



BULLETIN of the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation

Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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ADDITION TO STAFF

We are pleased to announce that Mr. Gavin D. R. Bridson, who came to the Institute in 1982 on temporary leave from The Linnean Society of London, has joined our staff on a permanent basis as Bibliographer and Senior Research Scholar. He had served as Librarian and Archivist for the Society since 1969, and before that as Librarian for the Department of Zoology at the British Museum (Natural History).

In his new capacity, Mr. Bridson is preparing a supplement to *B-P-H: Botanico-Periodicum-Huntianum*, published by the Institute in 1968. This work provides a fairly comprehensive title-list of periodicals (ca. 10,000) known to have included botanical contributions, notices of botanical publications, or relevant historical and biographical material. Each entry, headed by a standardized title-abbreviation, includes details of volume and date spans, and usually provides references to earlier and later title history. The supplement will account for the many new periodicals that have burgeoned forth in the intervening years, as well as incorporate a significant number of corrections and amendments to entries in the original work. Running to about 8,000 entries, the supplement will be ready for publication next year. *B-P-H* remains unparalleled as a retrospective periodicals bibliography in the life sciences and has become a worldwide standard for bibliographical citation.

As part of the Bibliography Department's ongoing project to produce a series of topical bibliographies, Mr. Bridson is beginning work on several that will account for periodical literature on particular taxonomic groups that was published during the department's special research period, 1730-1840. Our master bibliographic file now contains well over 50,000 citations of such articles, and for several of the contemplated subject areas, this information will enable the first-ever bibliographies of their periodical literature.

Mr. Bridson's personal research interests lie in the field of historical bibliography, especially graphic-arts printing. Natural history is almost unique in non-fiction literature for the sheer quantity and quality of its printed illustrations, and his work focuses on the history and bibliographical significance of their design, preparation and production. Some years ago he published a study of the treatment of plates in bibliographical description and was coauthor of a preliminary guide to British nineteenth-century color printers.



He is also coauthor of a recently published bibliography of the literature of printmaking and picture printing in Britain, and is now completing a historical directory of nearly 700 British eighteenth- and nineteenth-century graphic-arts printing firms and their productions. He also maintains an interest in natural-history drawings and manuscripts, which earlier led to his work as joint author of *Natural history manuscript resources in the British Isles*, published by Bowker in 1980.



Pastel, signed C de G, probably nineteenth-century French. From Still-lives and Nature Studies from the George J. McDonald Collection.

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The *Bulletin* does not publish book reviews. Books for review in the Institute's journal, *Huntia*, should be directed to Dr. Robert W. Kiger, its Editor, at the Institute.

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SPRING EXHIBITION

"Still-lives and Nature Studies from the George J. McDonald Collection" will be on view from 16 April through 15 June 1984. This private collection of mostly nineteenth-century American works, never publicly exhibited, was assembled between 1960 and 1980 by Mr. McDonald, of Washington, D.C.

George tells of his original inspiration from a chance viewing of the William H. Gerds collection in Newark about 1960. Soon afterward he began collecting paintings around Washington and on trips to his home state of Rhode Island. Still-lives especially were available, and usually within his means, though he once had to decide between a new raincoat and a painting (and chose the painting). He bought his first still-life in Baltimore. A second one, signed and dated, and acquired a month later in the same shop, turned out to be a mate to the first. Depicting a cantaloupe and a watermelon, these paintings by [M.?] J. Scaman (New York, 1864) are included in the show.

After receiving a degree in International Relations from Brown University, George worked for the Census Bureau in both New York and Washington. Later he held positions in the Office of Education and the U.S. Postal Service. Upon an early retirement in the mid-1970s, he opened an art gallery in Washington, but kept private the works shown in this exhibition, with the exception of a few sold from his collection and graciously lent to us by the new owners.

