

# Pi Alpha Xi

## The National Honor Society for Horticulture

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# Pi Alpha Xi



## MISSION:

- To foster good fellowship between students, educators, and professional horticulturists.
- To promote scholarship, fellowship, professional leadership and the enrichment of human life through plants.

## ACTIVITIES:

- Annual national Photography Contest
- Scholarships for student members
- PAX Honor Cords for commencement to recognize scholastic excellence
- Individual chapters have various activities: growing plants, flower sales, banquets, etc.



The Paul Thomas  
*Pi Alpha Xi*  
Digital Photo Contest

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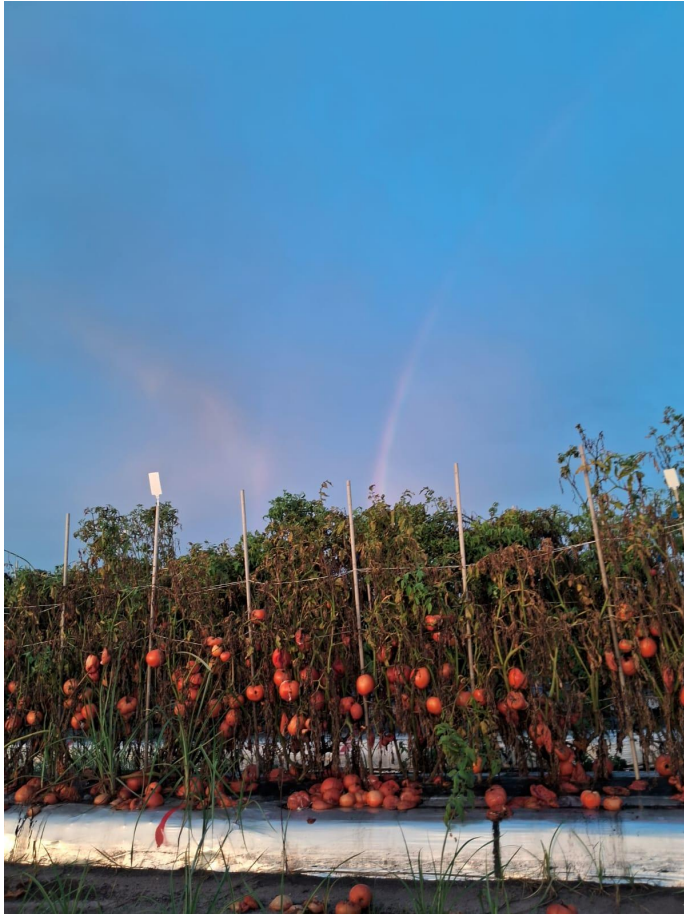


# 1. Perfect Partners

# Perfect Partners

These images represent what the photographer believes to be outstanding plant combinations. These can be container, bed or floral design compositions. The images should show clearly how two plant partners are being used.

