

Gardens of Savannah

Photography by Kirt Witte
Narrative by Kathy Bohannon

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TWIN LIGHTS PUBLISHERS, ROCKPORT, MASSACHUSETTS

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First published in the United States of America by:

Twin Lights Publishers, Inc.
8 Hale Street
Rockport, Massachusetts 01966
Telephone: (978) 546-7398
<http://www.twinlightspub.com>

ISBN: 978-1-934907-12-2

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

(opposite)
Crawford Square

(frontispiece)
Savannah Wildlife Refuge

(jacket front)
Forsyth Park

Dedications:

To my wife and son for their love, support, and patience with all my various projects. — Kirt Witte

To my husband, John, and our children for their encouragement, and to my sister, Barbara Steele, for sharing her love of gardening. A special thank you to Master Gardener Emily Wilbert for sharing her time and knowledge. — Kathy Bohannon

Book design by:
SYP Design & Production, Inc.
www.sypdesign.com

Printed in China



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In 1733 when General James Oglethorpe landed on the southern coast of North America, he arrived with a plan to settle a new colony. The colony would be named "Georgia," in honor of King George II. Oglethorpe and his entourage found a lush and beautiful environment for colonists to thrive. He named it Savannah after the Savannah River, whose name was derived from the Shawnee Indians who inhabited the area.

Savannah. Just the feel of its name slipping through one's lips creates visions of sultry summers and towering live oaks. But she is oh, so much more.

Savannah is the crown jewel of Georgia. As the first city to be founded, she is probably the wealthiest of all Georgia cities in history that has been preserved in the form of museums, monuments, architecture, and even her flora and fauna.

Located in Georgia's Lower Coastal Plain, Savannah's landscape includes sandy soil, wetlands, brackish marshes, hardwood swamps, and salt water inlets. Locals are familiar with "gumbo," that sticky black mud that is found near the swampy areas and serves as a cozy environment for wildlife such as alligators and waterfowl.

Azaleas, live oaks, palms, crape myrtles, wisteria, and a panoply of water plants simply thrive in Savannah's unique geography. Gardens are plentiful here and the garden enthusiast would have to spend many days to see all there is to see at the peak of the spring season.

Gardens of Savannah opens private and public garden gates, sharing Savannah's bountiful beauty. Be sure to pause at the gates to experience the roses in their majestic displays. You'll be glad you did.



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Savannah Botanical Garden

This garden statue is a nod toward the famous *Bird Girl* created in 1936 by the Chicago-based artist Sylvia Shaw Judson. Standing in a flurry of color at the Botanical Garden, it is surrounded by beautiful blue salvia, campanula, orange day lilies, and wild flowers.



Ornate Ram Urns

Grecian urns stand sentry in this manicured garden at Savannah's Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum. Founded in 1966, the museum highlights antiquities from sea trade during the 18th and 19th century. A shady bench beckons amidst a deep green hedge.



Welcoming View

An American sycamore towers over a meticulously trimmed hedge at the Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum. A dainty gas lantern flickers its greeting to visitors fortunate enough to rent this garden for after-hours events.



Bold Colors (above)
 A medley of foxglove, delphinium, snapdragons, and cheerful pansies border the brick walkway through the garden of the Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum. Each of these plants is carefully selected, offering the ultimate in show.

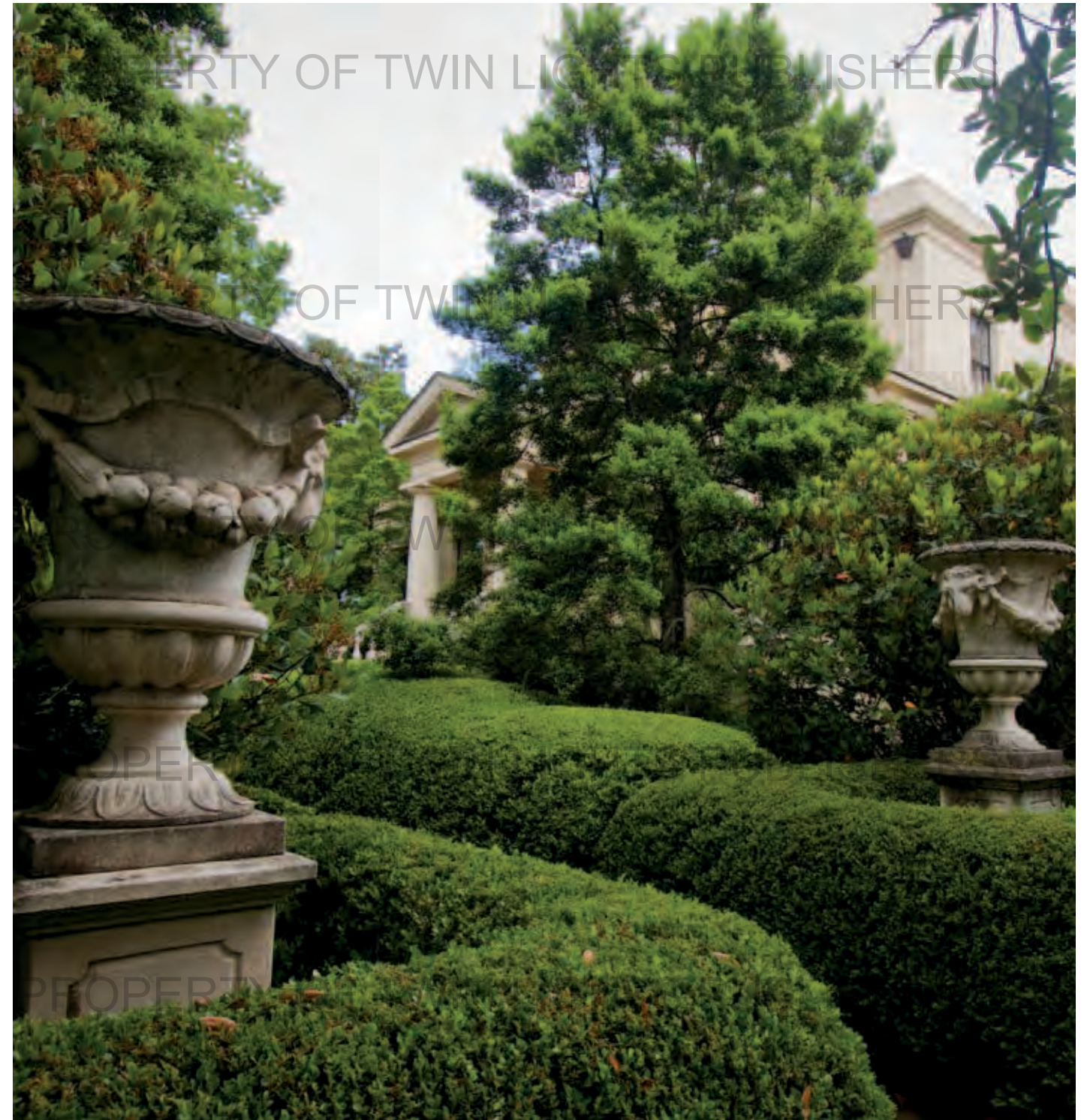
Mix and Match (opposite)
 Savannah's Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum pays homage to the galley ship *Anne*, which carried the city's original settlers to her shores. The museum also honors some of the first ships to ride the waves of change toward Savannah's thriving port industry.