For this show, we selected 43 of George's still-lives, nature studies and animal paintings. They include a generous sampling by New England artists, particularly of the Providence, Fall River and Springfield still-life schools: George Whitaker, Edward C. Leavitt, J. C. Spencer, Bryant Chapin, Abbie Luella Zuill and Jonas Joseph La Valley. When asked which is his favorite painting, George is quick to name Whitaker's "The Fruit of Our Garden in the Country—Study," from the collector's home state. He also has a special fondness for one of the earliest works in the collection, a watercolor of a bouquet by E. English. Other artists represented in the show are P. Dieffenbach, Anna E. Hardy, George W. Horlor, Raoul M. de Longpré fils, Emile van Marcke de Lummen, David Emil Joseph de Noter, George Stevens and A. J. H. Way.

A 20-page annotated checklist of the show includes eight reproductions in full-color. The exhibition poster also features one of these works, the handsome 1862 painting of apples by P. Dieffenbach illustrated here in black and white.



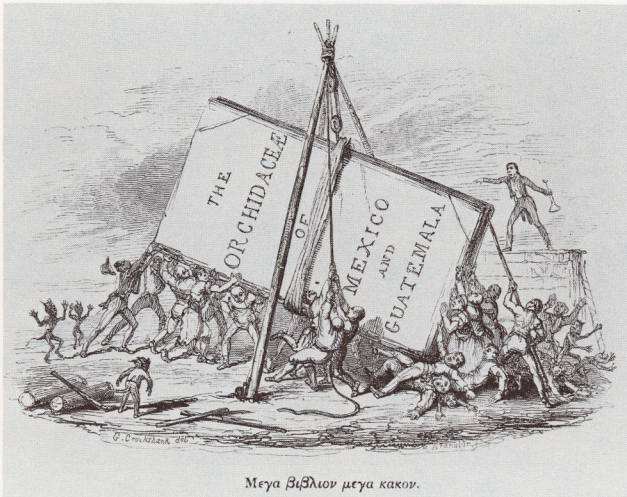
Oil on canvas by P. Dieffenbach. From Still-lives and Nature Studies from the George J. McDonald Collection.

DELECTUS HUNTIANI 8

Despite its scarcity, James Bateman's *Orchidaceae of Mexico and Guatemala* (1837-1843) is comparatively widely known, if only in point of dimensions! Like Audubon's celebrated *Birds of America* (1827-1838), it has been largely the book's physical stature that has earned this fame, for at 29 inches, although overshadowed by Audubon's 38-inch monster, it is still the largest botanical book yet published. However, few people know that Bateman's tome had a diminutive partner.

Bateman's inherited wealth enabled him to indulge his predilection for orchids to the extent of personally funding

his monumental treatise, replete with coloured drawings by Augusta Withers, Miss S. A. Drake, Miss Jane Edwards and Samuel Holden. Of course, its dimensions were not altogether a matter of vanity—the author wished to have these gorgeous exotics portrayed in their natural sizes. But the irony of the situation was that the life-size depiction of these ethereal blooms created such a slab of paper that the resulting *mega biblion* invited the good-natured jibe of “the librarian's nightmare.” The author was obviously sufficiently alive to this situation to invite the celebrated George Cruikshank (1792-1878) to create an audaciously witty vignette. Often reproduced since, it depicts a gesticulating librarian, armed with megaphone, directing the struggles



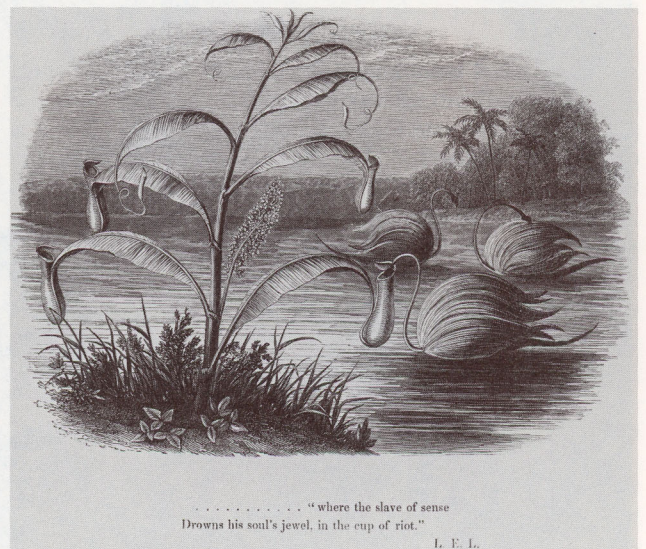
of a score and more of underlings who hoist the tome with derrick and tackle while suffering the taunts of a quintet of gleeful demons. However, this little vignette should really be seen in its original setting, where ironic force was lent by floating it in a sea of over four square feet of blank paper!