# Perfect Partners – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

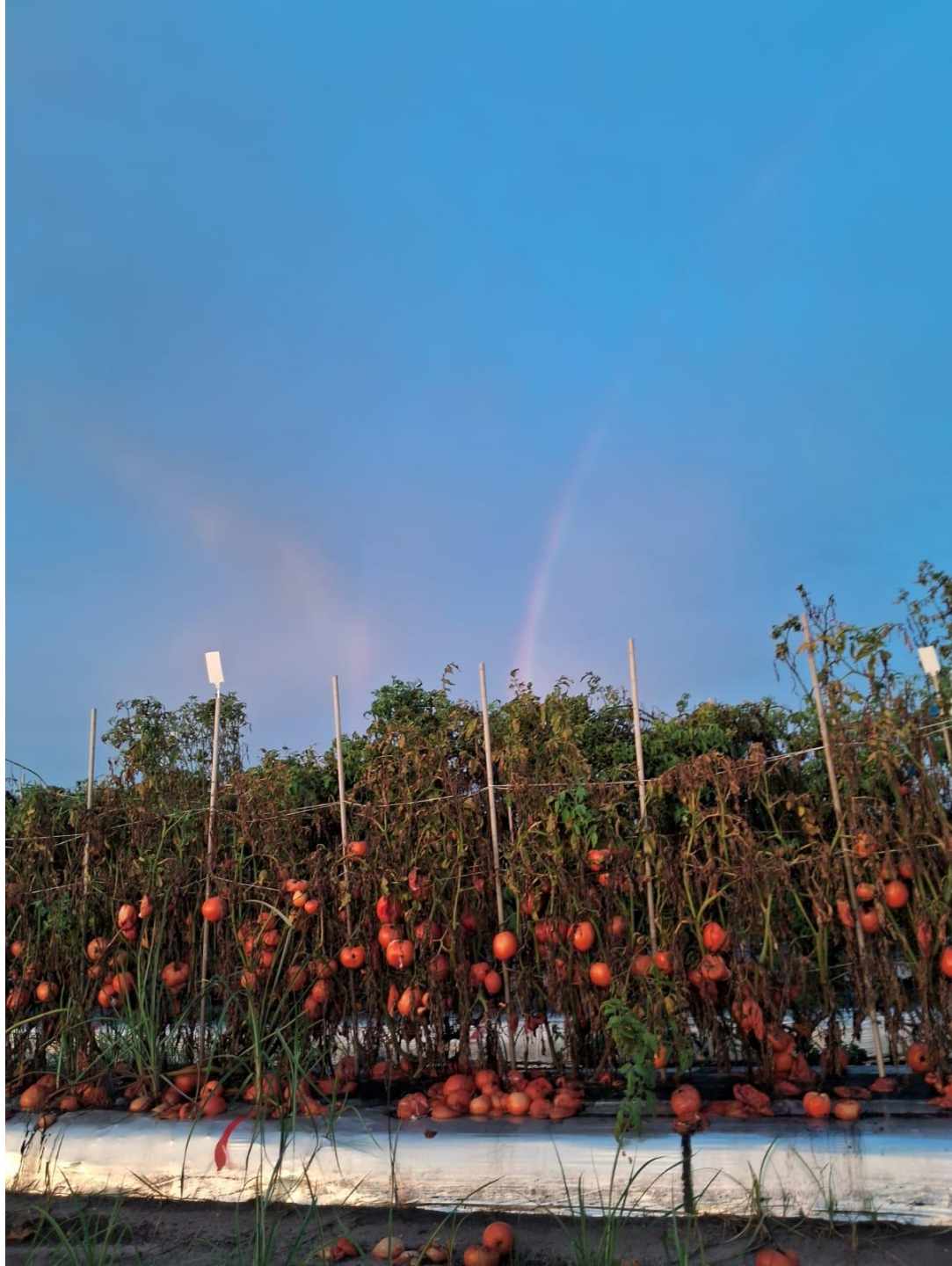


**Title:** Rainbow Over Rot

**Caption:** A late-season tomato plot under a fading sunset, with a rainbow rising behind the decaying canopy. A moment of beauty amid post-harvest loss in horticultural production.