A Cool Escape

Enchanting paths wander throughout many Savannah gardens. This one, at the Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum, leads to a wire ornamental vase to explore.



Scarborough House

Hedges snuggled up to Grecian urns create a gracious reception to visitors of the distinctive Scarborough House at the Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum.



Southern Hospitality

Residents of Isle of Hope enjoy shady live oaks and the ever-present Spanish moss. Nestled among an assortment of vibrant azaleas, this private manse and its sprawling porches surely make passersby wish they could pick out a chair and gently rock until the sun goes down.



Shady Azaleas (above)

Wherever they may be, picket fences are a charming back drop for gardens. Since the settling of Isle of Hope in 1736 by Noble Jones, John Fallowfield and Henry Parker, the hamlet has grown to become one of Savannah's most friendly and sociable places to live.

Isle of Hope (pages 14-15)

Some of Savannah's oldest oak trees can be seen at Isle of Hope, which was once a summer destination for locals. Wealthy Savannahians built grand summer homes at the island's waterfront. Rich in history, Isle of Hope is also the site where freed slaves settled after the Civil War.





Tranquility

Centuries-old live oaks frame this picturesque estate, while the fence is adorned with azaleas. Live oaks can be found throughout the south and are no stranger to the Coastal Region of Georgia. The live oak is the state tree of Georgia, designated as such in 1937.



Comfy Cottage

Spanish moss nearly covers a dogwood tree as its blooms peek out, contributing to the color palette in the front yard of this Isle of Hope cottage.



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Secret Garden *(above)*

Neatly trimmed Nellie R. Stevens hollies create a classic effect in this secret garden at the historic Gastonian, a bed and breakfast inn located near the famous Forsyth Park. Wrought iron gates offer a view of the courtyard which features a three tiered fountain and formal garden.

Gastonian Inn *(opposite)*

The Gastonian consists of two upscale homes that were built in 1868 in the Regency-Italianate style; one for an insurance broker, the other a wholesale grocer. Located in the Historic District, the property is among many highly desired places to stay in Savannah.



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Take a Peek *(above)*
 Perfectly tailored English ivy softens the backdrop for the formal garden at the Gastonian. A pink azalea hedge pops color, enhancing the garden's green and gold foliage.

Simply Baskets *(opposite)*
 Mixed annuals in hanging baskets offer a pleasant greeting to visitors of the Gastonian, which is located within walking distance of many of Savannah's famed historic destinations.





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Owens-Thomas House (*opposite*)
Formosa and white azaleas are abundant in front of the Owens-Thomas House. The home was completed in 1819 and served as a residence until 1951 when it was bequeathed to the Telfair Museum of Art.

Elegantly Manicured (*above*)
The grounds of this National Historic Landmark include this English parterre garden. Cobblestone pavers lead to a scalloped edge fountain which is framed by a manicured hedge. A carriage house, common to historic Savannah mansions, still stands.

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Canopy of Wisteria
Wisteria vines climb the open porch gazebos of the Chestnut House, a beautiful Savannah landmark.



Vibrant Vine
Known as the blue sky vine this vibrant perennial can reach heights of up to 20 feet and its light blue - lavender blooms are striking against textured foliage. Blue sky is considered one of the most beautiful flowering vines and gardeners enjoy its prolific growth along fences and walls.



Harper Fowlkes House (above)
A gas lantern stands amid frothy salmon azalea blooms, softening the landscape of the Harper Fowlkes House.

Brilliant Redbud (opposite)
Native to the southeast, this ornamental redbud tree is in full bloom, with vibrant pink petals. It can reach heights up to 30 feet and widths up to 35 feet. After blooming in early spring, the heart-shaped leaves are light amber and become green as they mature.





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Serene Garden

Small or large, serene private gardens grace many homes throughout Savannah. The Lady Banks rose (*Banksia Lutea*), a double flowering cluster rose vine in the foreground, perks up trimmed hedges and large shade trees in this landscape.



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Lady Banks Vine

Up close, the Lady Banks rose reveals an explosion of petite petals, but her dainty appearance may deceive. The hardy Lady Banks rose grows wild in China, along roadsides and fields. Perfect for arranging, the vine is flexible and can stand in a vase or entwine on a wreath.



Cool Walkway

With streetscapes such as this one, there is no surprise that Savannah is a favored city. The ever-present azaleas and wisps of Spanish moss among tree branches combined with breathtaking architecture provide a true sense of romanticism for the Hostess City.

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Japanese Magnolia

A Japanese magnolia blooms amidst a backdrop of old brick, wrought iron, and Spanish moss, all of which are staples to most Savannah landscapes.

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Perfect Blooms

Sunlight on these glorious orange roses is enough to awaken even the most dulled senses. It is said that the color orange represents desire and enthusiasm, a sentiment not lost on these beauties.



Delightful Birdhouse

A picket fence in Isle of Hope draws passersby to take a look at this unusual birdhouse with a rock stand. Spanish moss, which is soft and graceful, drapes over a scarlet camellia.



