



BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS

There's more here than you think.

**FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS
FIVE-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON EDUCATION - FOR THE ACADEMIC YEARS 2003/04 - 2007/08**

report date: 1 August 2007

FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BBG EDUCATION

- 1.) We use nature and our living collections to provide science-based education programs for children and adults.
- 2.) Over 41,000 people served in 2007/08 academic year, up 21% over prior period.
- 3.) Free educational experiences to over 95% of participants, up 4% over prior period.
- 4.) BBG Library is the largest free-lending horticulture library in the US, patronage up 64% over prior period.
- 5.) Environmental & Horticultural Conference & Meeting participation up 110% over prior period.

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INTRODUCTION

Stated briefly, the mission of Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens is to educate people about plants, gardens and the environment. Our program offerings have been achieving this mission since our organization's inception, in 1963. With staff increases in the 2002-03 academic year, we began to monitor and measure program participation more accurately than in prior years. We also began to compile and present this information in broader ways and to wider audiences, through presentations and the publication of an annual report (begun for calendar year 2004). Programs are largely science-based, focusing on horticulture, botany, environmental science and landscape design. Nature and our living collections serve as the context for additional classes in art, travel, crafts, food and cooking, and human wellness.

Detailed descriptions of most programs can be found on our website www.bbgardens.org or in *The Garden Dirt*, our bi-monthly newsletter. While a few programs and classes are fee-based, the vast majority, 95%, are offered free. Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens practices a policy of equal opportunity and equal access to services to all persons regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, orientation or gender. Birmingham Botanical Gardens is a facility of the Birmingham Park & Recreation Board, and The Friends' programs would not be possible without the generous assistance and cooperation of Park Board staff.

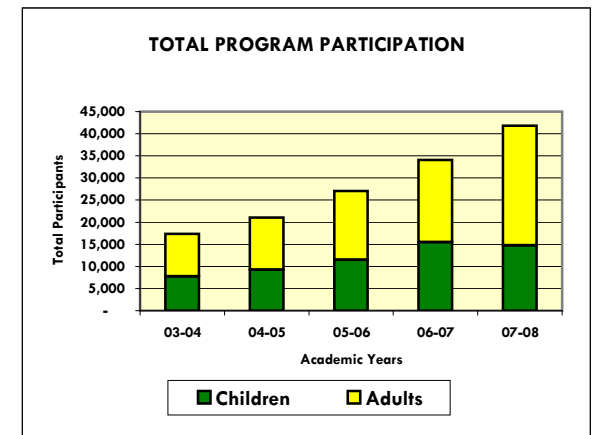
KEY

Programs in italics represent new programs for 2007-08. * denotes programs which did not occur in a particular year; ** denotes non-participation in a particular year; *** denotes programs for which adult participation was not previously captured and reported; "n.a." denotes years in which figures are not available. Programs are free, unless noted.

FIVE-YEAR SUMMARY

ACADEMIC YEARS: 1 July - 30 June	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	7,767	9,289	11,529	15,488	14,765
ADULT PROGRAMS	9,593	11,735	15,529	18,608	27,058
TOTAL ALL PROGRAMS - ALL AGES	17,360	21,024	27,058	34,096	41,823

In the first half of calendar year 2008, the loss of over \$300,000 in funding from the Jefferson County Community Arts Fund negatively impacted Children's Programs. Despite this loss of 16% of our total operating budget, the drop was a scant 5%. Adult Program participation surged 41% on the strength of the BBG Library. Environmentally-focused professional conferences were introduced with new, important partners. Total Program Participation grew by 21%.



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Participation data for children (high-school aged and younger) is separated into on- and off-site programs. On-site programs are separated further into Discovery Field Trips and Other. Only participants in hands-on, science-based activities are counted. Children utilizing the Gerlach Plant Information Center and the BBG Library (with its recently-expanded children's section) are not counted. Library patronage data (see below) does not distinguish between children and adults, leaving Total Program Participation figures accurate, but underreporting children somewhat.