In a book whose chief attraction is its 40 huge hand-coloured lithographs by Maxime and Paul Gauci, it is an unexpected pleasure to find that Cruikshank's is only one of 38 decorative, wood-engraved, tail-piece vignettes of such contrasting scale and character. Bateman's unsparing purse also extended to paying other skilled artists such as J. Brandard, R. E. Branston and E. Landells to produce these exquisitely engraved, illustrative gems. Most of them depict appropriate subjects—tropical forest scenes, floating gardens, curious Mexican and Guatemalan antiquities and people,



unusual plants and faunal oddities. But that is not all. Cruikshank's comic genius is again given full expression in a superb vignette that portrays the trauma caused by a family of huge cockroaches (*Blatta gigantea*) when a newly arrived box of tropical plants is opened by four unsuspecting gardeners at "High Legh."

In a much gentler vein, another unsigned vignette shows a fantasy of engaging little creatures formed from the dried flowers of nine orchidaceous genera. This has much the same character as Dickie Doyle's fairyland illustrations of the 1870's. One of Bateman's acquaintances, we learn, was a Lady Grey of Groby who had a remarkable "museum siccum" that boasted a rich collection of such whimsical tableaux. They clearly appealed to the author's sense of humour, for another of them provided the subject of yet another quietly droll vignette, shown here.

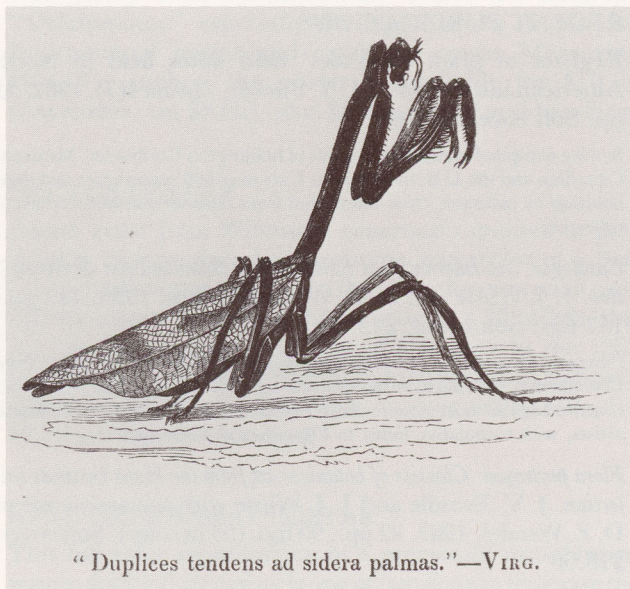


But, just look a moment—what is going on? Quite simply, the dried blossoms of *Cycnoches ventricosum* (an orchidaceous plant, with flowers exactly resembling swans) are represented as drinking out of the pitchers of *Nepenthes distillatoria* (pitcher plant). But of course—a line of Laetitia Landon's verse says it all! Each vignette in this gargantuan work is accompanied by a similarly witty or apposite quotation chosen from Latin or English literature by the cultured Bateman.