**Photographer:** Shubham Singh, University of Florida





# Perfect Partners – 2nd Place

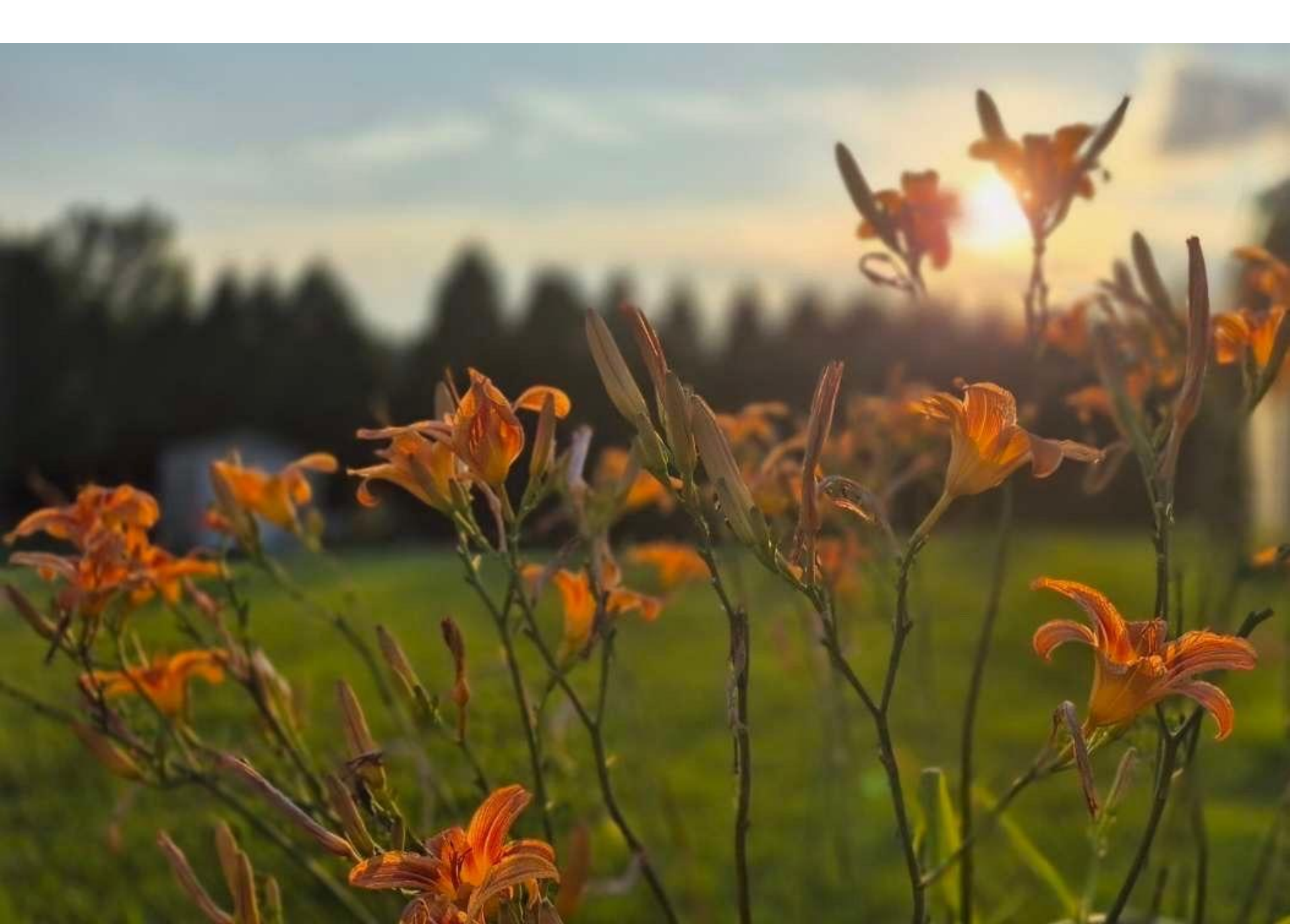
**Title:** Sunrise Synergy

**Caption:** Summer cabin view  
on Lake Pleasant, St. Cloud,  
Minnesota

**Photographer:** Adam Savage,  
Mayo Clinic







# Perfect Partners – 1<sup>st</sup> Place



**Title:** Terrestrial Rainbow

**Caption:** The product of rain and sunshine

**Photographer:** Molly Boyd,  
UNL





## 2. Pi Alpha Xi 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

# Pi Alpha Xi 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Images that exemplify the mission of Pi Alpha Xi: to promote scholarship, fellowship, professional leadership, and the enrichment of human life through plants. Photos of PAX Plant sales, research, field days, group activities, teaching, etc. would be appropriate



# Pi Alpha Xi 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – 1<sup>st</sup> Place



**Title:** Gathering Round *Vitis rotundifolia* in the Rural Research Rotunda

**Caption:** Dr. Eric Stafne, Mississippi State University Extension, demonstrates vine pruning of *Vitis rotundifolia* at the McNeill Muscadine Field Day 2024.

**Photographer:** Richelle Stafne, Former USDA ARS Biol Sci Tech





### 3. Garden Visitors

# Garden Visitors

These images should include gardens, landscapes or plants sharing their space with people or insects. Examples include insects and pollinators, people or pets, or wildlife in the garden. Images that include people must include a model release form.

# Garden Visitors – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

**Title:** Berry Rest

**Caption:** Dragonfly landing on a blueberry to take a brief break in its adventurous flight

**Photographer:** Nalajala Sindoor, UGA







# Garden Visitors – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



**Title:** Delight of the Bumblebee

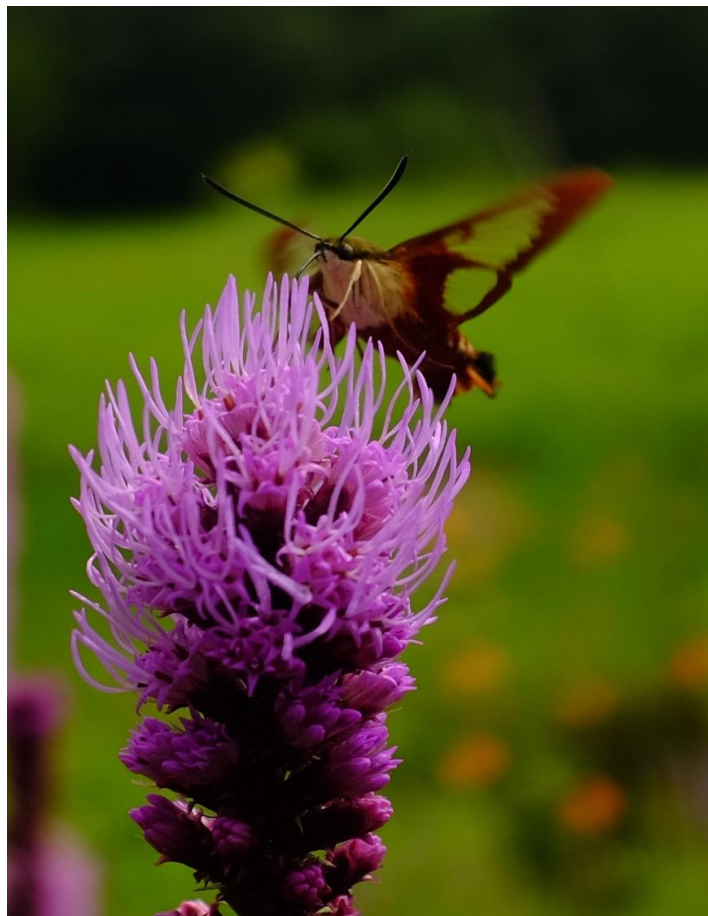
**Caption:** The pollen is callin'