Savannah Botanical Garden

A benched arbor awaits a full burst of spring color at the Botanical Garden. The garden is an all-volunteer effort of the Savannah Area Council of Garden Clubs, Inc. and includes a pond, nature trails, exhibits, and both formal and natural gardens.



Hardy Anthurium (above)

Most anthurium species are found in wet tropical areas and are bushy or climbing with short stems and simple leaves. A popular flower with florists, these plants prefer high humidity and warmth.

A Quiet Path (pages 34-37)

The Botanical Garden in Savannah beckons visitors to stroll along its paths and admire the beauty within. A birdhouse and hostas are among plantings of roses, daylilies, and blue pansies that line a path to the arbor where clematis flourish on a trellis.





Queen of the Vine *(opposite, top)*

A purple clematis bursts forth to proclaim its spot in the sun. A member of the Ranunculaceae family, the hardy clematis blooms from winter to fall, stopping only at the first sign of frost. Some species wander up to 30 feet and grow well with at least four hours of sunlight.

The Perfect Rose *(opposite, bottom)*

The transition of light to dark makes this stunning pink rose a showstopper. Roses are versatile in color, height, and fragrance. Climbing roses can reach 20 feet tall while miniature and ground-cover roses are typically less than three feet tall.

Stop for a Moment *(above)*

A nice and cool spot to gaze upon the nearby fountain and rose garden, this rope-railed bridge is flanked by ferns and just a small part of the ten-acre Botanical Garden in Savannah.



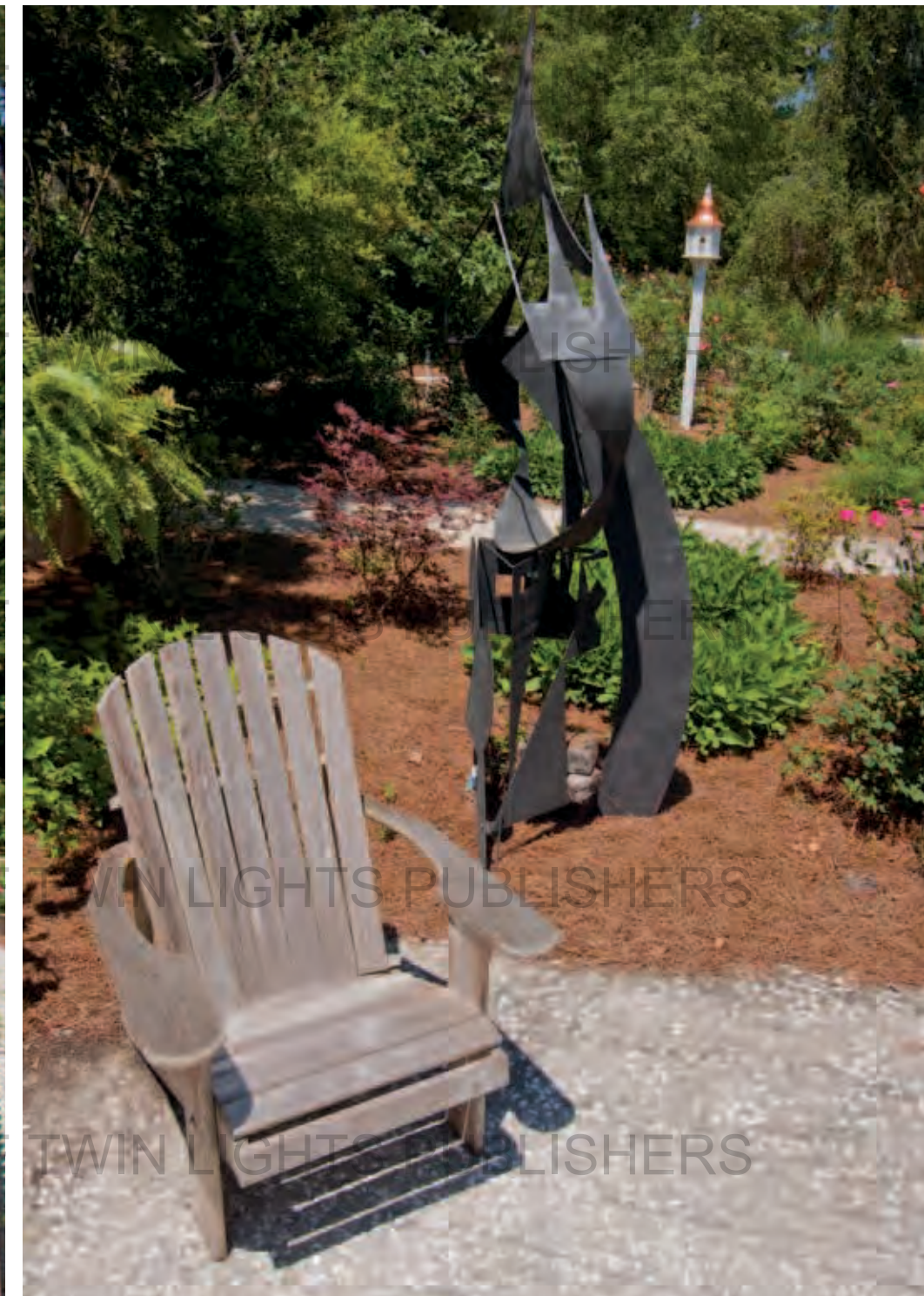
Pretty as a Rose *(above)*
Roses flourish in the Savannah Botanical Garden where visitors enjoy their fragrant blooms and vivid color. The Gardens and Reinhard House are the perfect venue for weddings and receptions.

Only the Best *(opposite)*
Roses require a balance of good soil and sunlight to thrive in Georgia's climate. Having a successful rose garden means planting in areas that have at least six hours of sunlight each day. The morning sun dries dew from rose bush leaves and helps to keep plant diseases at bay.





1840s Farmhouse
Slated for demolition, the circa 1840 Reinhard House was moved from downtown Savannah to the Botanical Garden in 1990 and now serves as the office for the Savannah Area Council of Garden Clubs, Inc.



Take a Seat
A quiet respite is almost a promise in this corner, as one can pause to enjoy the beauty of the perennial garden at the Botanical Garden in Savannah.