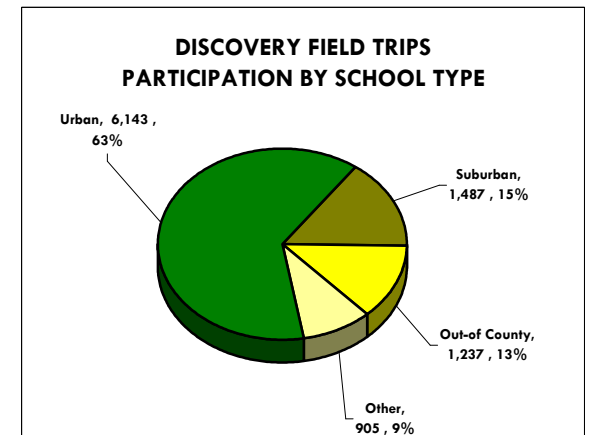
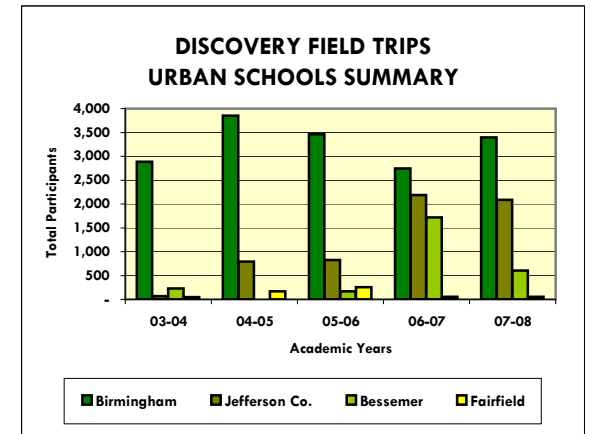
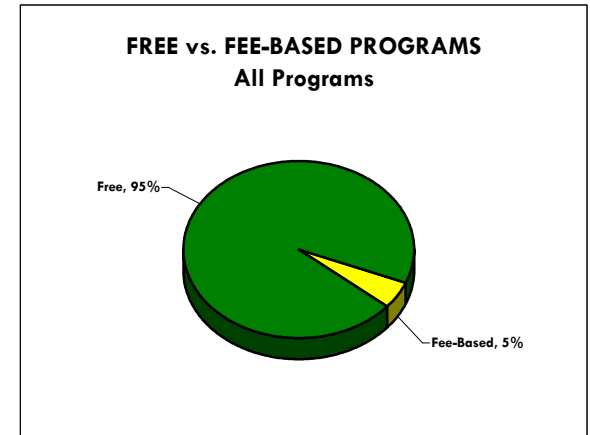
Children's Programs are marketed primarily to students in kindergarten through grade five in urban schools. Recently, programs directed at Advanced Placement Biology students, Girl Scouts and Horticultural Therapy clients were added to increase participation from high-school aged children. Accessibility has always been a hallmark of The Friends' education programs and 95% of children attended free; this is reflected in Total Program Participation (see chart at right). Support for Children's Programs in 07-08 was provided by the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, Daniel Foundation of Alabama, Hess Foundation, Hill Crest Foundation, Junior League of Birmingham, Robert R. Meyer Foundation, Susan Mott Webb Charitable Trust and the cities of Mountain Brook and Vestavia Hills.