**Photographer:** Molly Boyd,  
UNL





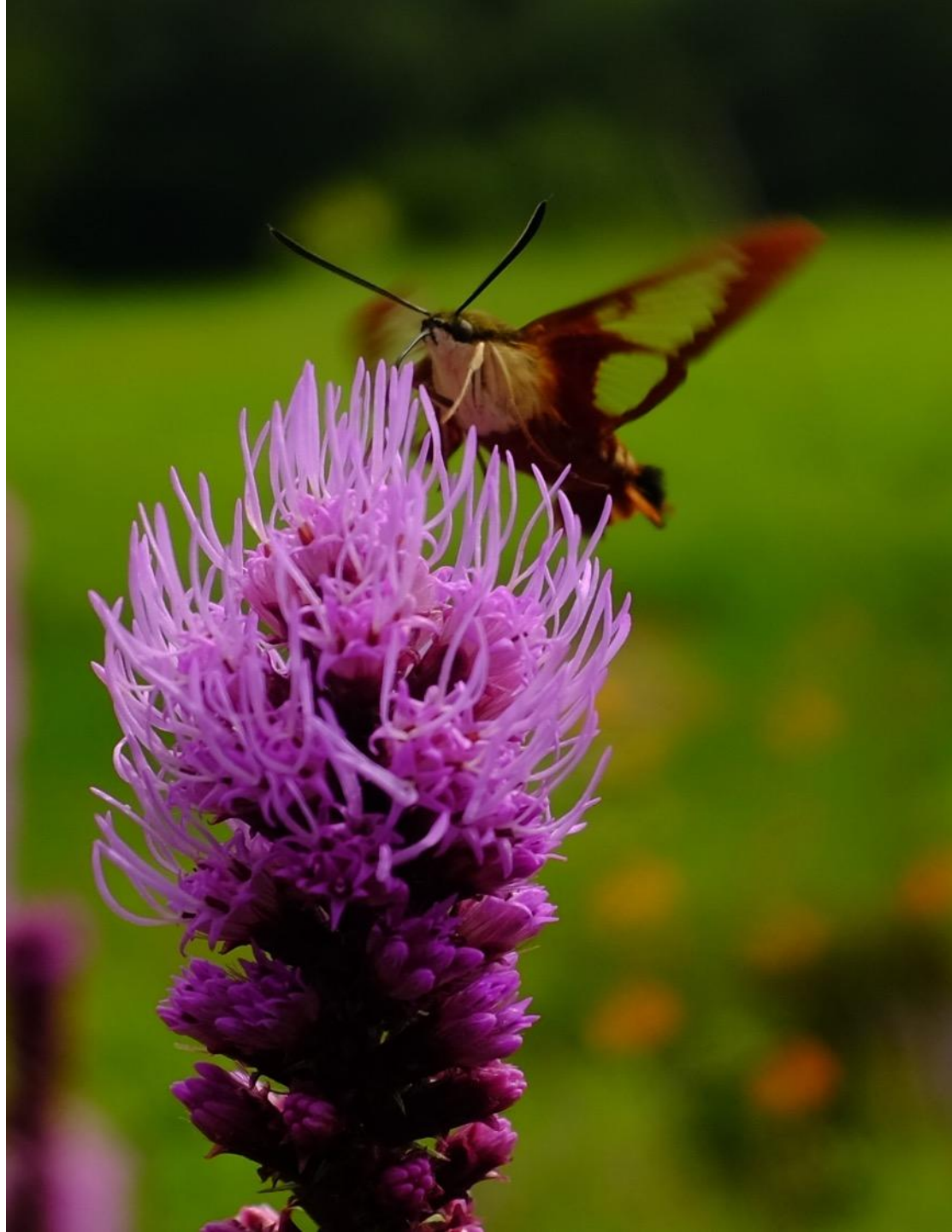
# Garden Visitors – 1<sup>st</sup> Place



**Title:** Hummingbird Moth

**Caption:** A hummingbird moth hovering by a Liatris flower.

**Photographer:** Renae Moran,  
University of Maine



## 4. Flowering Plants with an Attitude!

# Flowering Plants with an Attitude!

We've all seen pansies growing out of sidewalk cracks, or native flowers growing on rock surfaces. This category is for any horticultural plant growing in an audacious, amazing or inconceivable way. Examples include extremely large plant specimens, huge colonies or a lone survivor clinging to life in some inhospitable place.



# Flowering Plants with an Attitude!

## - 3<sup>rd</sup> Place



**Title:** Bioluminescent Blooms

**Caption:** Firefly petunia  
showing off its glow!

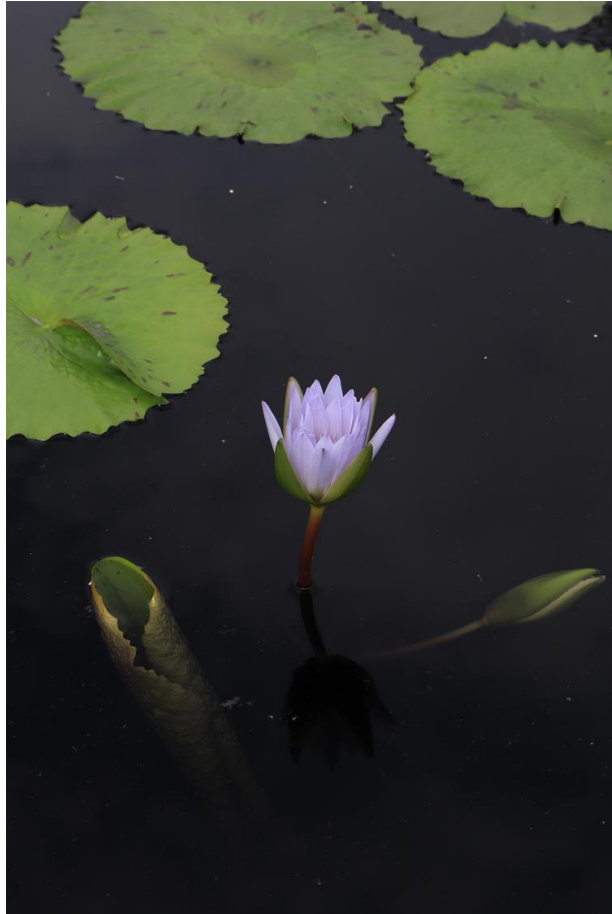
**Photographer:** Ava Forystek,  
Cornell University