Daylilies *(above)*

Daylilies are available in a variety of colors and need little care. The bloom on this brilliant lily will only last one day, but these perennials will continue to bloom until late autumn.

Elusive Salmon Roses *(opposite)*

This salmon rose is eye-catching as the sun enhances a variety of shades in its petals. Many gardeners desire coral and salmon roses for their unique appeal.





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Andrew Low House

(above, right, and opposite)

Juliette Gordon Low, founder of the Girl Scouts, lived in this classically designed home until her death in 1927. Today, its garden is the only original Savannah garden that is accessible to the public. Double-hourglass beds are filled with historic species such as sago palm, violets, verbena, karume azaleas, holly fern, and English daisies, to name a few, and edged with clay tiles. Two stoic lions guard the entrance.



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Mercer House *(above and opposite)*

Azaleas among palms grace the famous Mercer-Williams House Museum. Built in 1868, the home underwent renovation after being purchased by antiques dealer Jim Williams in 1969. Williams restored over 50 homes to their former grandeur in Savannah's Historic District.



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Ballstone Inn (above and opposite)
Stunning hydrangea blooms spill from window baskets at the The Ballstone Inn, a four-story antebellum mansion. Notable names associated with ownership of this property include Savannah founder General James E. Oglethorpe, Major George W. Anderson, and Confederate

Captain Henry Blun. The home stayed in the Blun family until 1910 when its purpose ranged from a boarding house to a bordello, then an office for the Girl Scouts of America, and finally renovated into a bed and breakfast inn. In 1997 it was restored to its original splendor.



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Juliette Gordon Low House

(above and right)

Colorful foxglove tower over snapdragons along with a variety of plantings in the garden of the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace. Foxgloves are biennial so planting them two years in a row will guarantee an abundance of blooms as seen here.

Flowing Wisteria

(left)

This twining wisteria vine appears frothy atop an iron fence. Wisteria thrives in warmer climates and along with its undeniable visual appeal, it produces a pleasant aroma. Summer visitors may expect to see beautiful wisteria bursting from the tops of carefully groomed arbors as well as wildly mingling in trees along the roadside.





House Garden *(above)*
The courtyard garden of the historic Davenport House is one of the home's signature attractions. The Federal-style manse was built in 1820 and was home to Isaiah Davenport. It is one of many grand homes in Savannah that suffered before being restored by local historians.

Courtyard *(opposite)*
Brick pavers map a formal route to the Davenport House. Once the site of a carriage house, garden, and privy, today the courtyard is maintained by volunteers and contains plants that are indigenous to Georgia.





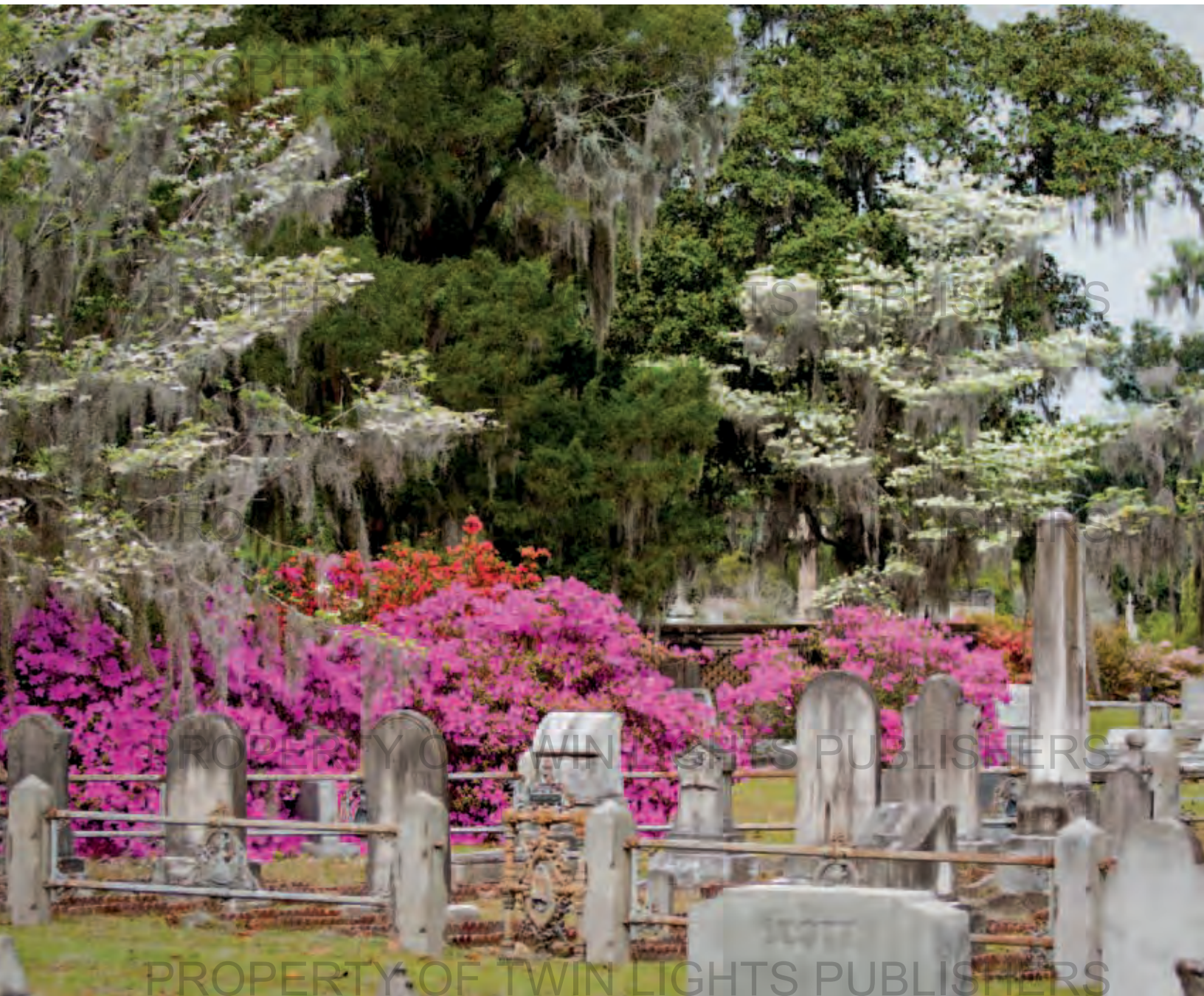
Laurel Grove Cemetery

Laurel Grove Cemetery was developed in 1850 and named after the native laurel oaks that once stood on its grounds. Today, Spanish moss hangs heavily among the live oaks throughout the cemetery. An epiphytic plant, Spanish moss is a common sight in the coastal region.



