

Pi Alpha Xi

The National Honor Society for Horticulture

*For more information, contact President, Mark Bridgen
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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



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 – 3rd 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



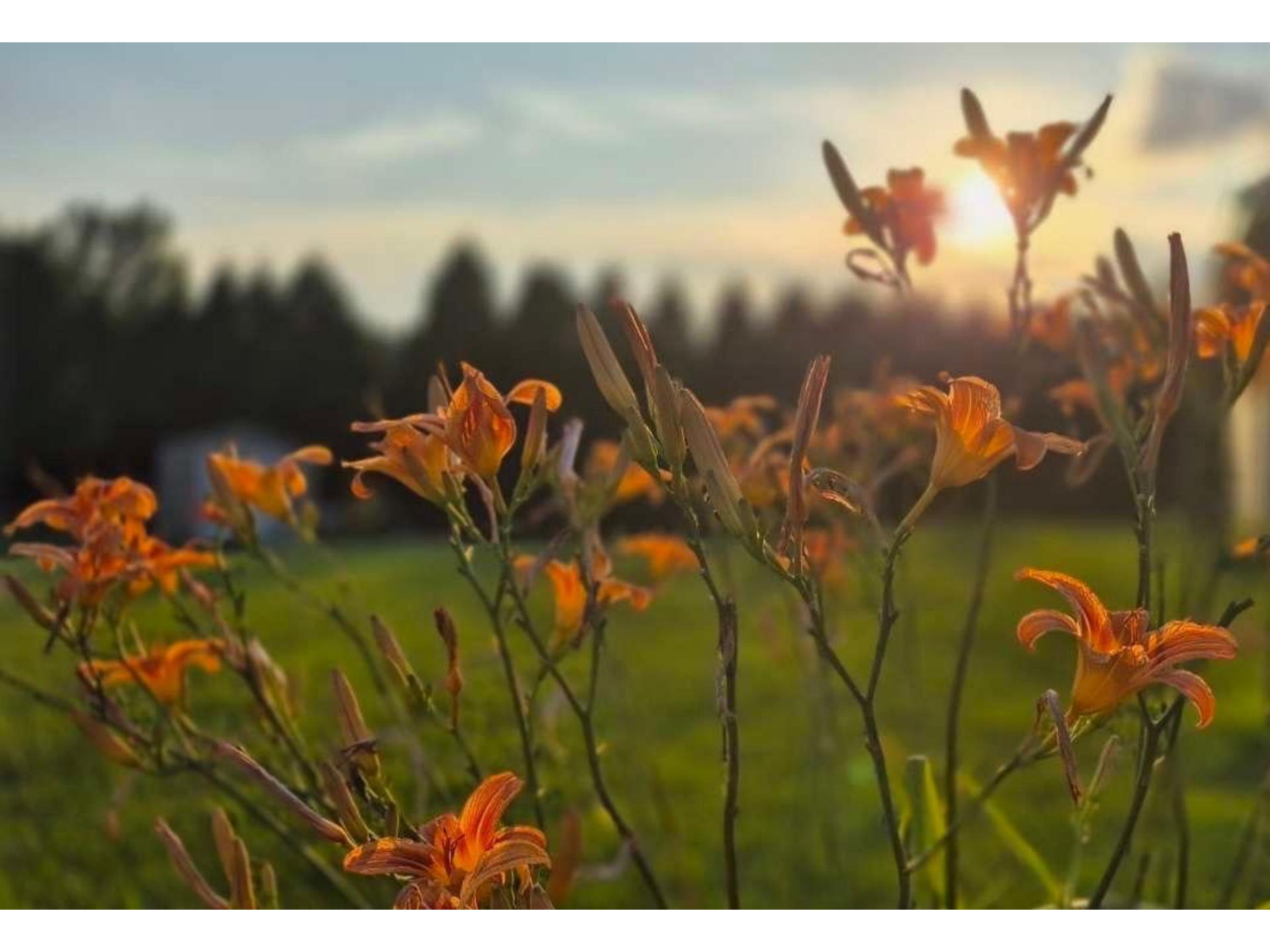
Perfect Partners – 2nd Place



Title: Sunrise Synergy

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

Photographer: Adam Savage, Mayo Clinic



Perfect Partners – 1st Place



Title: Terrestrial Rainbow

Caption: The product of rain and sunshine

Photographer: Molly Boyd, UNL



2. Pi Alpha Xi 100th
Anniversary

Pi Alpha Xi 100th 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 100th Anniversary – 1st 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 – 3rd Place