# Flowering Plants with an Attitude!

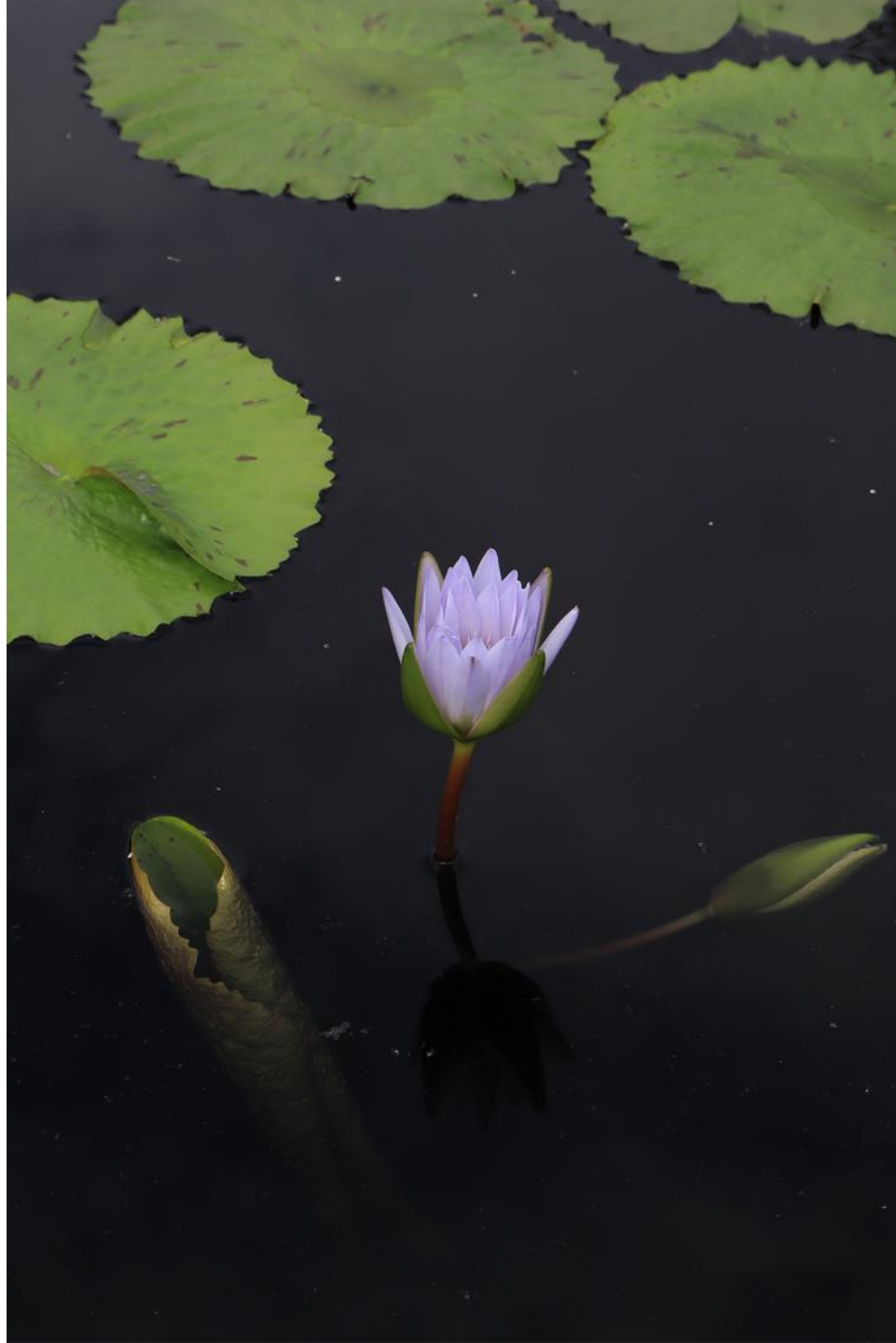
## – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



**Title:** Sleeping Beauty Awakens

**Caption:** From the quiet darkness, a pristine water lily gracefully rises, accompanied by the promise of new life.

**Photographer:** Qingwu Meng, University of Delaware



# Flowering Plants with an Attitude!

## – 1<sup>st</sup> Place



**Title:** Phlox in the Rocks

**Caption:** *Phlox diffusa* or spreading phlox is a common wildflower of the Rocky Mountains. This tough blooming flower was growing among the rocks near the tip of Grand Targhee Ski Area on the Western Slope of the Grand Tetons.

**Photographer:** Steven Newman, Newman Events and Consulting, LLC





# Serendipity

Sometimes the perfect photography is by chance. This category is for that random shot that was unplanned but exemplifies horticulture.