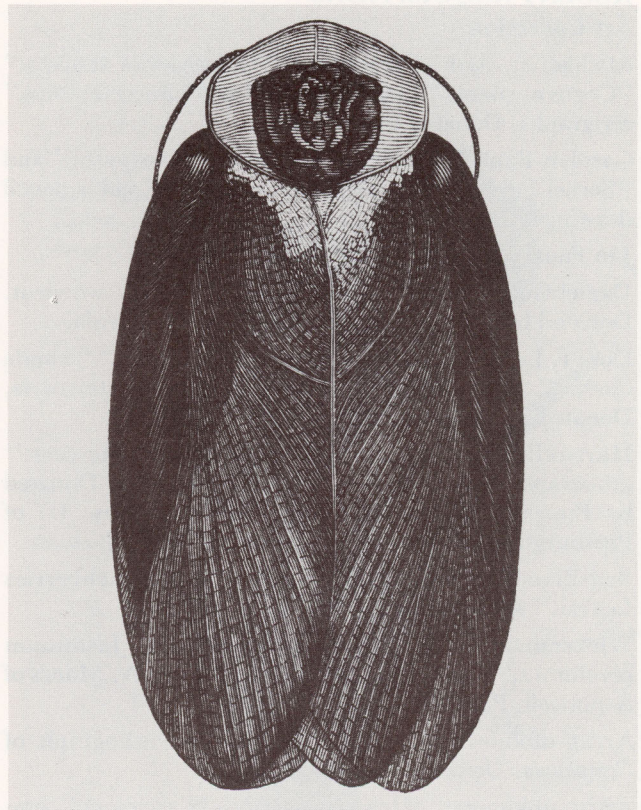
Whether or not the affluent subscribers to a 20-guinea scientific treatise fully appreciated this frivolity is not recorded. However, the individuality and craftsmanship of its vignettes were apparently valued by someone, for in 1844 the great flower tome budded a modest offshoot, *Vignettes from Mr. Bateman's Orchidaceae of Mexico and Guatemala*. Priced at a guinea, no less, this slim oblong octavo volume presented 30 of these wood engravings in superb impressions

accompanied by a letterpress title page and “description of the plates.” Curiously, though, this little item seems to be even rarer than its great parent, which was published in only 125 copies. The Institute is fortunate enough to possess an example of each.

Bateman never visited either Mexico or Guatemala, and relied on the collection of a traveller friend, George Ackermann, for several drawings of local scenes. As noted, the vignettes were prepared by distinguished craftsmen of the day. The draughtsmen included John Brandard (1812-1863), later to acquire great fame as the talented artist for innumerable pictorial music covers, and Thomas Peplow Wood, described by Bateman as “a very promising young artist,” who unfortunately died in April 1845 at the age of 28. The engravers were Ebenezer Landells (1808-1860), a pupil of the illustrious Thomas Bewick, and Robert Edward Branston (fl. 1829-1885), who belonged to a talented family of wood engravers. The volume of their reprinted vignettes was printed by “Cook & Co. Printers, 76 Fleet Street, London”.¹ In this reissue, the vignettes, engraved with needle-fine precision, were impressed on India paper (actually a soft Mulberry-fibre paper) to ensure that the most delicate detail showed to best effect. Whereas the original volume required one to stoop to see the tiny detail in Cruikshank’s “librarian’s nightmare,” it and all the others could now be examined closely in one’s hand.



A guinea might seem disproportionately expensive for such a small portion of the original 20-guinea work, but the price serves to indicate the still-high contemporary estimation of this quality of wood engraving. However, there was a rapidly growing new market for acres of cheap quality work,



engendered by such successful enterprises as the *Penny magazine*, which would rapidly overwhelm the select demand for the slow, expensively high-quality work for which Branston and Landells were justly admired. W. M. Ivins, who expressed a tart disregard for such “wonderful but silly” India-proofed engravings, held the view that “wood-engraving, like type printing, was not to come of age until it had come down from the higher levels of expensiveness and become a rather cheap and common thing.”² True, as part of the development of communication by repeatable pictorial statements, Bateman’s sophisticated vignettes might seem to us to belong to an ultimately blind alley. But surely, we may permit ourselves to be charmed by the way the author’s cultured humour conceived the idea of using such craftsmanship to leaven an avowedly grandiose botanical treatise, and may unashamedly admire the finesse of these miniatures.

—Gavin D. R. Bridson

¹I know nothing of Cook but, interestingly enough, this address (also known as White Lion Court) had been shared just previously by two other fine printers of wood engravings, James H. Vizetelly and George Whitehead.