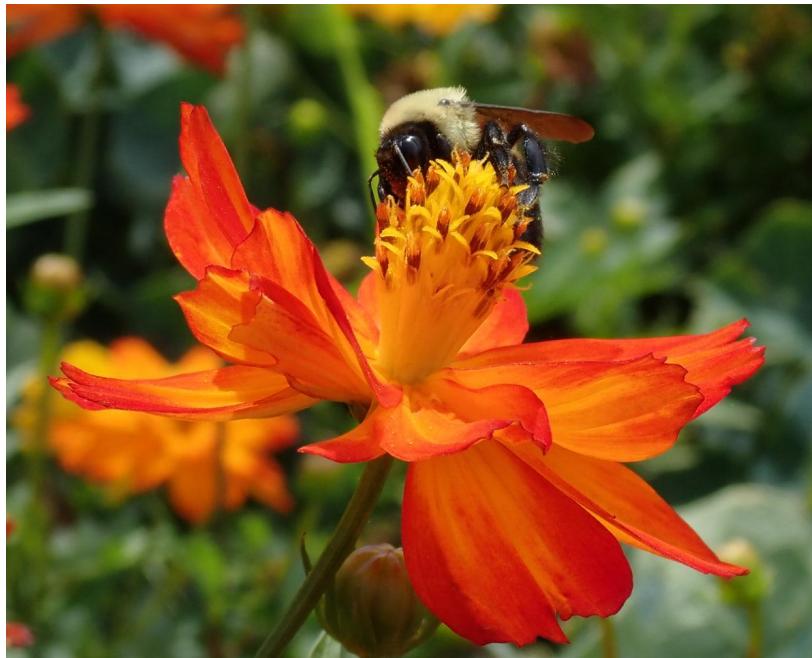
Title: Berry Rest

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

Photographer: Nalajala
Sindoora, UGA



Garden Visitors – 2nd Place



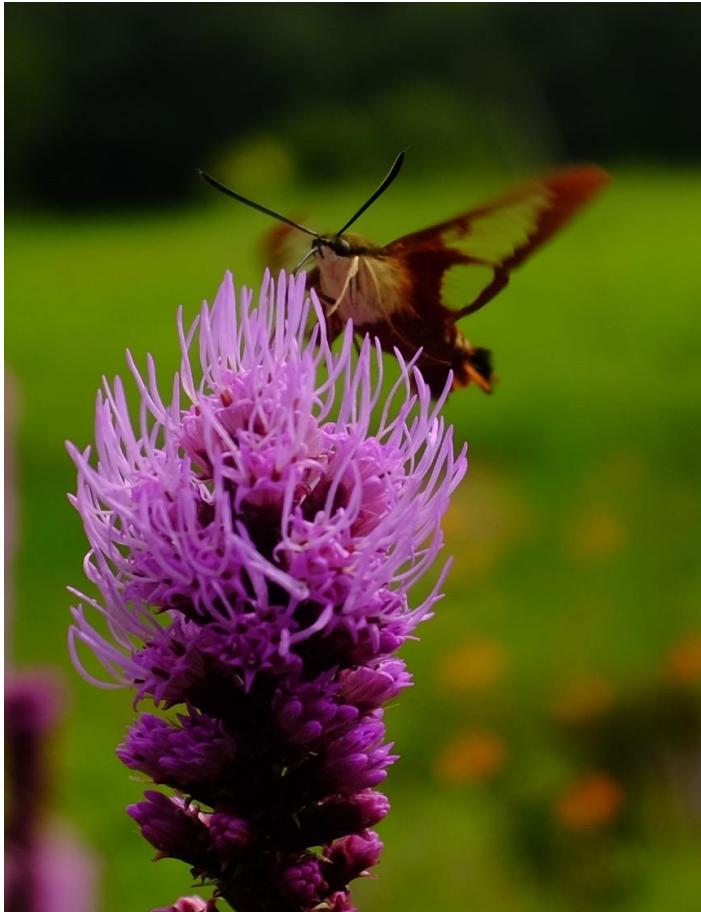
Title: Delight of the Bumblebee

Caption: The pollen is callin'