ON-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

DISCOVERY FIELD TRIPS

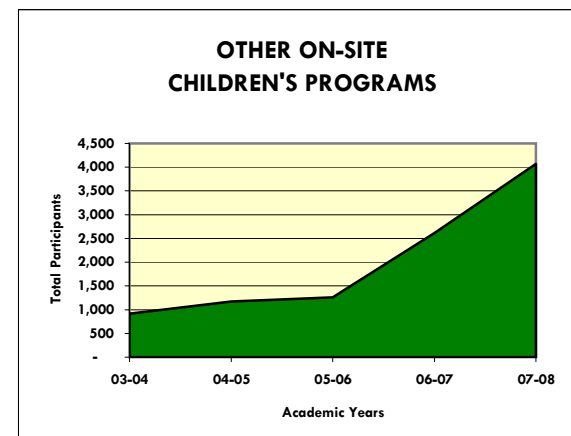
Participation figures for Discovery Field Trips, our flagship program, fell by 13% last year. Birmingham schools' participation was up 19% from the prior period, but marketing efforts to Bessemer fell short in the first half of the year and were discontinued for Jefferson County Schools after loss of county funding. Suburban schools surged 40% as Trussville sent 764 students (none previously). Out-of-County participation dropped 37% with Shelby County declining 49%. Private, parochial and home-schooled group participation fell by 40%. While we welcome all of these schools, we are not able to market to them. They often do not schedule guided field trips with our education department and their visits often go uncounted.

SCHOOL TYPES	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
Urban Schools	3,232	4,813	4,706	6,707	6,143
Suburban Schools (including OTM schools)	2,226	1,447	1,198	1,062	1,487
Out-of County Schools	244	623	627	1,967	1,237
Other, Private, Parochial and Home Schools	351	236	978	1,496	905
SUBTOTAL - DISCOVERY FIELD TRIPS	6,053	7,119	7,509	11,232	9,772



OTHER ON-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

On-site programming directed at children grew 56% in the past year, following a 107% jump for the previous year. This growth offset the decline in Discovery Field Trips, keeping total on-site participation at prior period levels. Our programs offer a variety of experiences from simple nature-based holiday crafts to college-level biology labs for gifted high school students. Efforts to sustain the success of the Family Discovery Cart, offered on Sunday afternoons in the gardens proper, were successful despite staff turnover. New data from Library activities helped to boost participation at our two awareness events, Earth Day at The Gardens and Family Fun Day. With the loss of county funding impacting outreach, new on-site programs were developed including the Alabama Spring Fest and a plant-related achievement award developed in conjunction with local Girl Scout troops. Horticultural Therapy sessions were offered to children for the first time in this program's 15-year history at BBG. Our involvement with state-wide programs remained strong as Better Basics and Legacy again partnered with us for their activities. We also began a partnership with the Alabama School of Fine Arts for their biology labs.



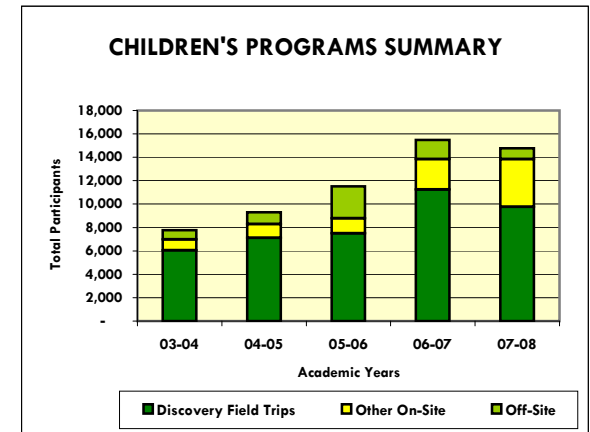
OTHER ON-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	COMMENTS
Family Discovery Cart	*	50	50	744	750	Sunday afternoons
Earth Day at The Gardens	100	200	200	275	550	300 education activity; 250 library activity
Better Basics M.O.R.E. Luncheons	***	***	***	400	400	Motivators of Reading Enrichment
Horticultural Therapy	*	*	*	*	379	first year for children
Family Fun Day	75	75	100	120	370	120 education activity; 250 library activity
Children's Summer Workshops	264	270	334	350	320	fee-based
Alabama Spring Fest	*	*	*	*	300	environmental science literacy field trip
"Plants: Try It!" Girl Scout Project	*	*	*	*	242	fee-based per troop
Garden Explorations	225	225	225	225	225	Birmingham Park & Recreation Centers
HollyDay Magic	100	200	200	205	200	fee-based
Advanced Placement Biology Labs	**	**	**	132	132	Carver, Huffman, Jackson-Olin, Ramsey HSs.
Legacy EnviroBowl	120	120	120	120	120	state-wide high school finals
Alabama School of Fine Arts	**	**	**	**	40	biology lab activities
Birmingham Cultural Alliance Partnership	30	30	30	40	40	with six other local arts and cultural institutions
Enchanted Garden Fairy Tea	*	*	166	*	*	fee-based
SUB-TOTAL - OTHER ON-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	914	1,170	1,259	2,611	4,068	
TOTAL ON-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	6,967	8,289	8,768	13,843	13,840	