²See his *Prints and visual communication*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1965, pp. 104, 105.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Art Collection

Michael E. Arth (Colorado). "Washingtonia robusta," "Cocos nucifera," "San Gorgonio" and "Butia capitata," serigraphs. Donated by the artist.

Carolyn Bank Crawford (Oklahoma). "Diospyros" and "Seckel Pears and Blackjack Oak Leaves," color pencil drawings.

Jan Faust (Pennsylvania). "Stalks," graphite.

Daniel Goldstein (California). "Iris at Night," woodcut. Donated by Martin Goldstein of Aptos, California.

Dora F. Lee (Maryland). "Cyclamen," "Lotus," "Vanda Orchid" and "Night Blooming Cereus," watercolors. Donated by the artist.

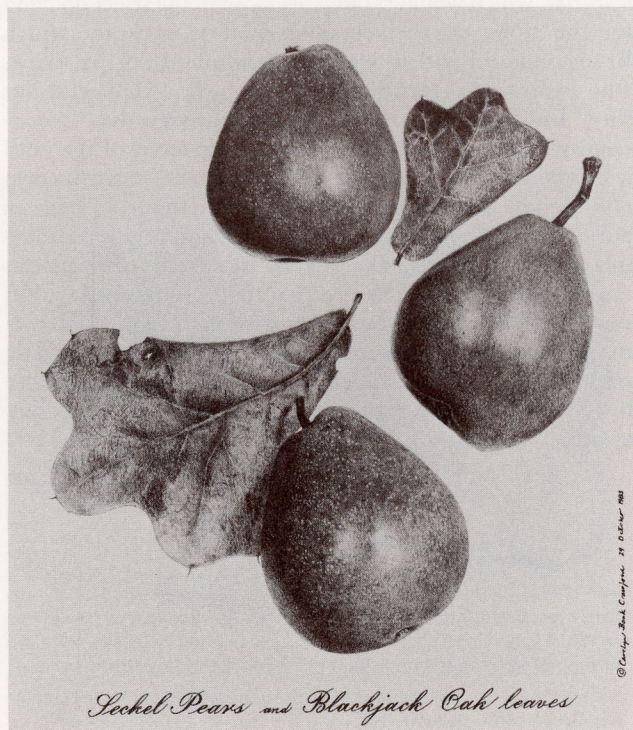
Hartwell Priest (Virginia). "Moccasin Flowers," lithograph, and "Windy Reed Grass," etching. Donated by Professor and Mrs. James O'Hara Denny, III of Pittsburgh in memory of Marianna née Priest Jackson.

Ben-Zion Shechter (New York). "The Bunchberries Leaves," silverpoint.

Wickersham?. "Campanula rotundifolia, Jasminum revolutum," watercolor. Donated by Hester W. Marsh of Aspinwall, Pennsylvania.

Artist unknown. Untitled hand-colored lithograph of *Campanula*. Donated anonymously.

Artist unknown. "Heart's-ease (*Viola tricolor*)," embossed paper. Donated by Gavin D. R. Bridson.



Color-pencil drawing by Carolyn Bank Crawford. See Recent Acquisitions.

Library

E. Benezit. Dictionnaire ... des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs ... Paris, 1976. Donated by a Hunt Institute Associate.

D. H. Janzen, ed. Costa Rican natural history. Chicago, 1983.

M. D. Gunn and L. E. Codd. Botanical exploration of Southern Africa. Cape Town, 1981.

P. B. Kaufman, T. L. Mellichamp, J. Glimm-Lacy and J. D. LaCroix. Practical botany. Reston, 1983. Donated by Janice Glimm-Lacy.

C. N. Page. The ferns of Britain and Ireland. Cambridge, 1982.

D. Scrase. Flowers of three centuries: One hundred drawings from the Broughton Collection. Washington, D.C., 1983.

W. Walsh and E. C. Nelson. An Irish florilegium. London, New York, 1983.

Manuscript Collection

American Association of Stratigraphic Palynologists, Inc. Augmentation of Association papers.