Photographer: Molly Boyd,
UNL



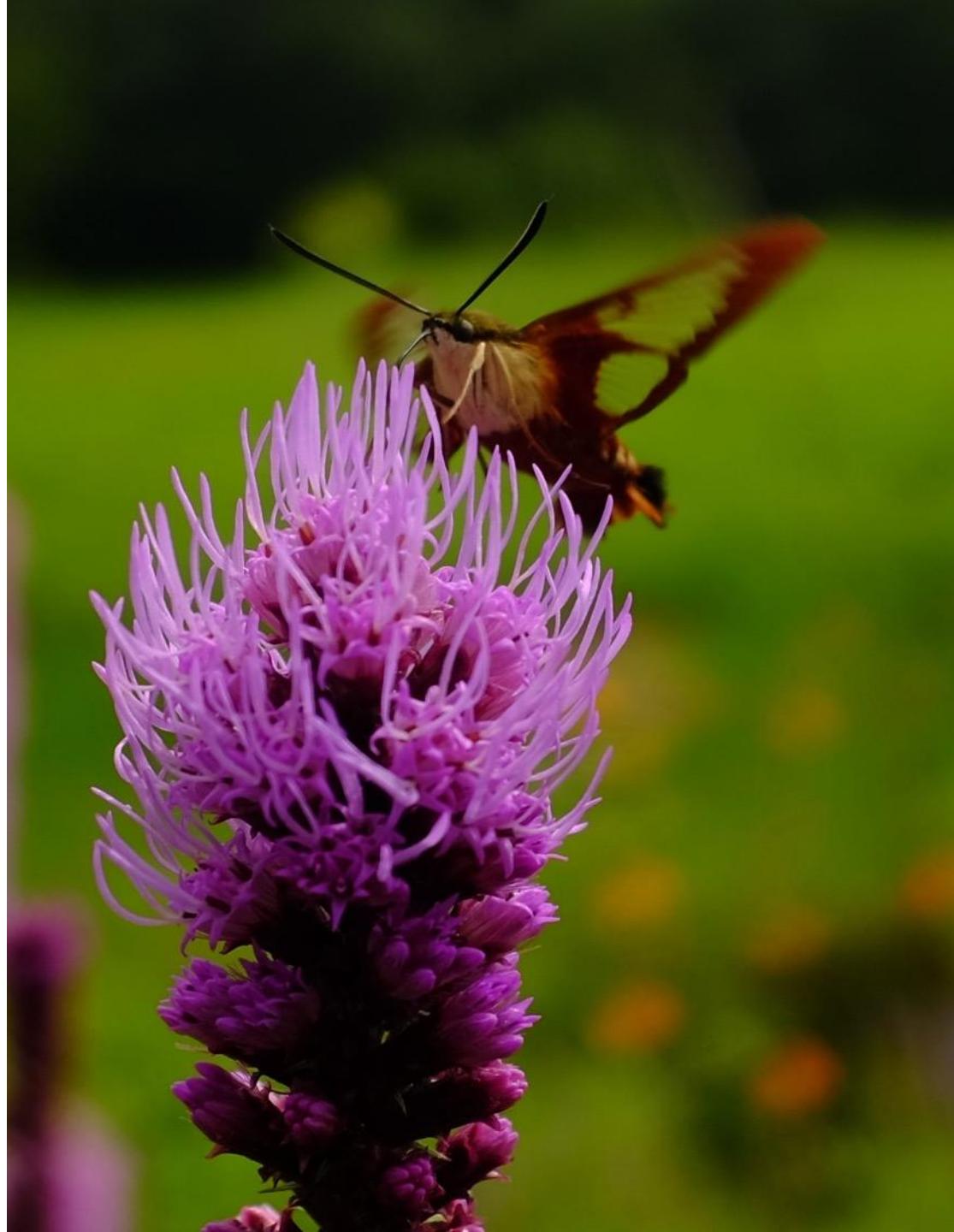
Garden Visitors – 1st Place



Title: Hummingbird Moth

Caption: A hummingbird moth hovering by a Liatris flower.