# Serendipity – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place



**Title:** Frosted Conifer

**Caption:** Chilly late winter morning and every plant was frosted.

**Photographer:** Karen Panter,  
Retired-University of  
Wyoming







# Serendipity – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



**Title:** Arrowleaf Balsamroot on the Bank

**Caption:** Springtime in the mountains. Arrowleaf balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*) has long been favorite of mine in the spring. This was shot on the bank of Lake Roosevelt on the Columbia River near Kettle Falls, WA.

**Photographer:** Steven Newman, Newman Events and Consulting, LLC







# Serendipity – 1<sup>st</sup> Place



**Title:** Sunny Sunflowers

**Caption:** Fresh cut sunflowers

**Photographer:** Karen Panter,  
Retired, University of  
Wyoming



# Horticulture in Production

# Horticulture in Production

The images in this category represent the core of academic horticulture in action. These images can be from farms, greenhouses, or research plots such as might be used in classroom or extension presentations.



# Horticulture in Production – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place



**Title:** Hydroponic Abundance

**Caption:** Edible dahlias grown in nutrient film technique (NFT)

**Photographer:** Mackenzie Lee, Colorado State University



# Horticulture in Production – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place



**Title:** Tendrils

**Caption:** Golden hour for a winegrape vineyard in Southern California.

**Photographer:** Luke Milliron, UC Cooperative Extension







# Horticulture in Production – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



**Title:** Berry Bold, Berry Proud

**Caption:** Highbush blueberry beauties growing with an attitude at the Alapaha research farm, University of Georgia.

**Photographer:** Sindooran  
Nalajala, UGA





# Horticulture in Production – 1<sup>st</sup> Place



**Title:** The (leaf) fall of two rootstocks

**Caption:** Rootstock SO4 (left) and rootstock Riparia Gloire (right) grafted to Pinot noir in the Willamette Valley, Oregon. There have been many visually observed differences between rootstocks in grapevines, but it does not get more obvious than that! Leaf fall timing is variable in grapevines and largely depends on canopy vigor and potassium status.

**Photographer:** Karamdeep Sidhu







# 7. Photomicrography

# Photo Micography

Many horticulturists spend hours over a microscope.  
Here is an opportunity to capture the small world.

# Photo Micography – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



**Title:** Microscopic Battle:  
Whiteflies on Yellow

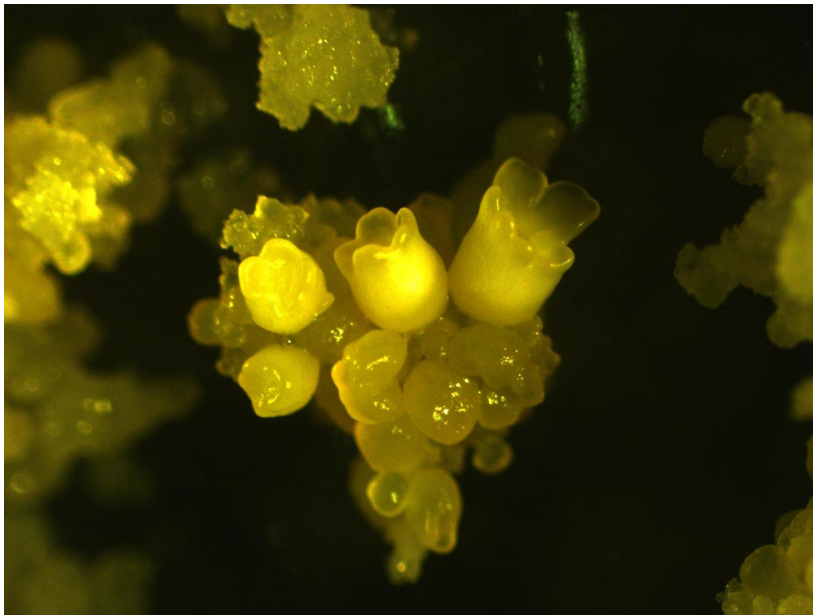
**Caption:** A microscopic glimpse of the yellow squash (*Cucurbita pepo*) leaf surface reveals the hidden world of silverleaf whitefly (*Bemisia tabaci*) adults and immature stages clustered on the underside of the leaf. This light microscope image captures the early-stage infestation, highlighting the intricate interaction between plant and pest.