A Peaceful Resting Place

Spanish moss hangs eerily above tombstones at Laurel Grove Cemetery. Azaleas are vibrant amidst the solitude of the Victorian cemetery of Laurel Grove.



Ancient Tombstones

Pink and orange azaleas rest at the base of dogwood trees at Laurel Grove Cemetery. Wisps of Spanish moss move quietly in the sultry Savannah breeze while ancient tombstones stand sentry over gravesites.



Through the Cemetery

A rutted road designates a path through Laurel Grove Cemetery, passing old oak trees which appear to have been overcome with Spanish moss. It is easy to consider this road being traveled by many horse and buggies as well as carriage hearses.



Bonaventure Cemetery

The Bonaventure Cemetery flower show is breathtaking during its peak season. Walking paths bordered by the hearty bushes make this quiet respite park-like. In 1764, Colonel John Mullyrne ordered live oaks to be planted every fifteen feet on either side of the estate's main roads.



Gothic Marker

Trees surround ancient, cold tombstones and colorful azaleas. It is in Bonaventure Cemetery that Savannah's most well known are buried, including songwriter Johnny Mercer, Pulitzer Prize poet Conrad Aiken, and Edward Telfair, the first governor of Georgia.



Scallop of Flowers (above)

Beautiful monuments such as this angel cherub can be seen throughout Bonaventure Cemetery. The 1994 book by John Berendt *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* made Bonaventure famous.

Standing Sentry (opposite)

An obelisk towers over gravestones at Bonaventure Cemetery. The marker is just one of many notables standing sentry over the burial plots within Bonaventure's gates.





Chippewa Square (above)
Surrounded by variegated ribbon grass and yellow Calibrachoa, this stately lamp oversees Chippewa Square, where a statue memorializing Savannah founder General James Edward Oglethorpe stands. Chippewa was the setting of Tom Hanks' famed park bench scene in *Forrest Gump*.

Wright Square (opposite)
Salmon azaleas flank shady park benches in Wright Square. Sun dappled live oaks provide much appreciated cover from Savannah's semi-tropical climate. The square is the burial ground of Indian chief, Tomo-Chi-Chi, who contributed to the peaceful settlement of Georgia.





William Washington Gordon Monument
 Wright Square is one of 24 squares included in the American Planning Association's top ten Great Public Spaces in America in 2009. The monument in the background is that of William Washington Gordon, first president of the Central Railroad and Banking Company.



Curvy Garden *(above)*
 One doesn't have to own a grand manse to get a feel for the solid architecture in Savannah. This elaborate enclosure is not only decorative but its railing invites passersby to take a peek at this lush, dense garden.

Telfair Square *(pages 68-69)*
 Situated across from the Jepson Center, this majestic live oak beckons strollers to sit beneath its outstretched branches.





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Forsythe Park (above)
 Springtime adorns Forsyth Park with an abundance of azaleas. With endless luscious grassy areas and paths lined with live oak trees, it is agreed by both locals and tourists that Forsyth Park is Savannah's jewel.

Fluffy Hydrangeas (opposite, top)
 Clustered balls of fluffy white hydrangeas thrive in Savannah's Forsyth Park. Hydrangeas prefer moist soil as long as it is well drained and enjoy some shade, particularly in climates such as Savannah's.

Spring Dogwood (opposite, bottom)
 What would the South be without dogwood trees? The popularity of this spring beauty has resulted in roads, neighborhoods, and festivals being named after this favorite tree.

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Fountain

The elegant Forsyth Park Fountain with its bountiful sprays can be seen from several areas of the park. Strolling along toward the fountain, one might enjoy the many hedges of flowering azaleas and rhododendrons while staying cool by the shade of live oak trees.



Snowy Azaleas (above)

Snow white azaleas pop amidst their pink companions. With open displays of the city's most prevalent flowering plant in city parks and squares combined with private tours of gardens and homes, it's no surprise this city is a choice destination, particularly in the spring.

Ornamental Lighting (pages 74-75)

Liriope defines the line between the sidewalk and a hedge of azaleas. Many of the sidewalks in the Historic District are made of old brick while newer ones are concrete. Nearly all are lined with hedges or trees. Take a peek at the curbsides to see original brick streets.



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Old Europe (opposite)
An old European town or Savannah? It's true Savannah, and one of many quaint and picturesque views to take in. This private garden shares with its admirers a beautiful display of springerii fern with potted petite dianthus and yellow pansies.

Shadow and Light (top)
Potted chrysanthemums brighten the brick patio of this private garden. Sago palms combined with an established water garden offer a sense of tranquility.

Serenity (bottom)
While the focal point is an artistic urn, don't miss the iron fence in this small space. Neatly trimmed, the flora here presents a comfortable and natural setting.



Friendly Fence

Perhaps Savannah, known as the "Hostess City," should also be considered the "Place of Friendly Fences." It is here you can enjoy gentle barriers to one's property, such as this picket fence that serves as a home to a thriving creeping fig.



Garden Cat

Textures are rampant in this private garden, from soft foliage and tree trunks to the acorn fence finials flanking the curved wooden garden door. A whimsical cutout of a cat suggests a peek into an adjacent garden.



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Flora and Fountain *(opposite)*

A fountain and graceful cherub is just the right centerpiece for this private garden which features an abundance of bamboo and elegantly dark Loropetalum. Pansies, purple heart Tradescantia, and other ornamental plants complete the array.

Welcome Home *(above)*

Through the garden gate: who could resist strolling through this placid courtyard? With brick pavers, potted plants, and an arched, lighted entry, this elegantly states, "Welcome home."