Photographer: Renae Moran,
University of Maine



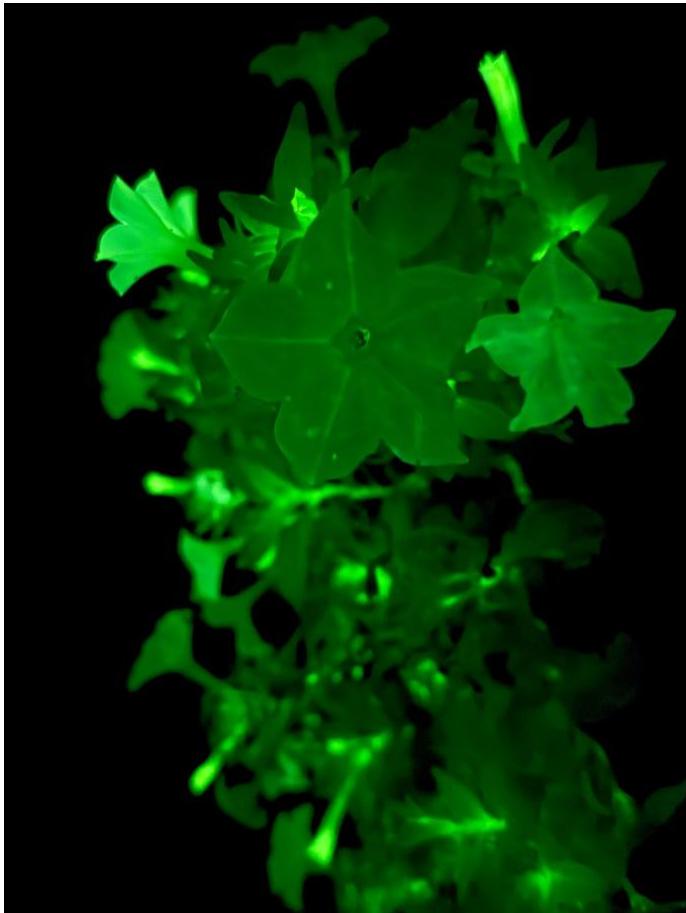
4. Flowering Plants with an Attitude!

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!

- 3rd Place



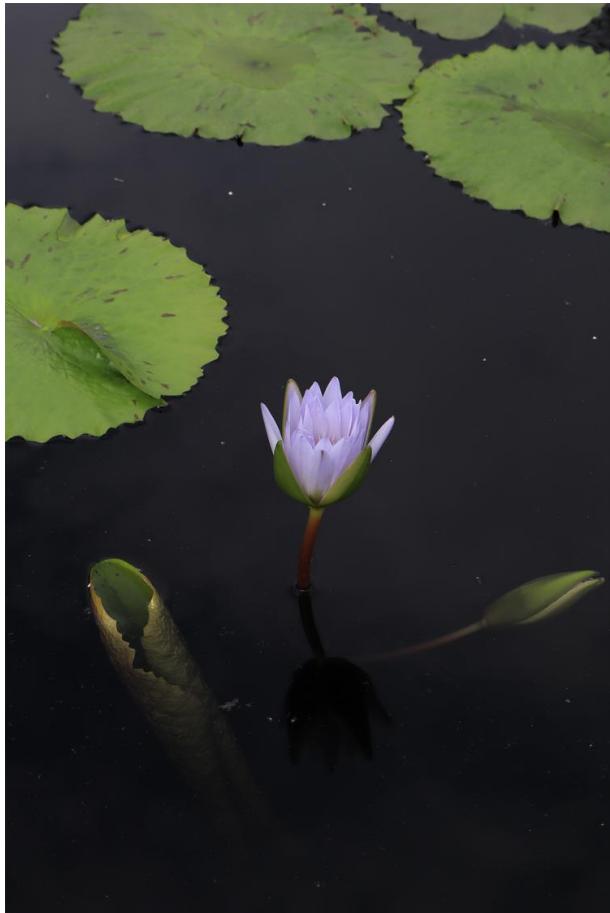
Title: Bioluminescent Blooms

Caption: Firefly petunia
showing off its glow!