Otto Degener, Walter H. Hodge and Antonio R. Pinto da Silva. Augmentation of personal papers.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Register of plant collectors' field notes held in North American institutions. M. T. Stieber. *Huntia* 4(3), 1982. 51 pp. Soft cover, \$10.00.

Survey-compiled annotated account of holdings in Caribbean, Mexican, Canadian and the U.S. institutions. Lists over 600 repositories and their holdings by collector, cross-referenced from separate consolidated list of collectors.

Catalogue. 5th International Exhibition of Botanical Art & Illustration. J. J. White and D. E. Wendel, comps. 1983. 115 pp., 157 figs. Soft cover, \$15.00.

Portraits, biographies and bibliographies of 65 20th-century artists from 12 countries, with illustrations of works by each. Latest addition to series constituting the most comprehensive reference to 20th-century botanical artists, with cumulative index to 474 artists now included.

Flora portrayed: Classics of botanical art from the Hunt Institute collection. J. V. Brindle and J. J. White, with the assistance of D. E. Wendel. 1983. 92 pp., 90 figs. (55 in color). Soft cover, \$18.00.

Descriptions, commentary and reproductions of 88 representative works dating from the 17th century to the present, with historical introduction.

Talking in flowers: Japanese botanical art. J. V. Brindle and J. J. White. 1982. 96 pp., 95 figs. (25 in color). Soft cover, \$15.00.

Catalogue of an exhibition of mainly 19th- and 20th-century Japanese botanical art, with historical introduction. Drawn primarily from the Institute's collection, works include books, handscrolls, sketch-book albums, woodblock prints and paintings.

Simple repair and preservation techniques for collection curators, librarians and archivists, ed. 3. J. Gunner. 1984. 22 pp., illus. Soft cover, \$3.00.

Practical basic techniques for repairing, sewing and maintaining books, manuscripts and art on paper. Expanded edition includes instructions for making a book cradle, a selected bibliography and a list of selected supplies of bookbinding/conservation materials.

International register of specialists and current research in plant systematics. R. W. Kiger, T. D. Jacobsen and R. M. Lilly. 1981. viii, 346 pp. Soft cover, \$5.00.

Computer-generated worldwide register of plant systematists, their specialties and current projects. Includes taxonomic, geographic, geologic and methodological/general-subject indices.

Kate Greenaway. Catalogue of an exhibition ... from the Frances Hooper Collection ... R. W. Kiger, ed. B. G. Callery, M. T. Stieber, J. J. White and E. A. Mosimann, comps. 1980. 112 pp., 168 figs. (34 in color). Hard cover, \$22.00.

Annotated catalogue of selected artworks, books, manuscripts and miscellany from the Frances Hooper Collection now at the Institute, with introductory essays by Miss Hooper, Rodney Engen and John Brindle, and a summary register of the entire collection. Gold-stamped cloth binding with color-illustrated inset and endpapers. Set in Bookman phototype and printed on Hunt-watermarked Curtis No. 2 rag paper.

5TH INTERNATIONAL POSTER

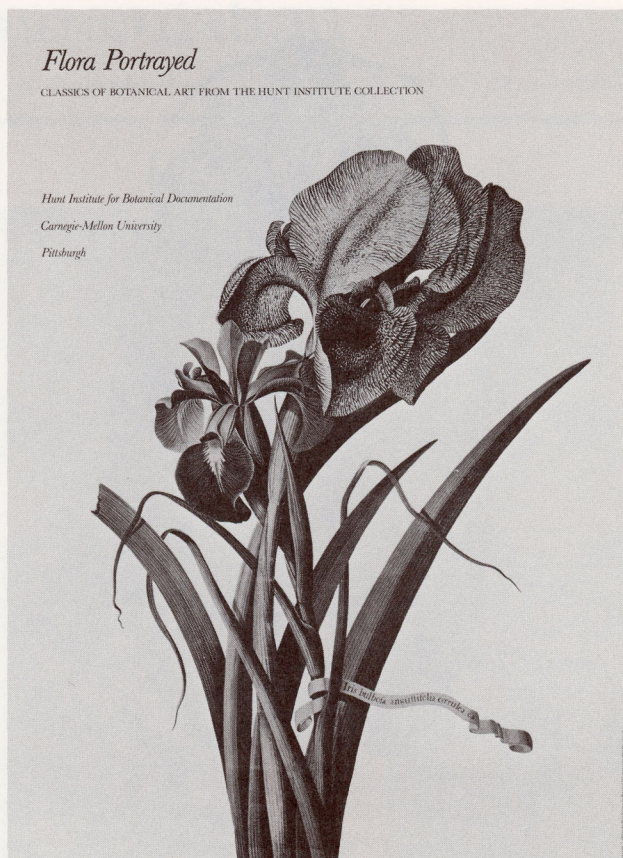
New Jersey artist Tjelda Michas created her serigraph "Delphiniums" especially for reproduction as our 5th International poster and catalogue cover. Measuring 28×19½ inches, the poster is available for \$10.00 (Associates cost \$8.00), plus \$2.00 postage and handling.