Garden Reflections (top)
Nestled between two buildings, this narrow garden appears larger than it actually is with the addition of a unique outdoor mirror. Cloth drapes and a water feature add to the appeal of this cozy walkway.

Spilling Azaleas (bottom)
Azaleas spill out from behind an ornamental fence in downtown Savannah. Private gardens, parks, and businesses in the Historic District frequently surprise passersby with small glimpses of beauty such as this.



Classic Entrance
The personality of the property beyond this brick wall is classically stated by the louvered entry door with foliage above and below. Shoots of canna lilies are sure to burst forth among an azalea hedge.



Calhoun Square *(above)*
Bright azaleas bloom beneath a live oak in Calhoun Square. Wesley Monumental Methodist Church is across from the park and can be seen in the background. Built in 1807 and donned Wesley Chapel, this was the city's first Methodist church.

Johnson Square *(opposite)*
Johnson Square is a favorite gathering place for downtown office workers. Built in 1733 and named for South Carolina Governor Robert Johnson, it was the first square in Savannah. Savannah's Park and Tree department meticulously maintain the squares in the city.





Monterey Square

Azaleas and live oaks make this image of Monterey Square enchanting. Monterey is among the most well-known squares of the city, and frequently visited as the famous Mercer-Williams House is located here, as well the Congregation Mickve Israel Synagogue.



Chippewa Square (above)

The First Baptist Church of Savannah rises above the flora of Chippewa Square. Azaleas nestled below the branches of live oaks thrive in this shady environment.

Monterey Square (pages 88-89)

Live oaks cloaked in Spanish moss line pathways leading to an Italian marble memorial to General Casimir Pulaski. Encircled by a cast-iron fence, the monument is the focal point of the square. Azalea blooms add spring color to the foreground.





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Columbia Square *(above)*
White azaleas in Columbia Square share the spotlight with the small but significant Wormsloe Fountain, added in 1970 as a memorial to historians Augusta and Wymberly DeRenne.

Wright Square *(opposite)*
Wright Square brings lush vegetation to an urban lifestyle. The towering monument is in honor of William Gordon, founder of Georgia's first railroad. Also in Wright Square is a massive granite boulder in memory of Tomo-Chi-Chi, the Yamacraw Indian Chief and friend to Oglethorpe.



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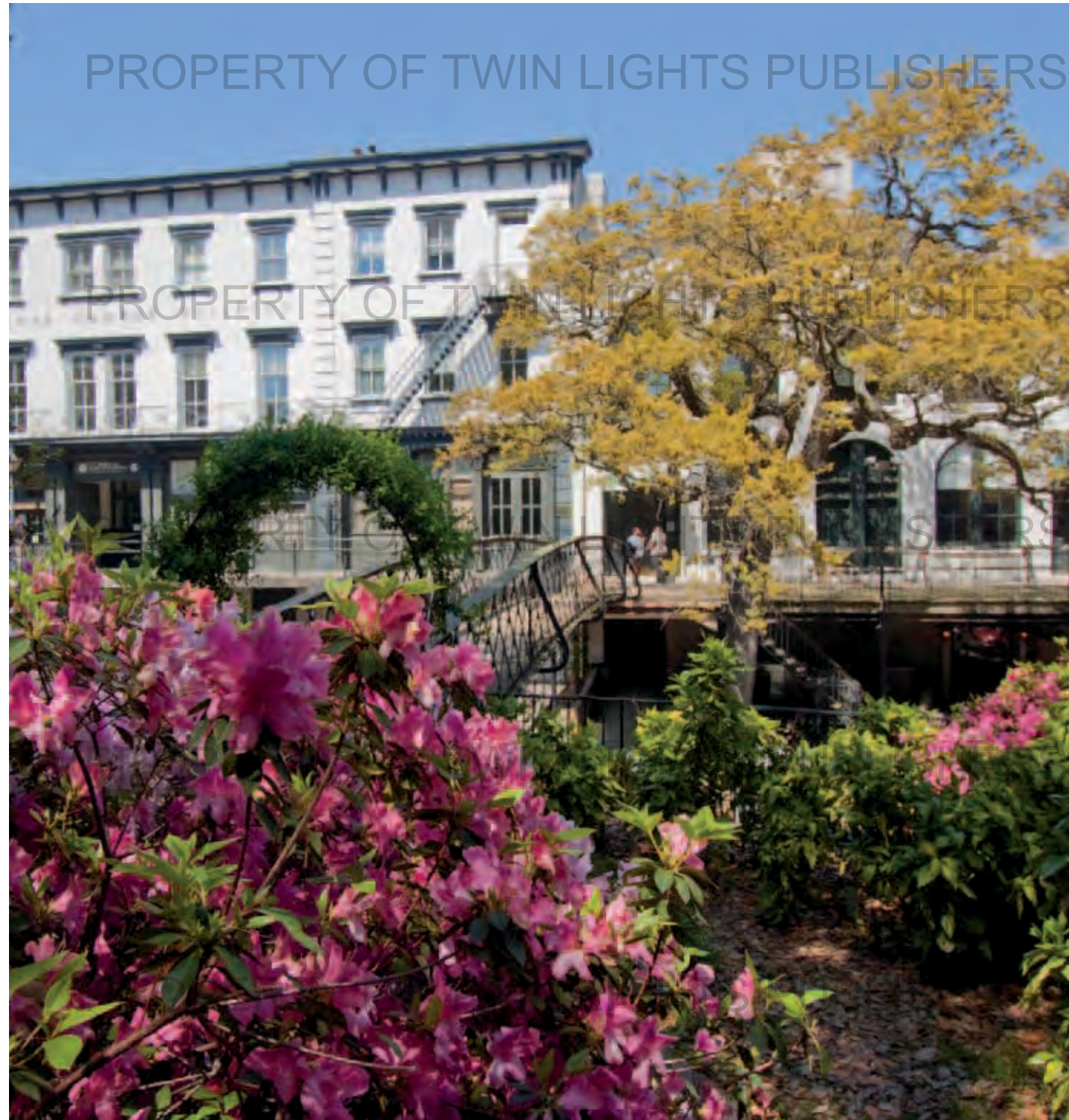
Reynolds Square

Reynolds square delights visitors with flourishing white rhododendrons, massive live oaks, and tailored green spaces. In the center stands a monument to John Wesley, founder of Methodism. The Wesley Monumental church is located on the periphery of the square.