Photographer: Ava Forystek,
Cornell University



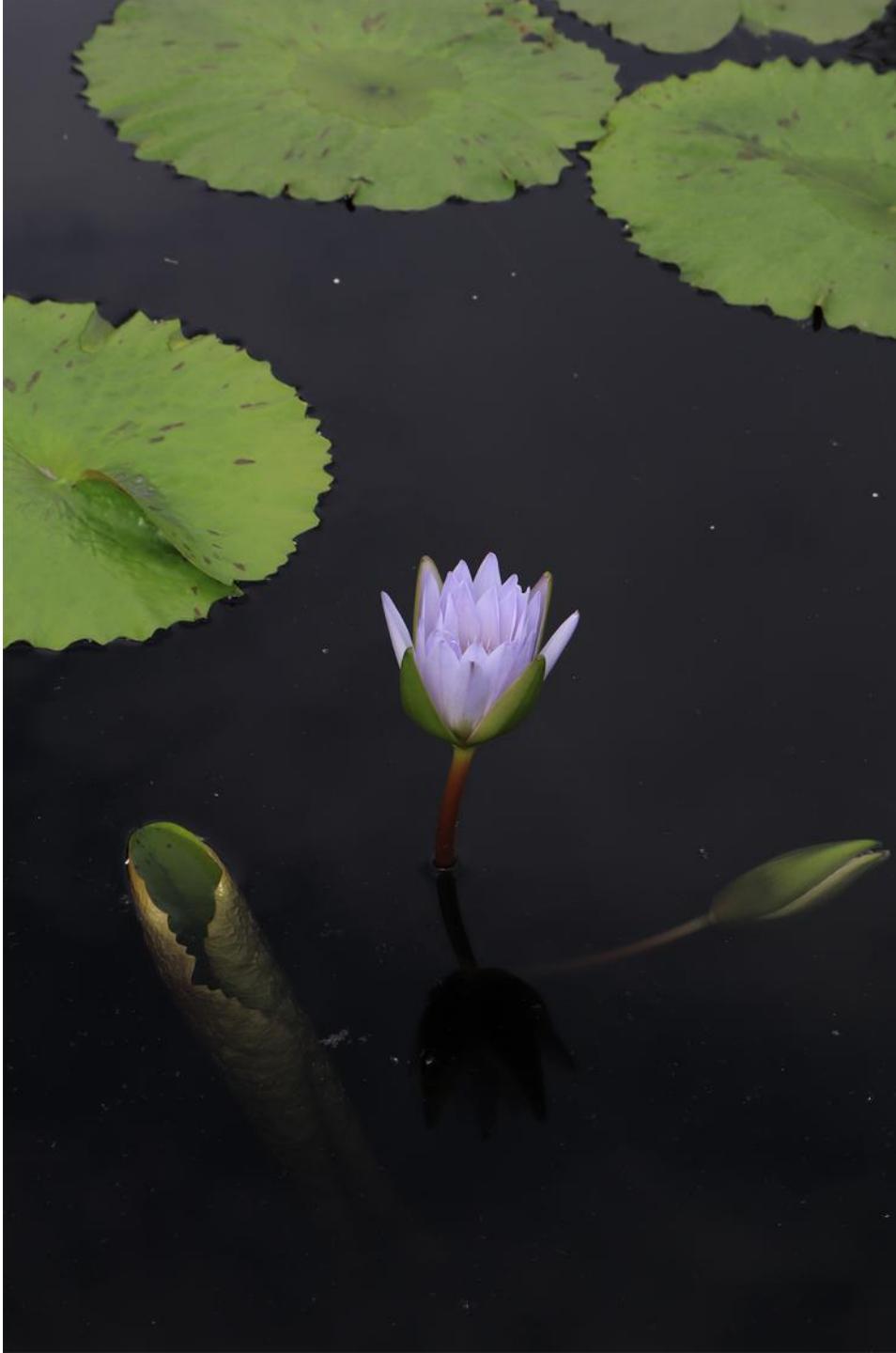
Flowering Plants with an Attitude! – 2nd Place



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!