**Photographer:** Nirmala Archarya





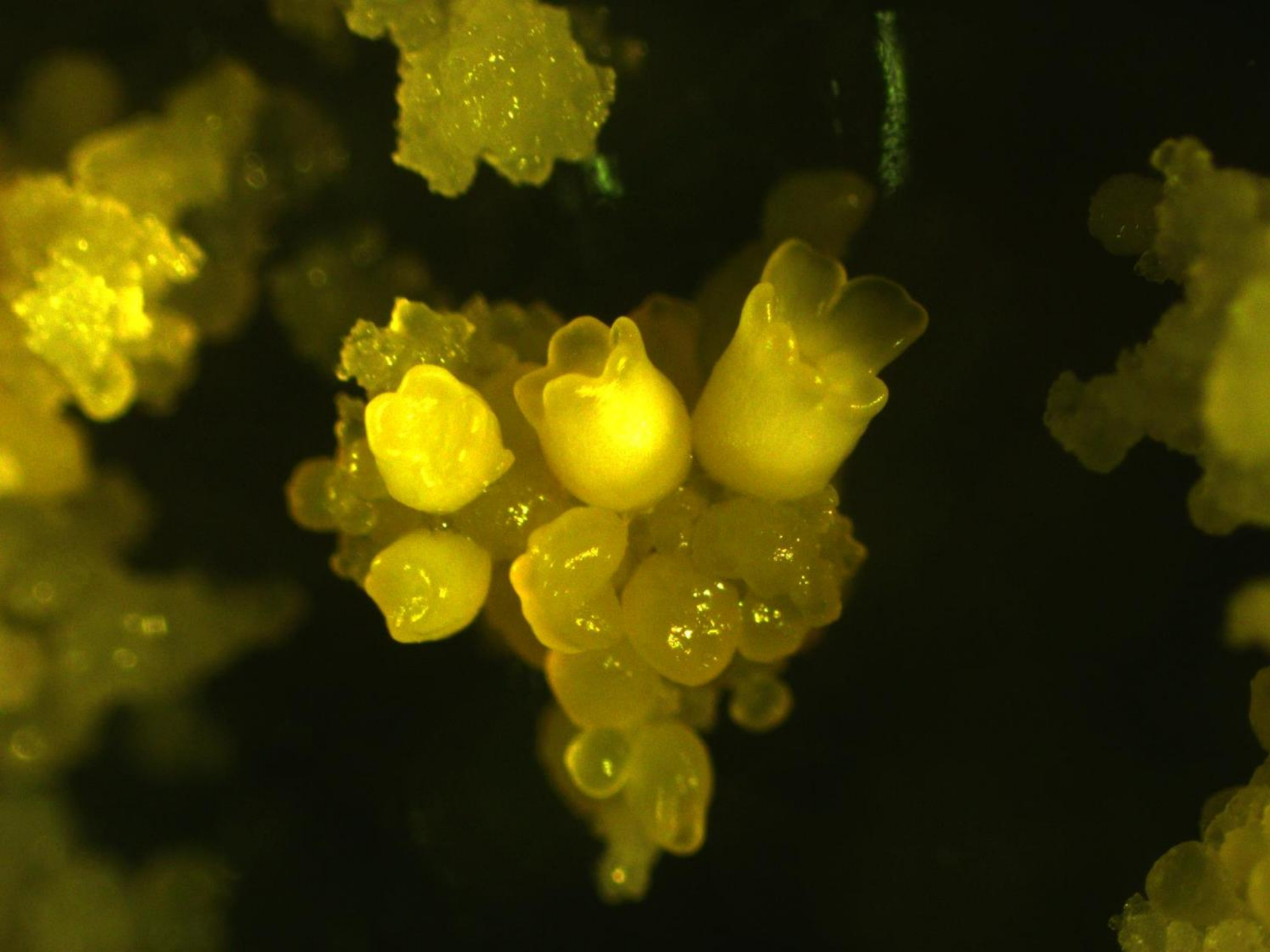
# Photo Micography – 1<sup>st</sup> Place



**Title:** Rose Italian Ice somatic embryos

**Caption:** Even under microscope we still can see continued beautiful horticultural features of Rose. Somatic embryogenesis is the main pathway for generate GE (Genome Editing) rose, Nikon 1500

**Photographer:** Kedong Da, North Carolina State Univeristy



## 8. Altered Images



# Altered Images

Photographs manipulated for artistic purposes by applying digital and/or traditional special effects (i.e., stacking, colorizing, toning, collage, photo composites, HDR, etc.). Please provide a brief description of the steps used to create the image for others to learn new techniques.

# Altered Images – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



**Title:** How the Mighty Oak Hath Fallen

**Caption:** Large *Quercus* spp. finally succumbs to several drought years followed by a significant winter freeze event in Pearl River County, Mississippi.