OFF-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

The loss of funding from the Jefferson County Community Arts Fund had its greatest negative impact on Off-Site Children's Programs (spring of 2008) and overall participation fell by 44%. However, we made a strategic decision to participate in the *Clover Crawl*, a street festival in downtown Homewood celebrating a "green" lifestyle and basic environmental awareness. Challenges with recruiting volunteers for long shifts (often requiring transport of materials) make off-site programs difficult without a BBG staff presence. Combined with a drop in Discovery Field Trips, the decline in Off-Site Children's Programs contributed to an overall loss of 5% in children's participation.

OFF-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	COMMENTS
Urban Forestry Fair	600	600	600	500	500	Boutwell Auditorium
Stokin' the Fire	n.a.	n.a.	350	200	200	Sloss Furnace National Historic Landmark
Christmas Tree Lighting	200	*	100	65	125	Linn Park
<i>Clover Crawl</i>	*	*	*	*	100	Green Resource Center for Alabama, Homewd.
A Clean Air Affair	n.a.	400	45	**	**	McWane Science Center
Auntie Litter Earth Day	**	**	1,546	500	**	Linn Park
Clay Elementary School Birdfest	*	*	90	**	**	
Education Day at Parisian	*	*	30	**	*	The Summit
Festival at Moss Rock Preserve	*	**	**	350	**	two-day event
Keep Birmingham Beautiful Commission Event	**	**	**	30	**	Linn Park
TOTAL OFF-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	800	1,000	2,761	1,645	925	

ALL CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
DISCOVERY FIELD TRIPS	6,053	7,119	7,509	11,232	9,772
OTHER ON-SITE PROGRAMS	914	1,170	1,259	2,611	4,068
OFF-SITE PROGRAMS	800	1,000	2,761	1,645	925
TOTAL PARTICIPATION CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	7,767	9,289	11,529	15,488	14,765



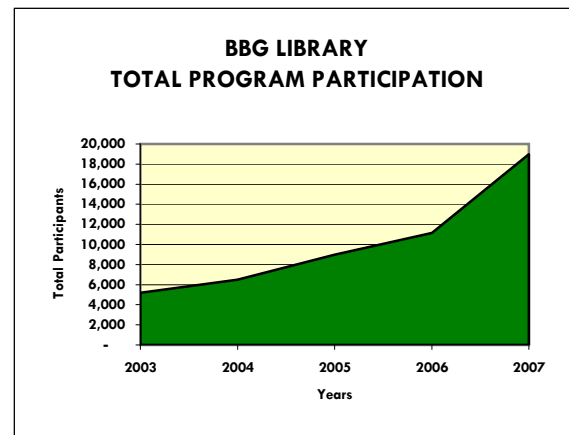
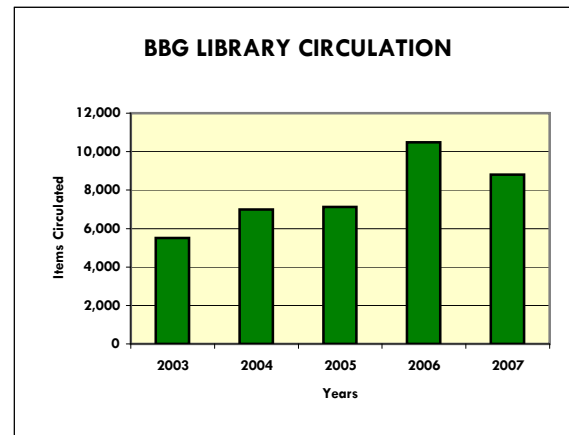
ADULT PROGRAMS