– 1st 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 – 3rd Place



Title: Frosted Conifer

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

Photographer: Karen Panter,
Retired-University of
Wyoming



Serendipity – 2nd 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 – 1st 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 – 3rd Place



Title: Hydroponic Abundance

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

Photographer: Mackenzie Lee, Colorado State University



Horticulture in Production – 3rd Place



Title: Tendrils

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

Photographer: Luke Milliron, UC Cooperative Extension



Horticulture in Production – 2nd Place



Title: Berry Bold, Berry Proud

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

Photographer: Sindoora Nalajala, UGA



Horticulture in Production – 1st 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. Photomicography

Photo Micography

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

Photo Micography – 2nd Place



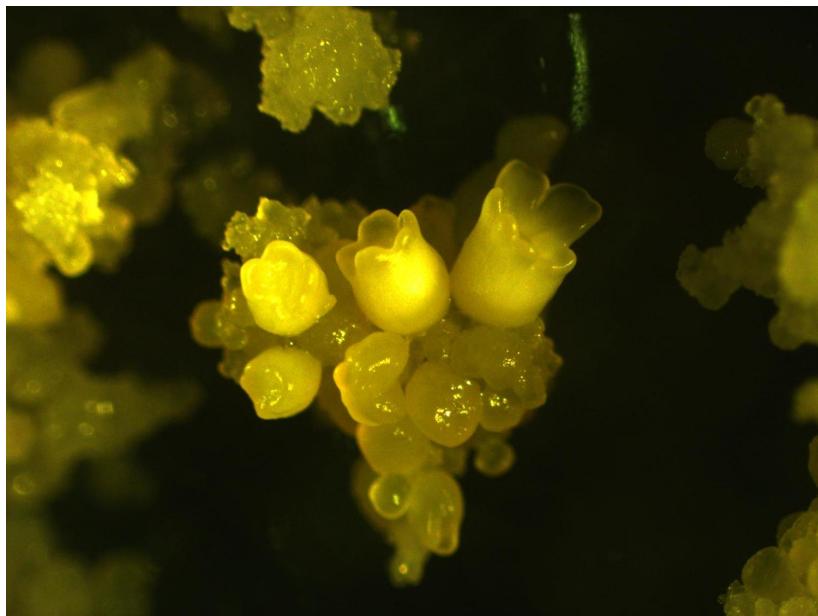
Title: Microscopic Battle: Whiteflies on Yellow