**Photographer:** Richelle Stafne, Former USDA ARS Biol Sci Tech





# Altered Images – 1<sup>st</sup> Place



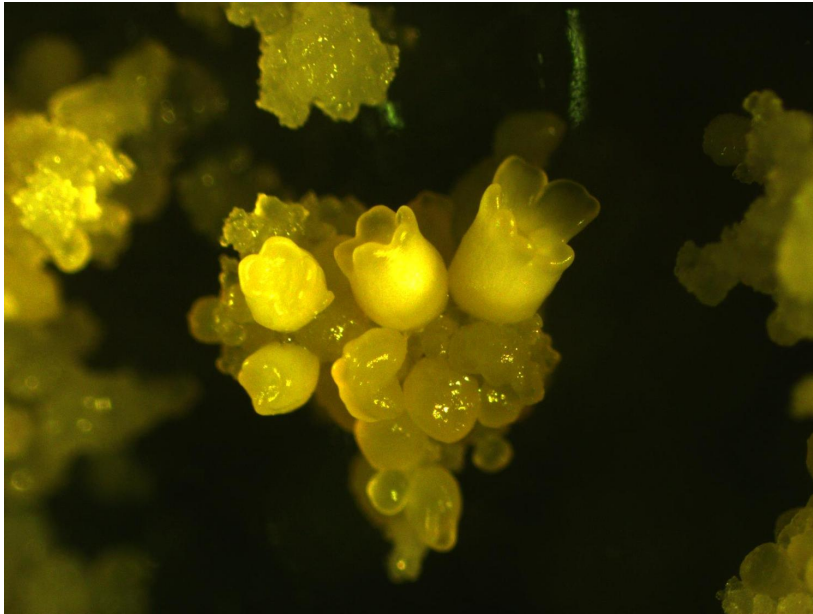
**Title:** Snag in the Desert

**Caption:** Trees once full of life whose bare remains reveals a window to the past have always been a fascination for me. This silhouette of an ancient tree caught my attention on a hike on a trail in Craters of the Moon National Park. The twisted and rugged branches evoke a sense of resilience and natural beauty.

**Photographer: Steven Newman,** Newman Events and Consulting, LLC



# Best in Show



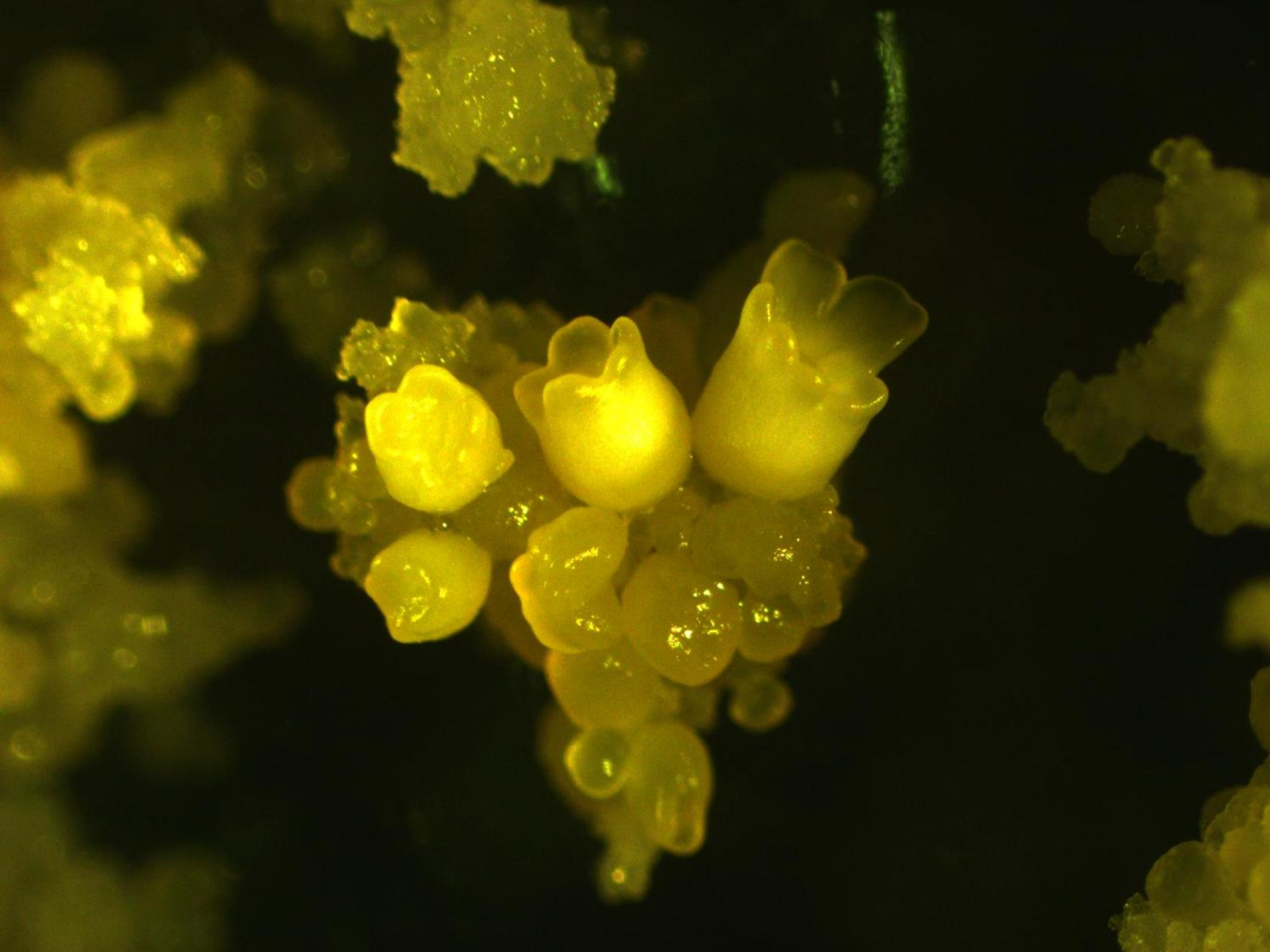
**Category:** Photomicrography

**Title:** Rose Italian Ice somatic embryos

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# Thank you all for your photo submissions!

- We'll see you next year in Dallas!
- Please consider entering your favorite photos in the 2026 Paul Thomas Pi Alpha Xi Digital Photography Contest!
- Let's celebrate horticulture in Dallas with our photos!