Participation data for adults (post-high-school aged) is separated into on- and off-site programs, and Conferences & Meetings. On-site data is separated further into Library Programs and Other. Adults and teachers attending and conducting Children's Programs are included; volunteer instructors are not counted. Adults utilizing the Gerlach Plant Information Center were not counted. Library patronage data (see below) does not distinguish between children and adults, leaving Total Program Participation figures accurate, but overreporting adults somewhat.

ON-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS

BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS LIBRARY PROGRAMS

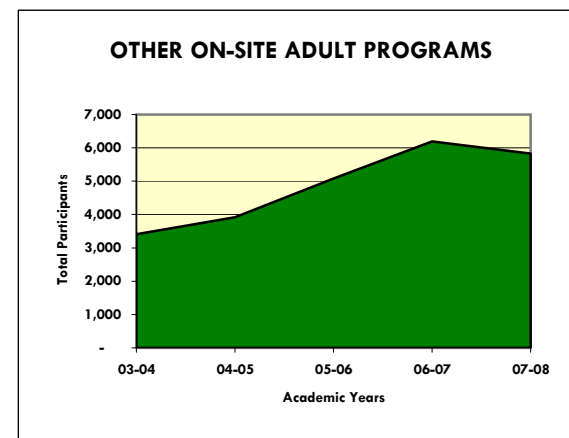
The BBG Library is the largest free-lending horticultural library in the US, with over 7,000 circulating items (including books, magazines, CD-ROMs and DVDs) and over 2,000 reference and archived items. As a member of the Jefferson County Library Cooperative, we can share items with other members through a user-friendly on-line reservation system. Our collection focuses on horticulture, botany, gardening, landscape architecture and design, environmental sciences, natural resource conservation and plant-related arts and crafts, with special sections devoted to children's items and archival materials. Computers with internet access are provided free to the public. Since 2004, the BBG Library has been open seven days a week, providing easy access. Patronage is tracked with an automated counter, with allowances made for staff movement. BBG Library staff coordinate displays in the Gerlach Plant Information Center and, since 2006, manage an art gallery in the auditorium hallway, holding opening receptions for local artists. Although total circulation fell by 16% (see chart at right), program participation jumped 66%, fueled by a 64% increase in patronage and the addition of library-specific activities at awareness events. The BBG Library is supported by public donations, the Ida C. Burns Charitable Trust at the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham and the Redmont Neighborhood Association of Birmingham.



LIBRARY PROGRAMS	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	COMMENTS
Patrons Served	5,200	6,500	8,995	11,149	18,247	see narrative
Free Computer Use / Internet Access	975	1,150	2,012	2,158	2,683	subset of Patrons Served
Family Fun Day	**	**	**	**	200	adults; library activity only
Earth Day at The Gardens	**	**	**	**	200	adults; library activity only
<i>The Big Read: To Kill A Mockingbird</i>	*	*	*	*	130	movie showing and book give-away
Library Art Openings	*	*	*	*	201	5 openings in 2007
SUB-TOTAL LIBRARY PROGRAMS	5,200	6,500	8,995	11,149	18,978	

OTHER ON-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS

Participation in this category dropped by 5%, primarily due to the decline in Discovery Field Trips and the temporary discontinuation of Sunday Strolls. Despite several popular strolls in 06-07, attendance had been dropping, and many were cancelled. So we focused our resources on Family Discovery Cart activities, which had been trending up. Adult client contacts for Horticultural Therapy (HT) were down slightly because of first-time efforts to include children; overall participation was up 47%. HT was funded by the Hill Crest Foundation and Publix Supermarkets Charities, Inc. After sustaining a 25% decline the previous year, Adult Classes & Workshops dropped only 5% this year, acceptable especially given the increase in Conferences & Meetings.