CACTUS POSTER

British artist John Wilkinson generously granted us permission to reproduce his handsome watercolor of a Star Cactus (*Astrophytum ornatum*) on the poster for our recent cacti and succulents exhibition. Measuring 22×28 inches, this full-color production won Best of Category in the 1982 Western Pennsylvania Printing Industry Awards competition. It is available for \$10.00 (Associates cost \$8.00), plus \$2.00 postage and handling.

KATE GREENAWAY POSTER

This full-color reproduction of a previously unpublished watercolor by Greenaway is one of two done to illustrate the double title page of a country manor guestbook. The same illustration appears on the endpapers of the exhibition catalogue. Measuring 22×28 inches, the poster is available for \$8.00 (Associates cost \$6.40), plus \$2.00 postage and handling.



Flora Portrayed

CLASSICS OF BOTANICAL ART FROM THE HUNT INSTITUTE COLLECTION

Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
Carnegie-Mellon University
Pittsburgh

FLORA PORTRAYED POSTER

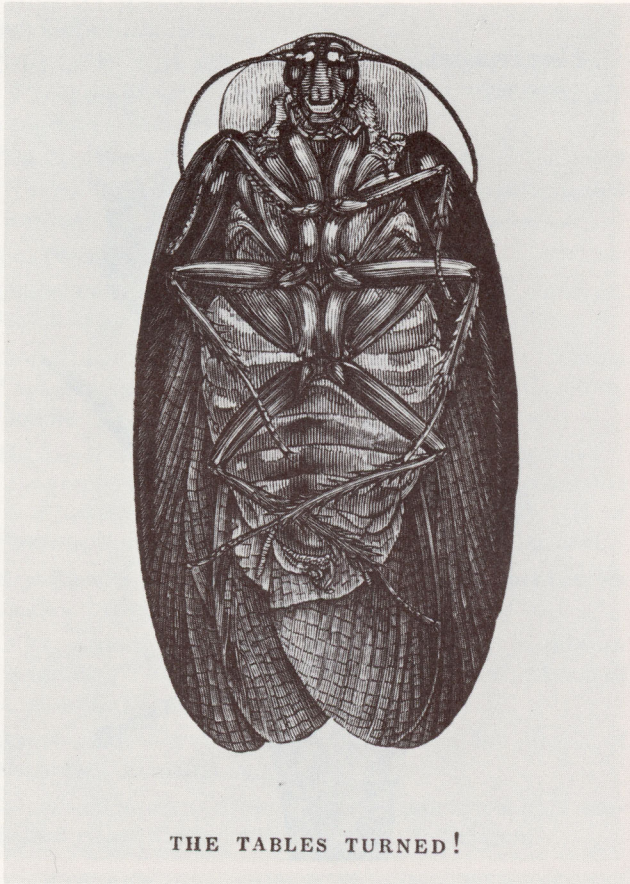
Georg Ehret's 1745 gouache on vellum of English and Mourning Irises has been reproduced in full color for our Flora Portrayed exhibition. Measuring 28×20 inches, the poster is available for \$10.00 (Associates cost \$8.00), plus \$2.00 postage and handling.

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