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



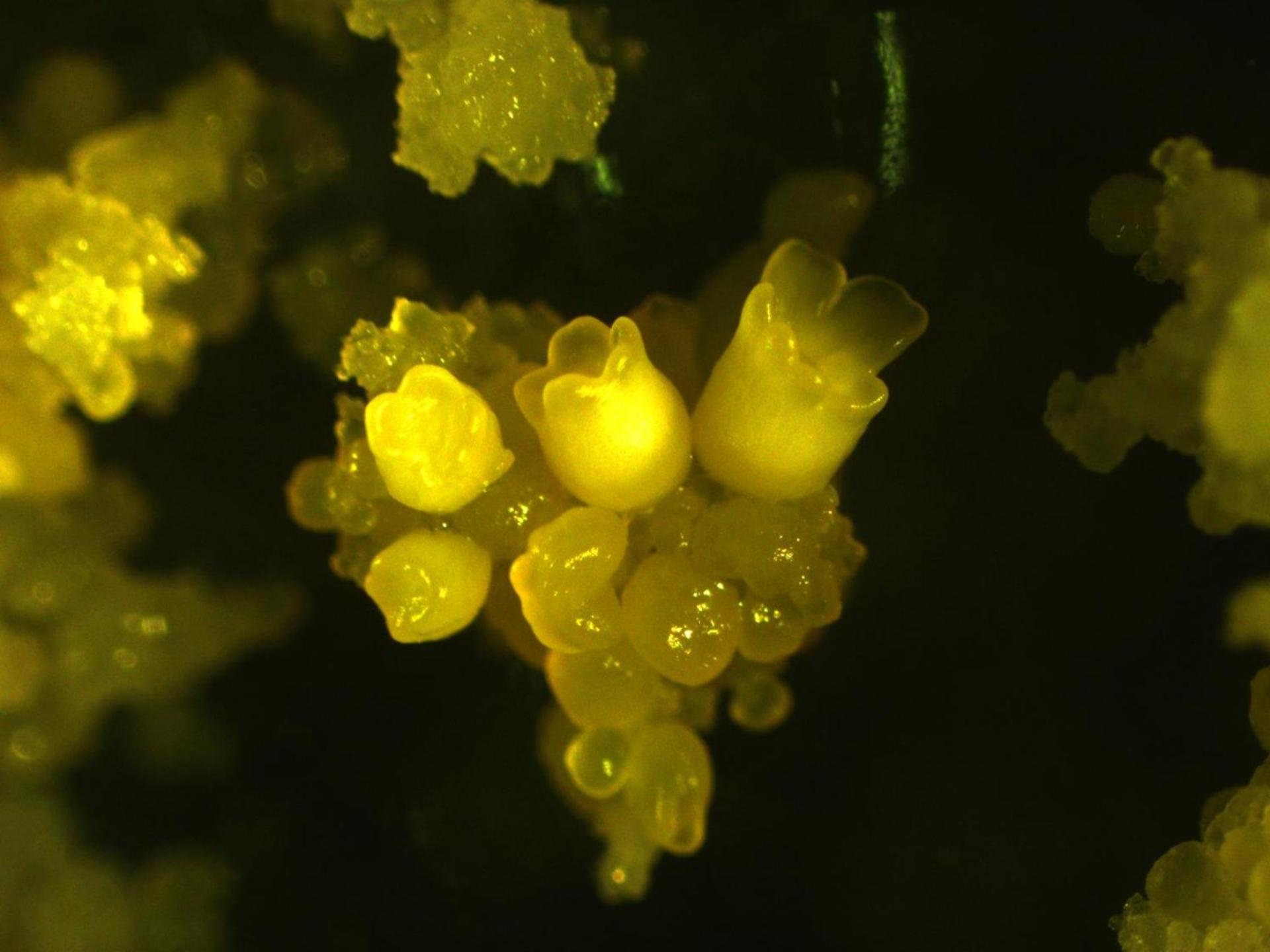
Photo Micography – 1st Place



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
University



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 – 2nd 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 – 1st Place