OTHER ON-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	COMMENTS
Discovery Field Trips	800	930	1,000	1,500	1,300	
Family Discovery Cart	*	***	***	1,242	1,250	
Teacher Workshops	250	250	821	831	831	regional and state-wide
Adult Classes and Workshops	700+	871	968	774	738	fee-based
Horticultural Therapy	420	420	575	730	697	
Earth Day at The Gardens	***	***	150	125	175	education activity only (not total attendance)
Family Fun Day	***	***	***	30	30	education activity only (not total attendance)
Spencer Lecture	500	500	370	350	210	reduced from two lectures to one in 05-06
HollyDay Magic	***	***	125	125	125	fee-based
Junior League Provisional Retreat	*	*	*	*	100	logistics meeting for Discovery Field Trips
"Plants: Try-It!" Girl Scout Project	*	*	*	*	88	fee-based per troop
Alabama Spring Fest	*	*	*	*	75	environmental science literacy field trip
Docent Training Program	42	46	51	58	70	Discovery Field Trip and general training
Legacy EnviroBowl	50	50	50	50	50	state-wide high school finals
Garden Explorations	***	***	***	40	40	Birmingham Park & Recreation Centers
Birmingham Cultural Alliance Partnership	***	***	90	36	36	with six other local arts and cultural institutions
Advanced Placement Biology Labs	*	*	*	16	16	Carver, Huffman, Jackson-Olin, Ramsey HSs.
Celebrity Lectures	650	200	420	*	*	fee-based
Interactive Signage Presentation	*	*	30	*	*	staff and invited guests
Organic Gardening Forum	200	200	105	*	*	discontinued in 06
Sunday Strolls	500	450	325	284	*	replaced with Family Discovery Cart
SUB-TOTAL OTHER ON-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS	3,412	3,917	5,080	6,191	5,831	

REPORT ON EDUCATION - Academic Years 2003-2007

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OFF-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS

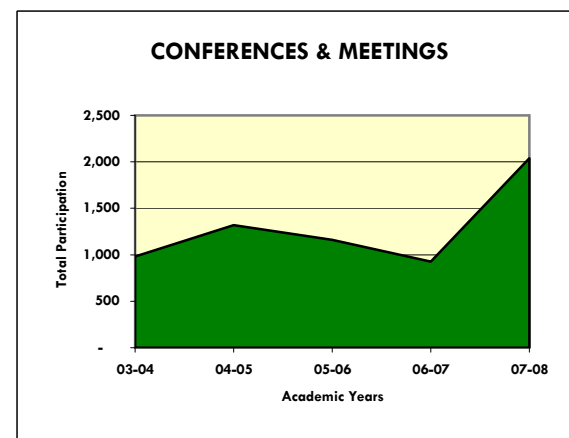
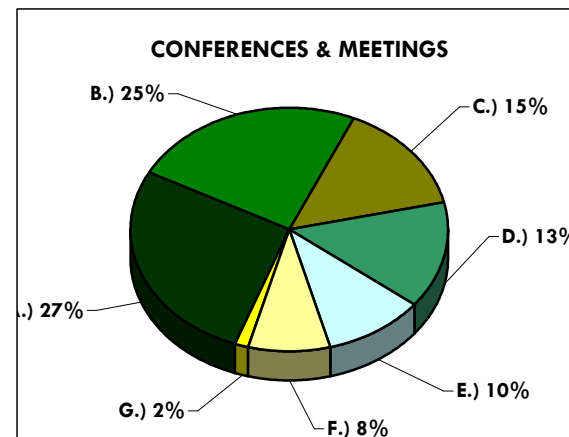
This category, down 38% from last year, mirrors Off-Site Children's Programs, with its associated adults and teachers.

