape construction should complement the natural location it's within. If wildlife and local habitats are created or enhanced through land forming and planting this should be done with careful consideration and thorough site analysis, ensuring the final creation naturally complements the surrounding environment.

<https://www.livinglandscapesuk.com/>

About Project Giving Back

Project Giving Back (PGB) is a unique grant-making charity that provides funding for gardens for good causes at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. PGB was launched in May 2021 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and its devastating effect on UK charitable fundraising. It will fund gardens inspired by a range of good causes at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

PGB will fund a total of 15 gardens at RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2023 and intends to fund up to 42 gardens at the show from 2022 - 2024. (Applications for 2023 & 2024 are now closed).

Project Giving Back was established with funding from two private individuals who are RHS Life Members and keen gardeners. They wish to remain anonymous. PGB will help UK-based good causes recover from the unprecedented effects of the global pandemic by giving them an opportunity to raise awareness of their work for people, plants and the planet at the high-profile RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

Find out more at www.givingback.org.uk.