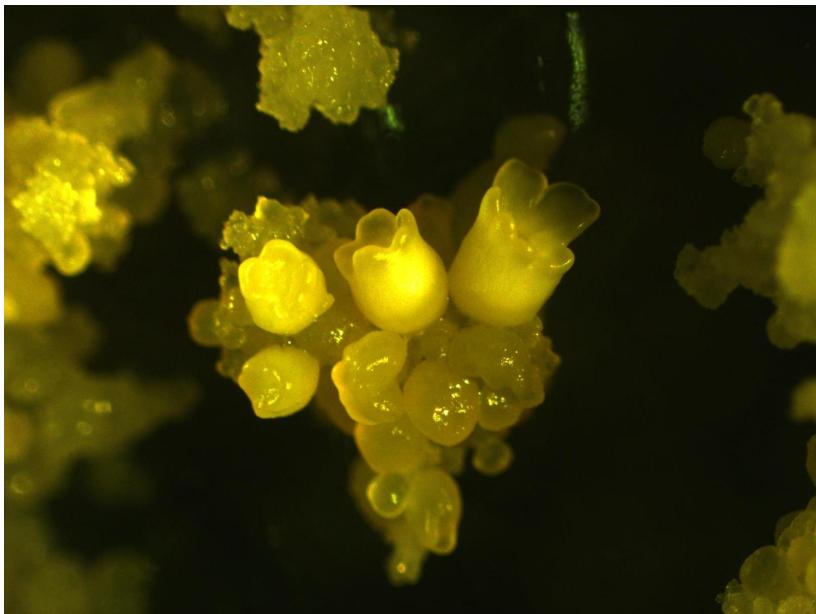
Title: Snag in the Desert

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

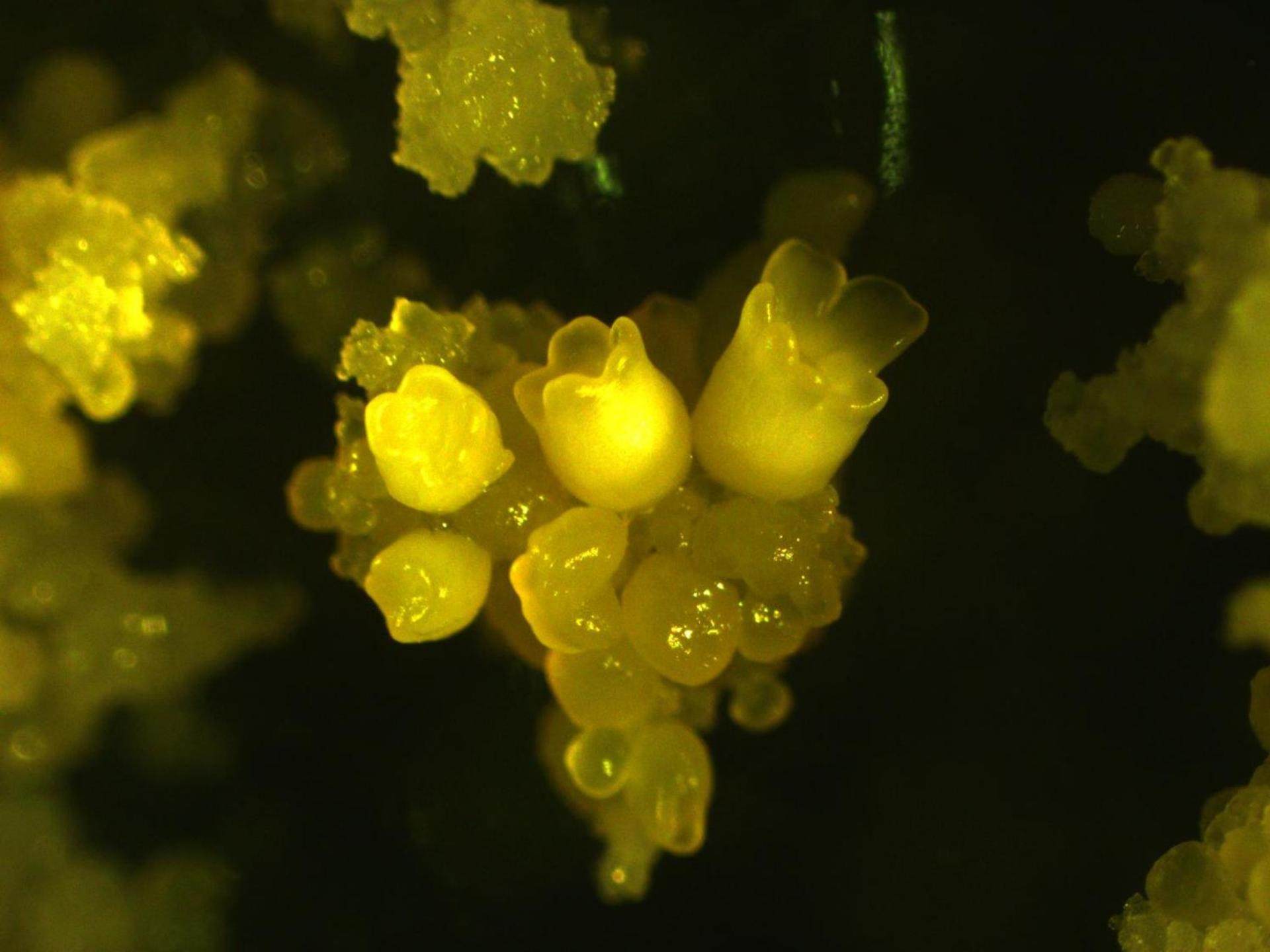


Category: Photomicography

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 University



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!