OFF-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
SUB-TOTAL OFF-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS	-	-	295	340	210

CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

This new category includes data collected but not previously reported for the numerous types of conferences which we sponsor or at which we give presentations. Educational tours are included; development tours are not. Last year we hosted two environmental conferences aimed at informed and professional audiences. *Calming Global Climate Change* and *Conserving Our Water* focused on timely issues and strengthened the environmental side of our mission. These conferences (in B, below) generated modest revenue for us, and in some cases, our partnering organizations. In addition, they allowed us to introduce our organization to new constituents in relevant ways and to share specific information about landscape management, and plant performance and evaluation gleaned from BBG's living collections.

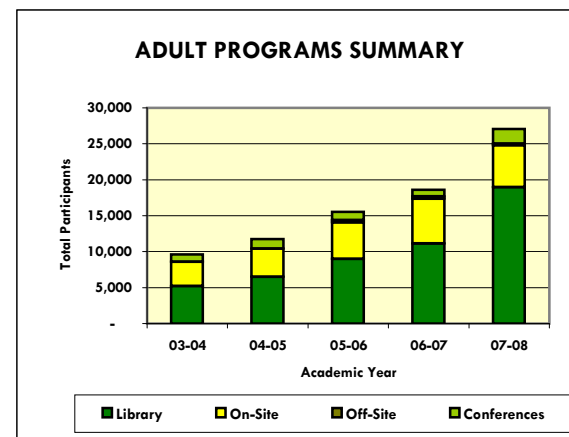
We measured attendance at presentations and tours given by BBG staff to 27 different garden clubs (D, below), 20 different civic groups (C, below), 13 different "green" industry professional associations (E, below) and more. The data show a 110% increase over last year and a 68% increase over 05-06. These presentations show how we extend the reach of our mission and spread the influence of our staff, organization and facility. The categories combine on- and off-site programs. Fees levied by membership organizations for whom we present are not included in our calculations of free vs. fee-based programming offered by The Friends.



CONFERENCES & MEETINGS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	COMMENTS
A.) Horticultural Orgs. & Societies, Master Gardeners	330	325	210	270	556	membership; presentation or tour
B.) Environmental & Horticultural Conferences	0	470	305	0	488	fee-based; sponsor program or presentation
C.) Civic Organizations & Government	105	200	263	90	300	membership/invite; presentation or tour
D.) Garden Clubs	196	196	210	43	285	membership; presentation or tour
E.) Environmental Orgs. & Professional Associations	305	52	165	40	211	membership; presentation or tour
F.) Botanical Gardens, Colleges & Universities	25	10	6	485	169	fee-based; provide program or presentation
G.) Other	20	65	0	0	30	free; present
SUBTOTAL CONF. & MEETING PRESENTATIONS	981	1,318	1,159	928	2,039	

SUMMARY

ALL ADULT PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
LIBRARY PROGRAMS (data is for first calendar year)	5,200	6,500	8,995	11,149	18,978
OTHER ON-SITE PROGRAMS	3,412	3,917	5,080	6,191	5,831
OFF-SITE PROGRAMS	-	-	295	340	210
CONFERENCES & MEETINGS	981	1,318	1,159	928	2,039
TOTAL PARTICIPATION ADULT PROGRAMS	9,593	11,735	15,529	18,608	27,058



VOLUNTEERS

Precise data for volunteers has only been tracked since 2006 and is not included in participation data above. Volunteers are active in many areas including fundraising and awareness events, administration and committees, plant societies and grower groups, and garden maintenance. Service in education and library programs accounted for 25% and 13%, respectively, of all volunteers hours in 2007. Although the number of volunteers dipped slightly from last year, total hours grew by 48%, for a total equal to more than 4.25 full-time equivalent employees. Our ability to deliver excellent, consistent and numerous programs - especially free programs for children - is dependent on our generous, dedicated and passionate volunteer corps.

VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION	2006		2007		2007
	# VOLS	HOURS	#VOLS	HOURS	HRS/VOL
EDUCATION PROGRAMS	374	3,516	372	5,828	15.67
BBG LIBRARY	36	2,277	36	2,726	75.72
TOTALS	410	5,793	408	8,554	20.97