White Rhododendrons

Reynolds Square, as well as all of Savannah's squares, is expertly maintained by the City of Savannah's Park Services. This rhododendron bush is a shining example of their proficiency.



Factor's Walk

Savannah's Factor's Walk can be reached by strolling beneath an archway of greenery and over this ornate bridge. It is here that Savannah's original port industry thrived. The Thomas Gamble building in background was constructed in the late 1800's and used for cotton trade and other commodities.



Cannons and Azaleas

Hedges of azaleas bloom near the display of a pair of George Washington's bronze cannons, presented in 1791 to the Chatham Artillery Militia Company of Savannah. The British cannons were the militia's trophies from the Battle of Yorktown and are located on Bay Street.



Victorian Elegance (above)

A Victorian door knocker seems to hold this wreath in place. Gathered berries, columbines, roses, and zinnias make this arrangement vibrant.

Historic District Courtyard (opposite)

Walking along city streets in the Historic District of Savannah, one must pause so as not to miss small private settings such as this display of snapdragons and violas amidst variegated hues of greenery. The wrought iron fence makes a regal statement.





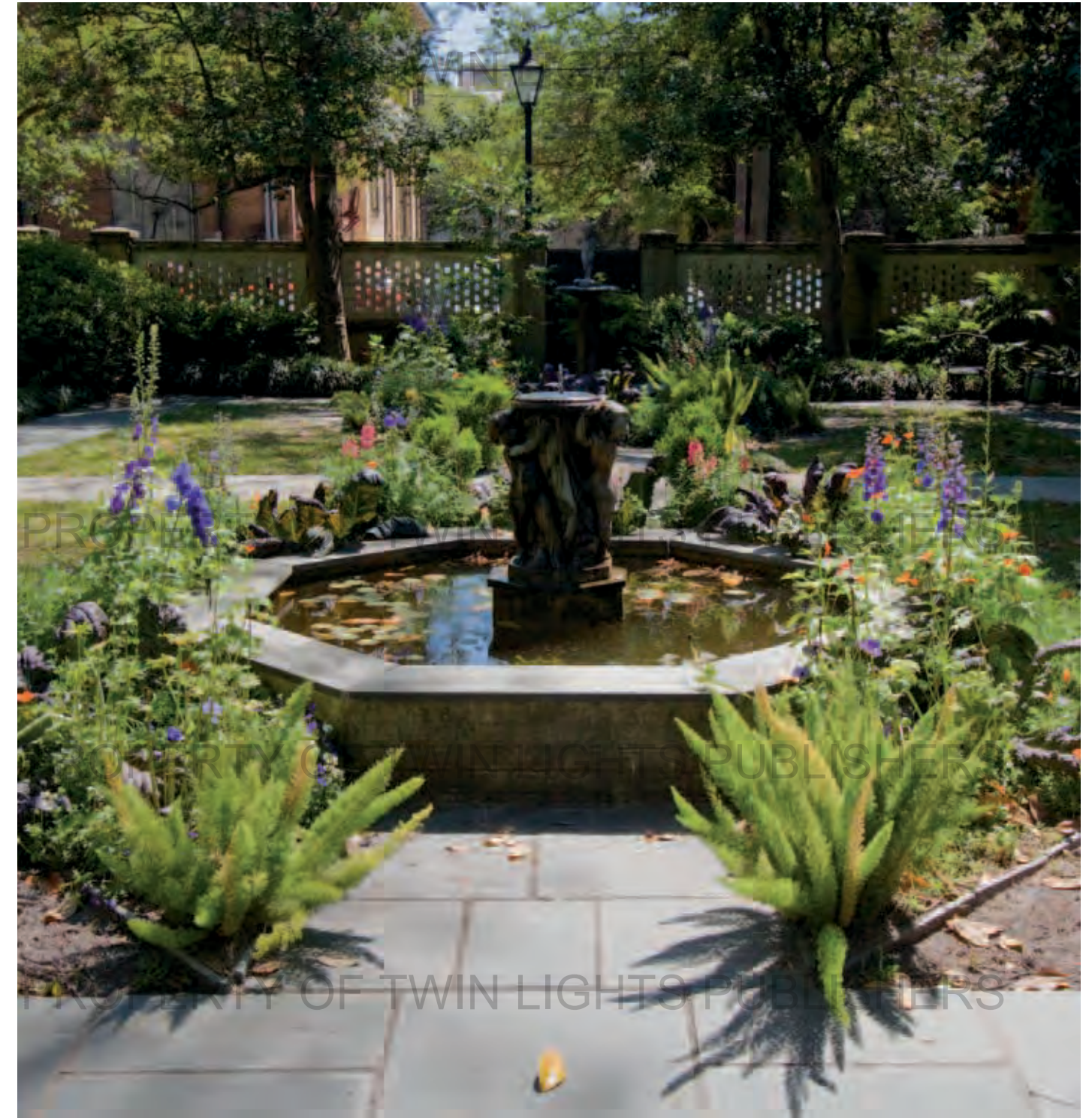
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Burst of Color *(above)*
Violas and candytuft cheerfully burst forth in color as they lean gently toward sunlight in this private garden.

Terra Cotta Garden *(opposite)*
A breath of spring seems to trickle from the porch of this private home, softly landing in terra cotta pots of colorful seasonal blooms.



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Savannah Hospitality (opposite)

A trailing rose graces the wall of this private garden while a wrought iron gate offers a peek inside. The symbol of hospitality throughout Savannah, a pineapple finial is placed alongside the gate, welcoming visitors to this home.

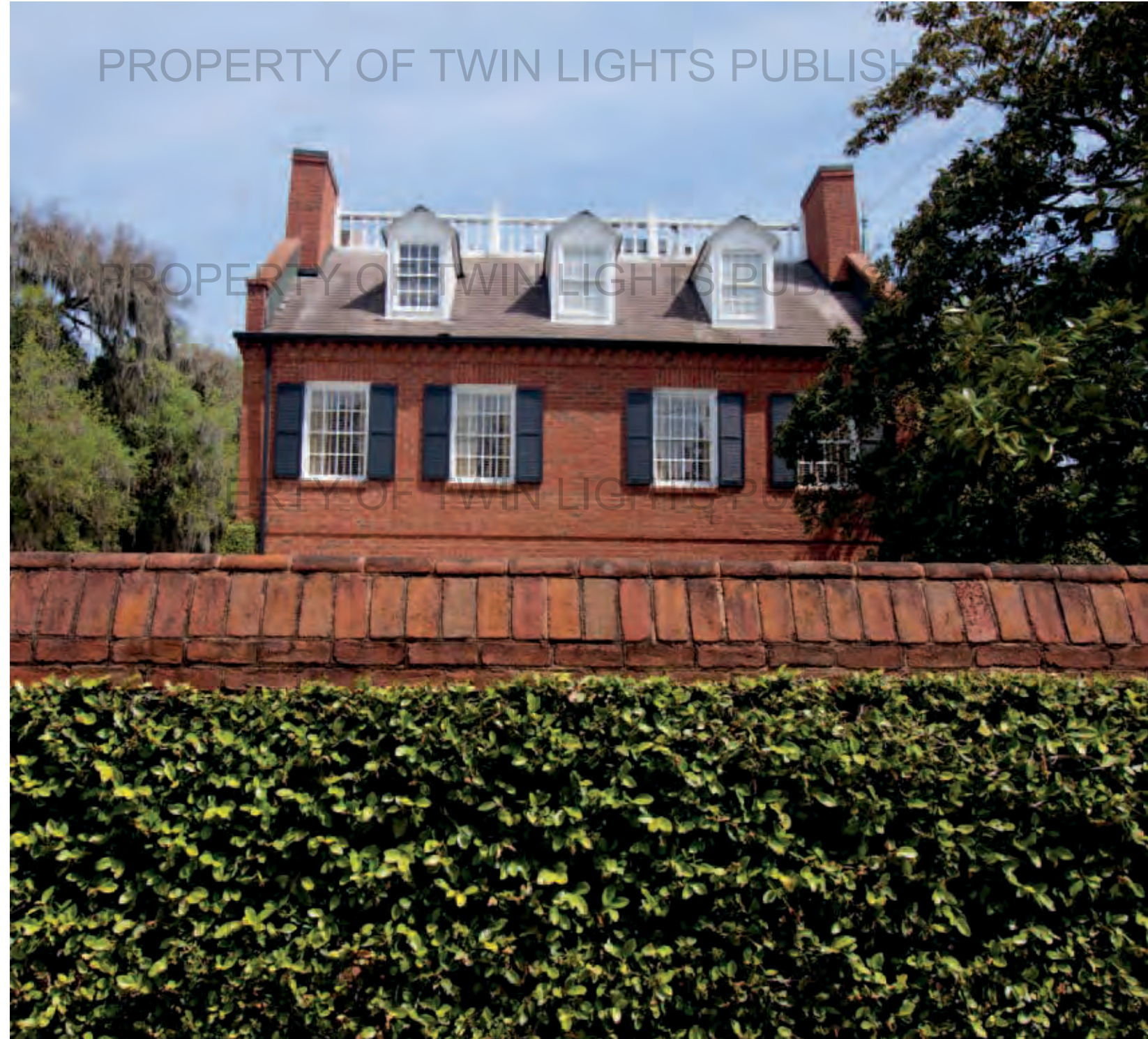
Gardenscape (above)

Though nearing the end of the season, this display of foxtail ferns and assorted flowering plants add color to a water feature. Water lilies float gracefully as cherubs support a small fountain. A backdrop of a sundial and garden statue add further interest to this gardenscape.



Sasanqua Camelia (above)
 This sasanqua camelia is part of the Theaceae family and can be found in tree or shrub configurations. The bright white petals of this ornamental evergreen are striking, especially when combined with Savannah's ever-present Spanish moss.

Confederate Jasmine (left)
 Confederate jasmine trails along a brick wall. This perennial vine grows rapidly and enjoys a long lifespan. Though not native to the United States, the confederate jasmine thrives in Savannah's climate.



Colonial Brick
 Reminiscent of Colonial architecture, the details of an old brick wall are made even more interesting by an orderly cover of greenery.



Maple and Moss *(above)*

Spanish moss clings to the branches of this red maple tree. Its seeds, also known as helicopters, spin and twirl in their last dance as they break away at season's end.

Green Gate *(opposite)*

Herbs and delicate roses soften an intricate iron gate. Thriving in Savannah's sandy soil and gentle climate, rosemary can continue year round with little attention.





Savannah Garden Expo
 Yellow daisies and fragrant white stock were part of a display at the Savannah Garden Exposition, an event held annually near Savannah's riverfront.



Coastal Region Planting
 A shamrock nestles with starflowers, dahlias, roses, white zinnias, and a sago palm. This beautiful arrangement, created for the Savannah Garden Exposition is representative of the many varieties of plantings available for the coastal region.



Blue and Yellow Beauty

A yellow zinnia and blue flax at the Savannah Garden Exposition offer a beautiful contrast of color and texture for any garden.



Expo Display *(above)*

Ornamental kale is the backdrop for this display of florist hydrangea, petunias, and daisies at the Savannah Garden Exposition.

Blue Delphiniums *(pages 112-113)*

A field of blue delphiniums is part of a vibrant display at the Savannah Garden Exposition. The delphinium is an elegant perennial, shooting spikes of color in the garden. Catching a Savannah delphinium at its best would mean avoiding hot and dry summer temperatures.



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Garden Seat *(above and opposite)*

An ornate bench, friendly fence, and birdbath are made even more welcoming by the many flowers surrounding it. Photographed while on display at the Savannah Garden Exposition, whether potted or planted, these blooms thrive in Savannah's coastal region.





Live Oak and Dogwood

Though this stately oak towers over the delicate dogwood tree, each are thriving as companions in this Savannah streetscape.



Red Tip Photinia

A red tip photinia blooms with whispers of tiny white flowers. A popular shrub, the oval leaves begin as rust-red but become dark green as they mature. The tiny flowers will produce berrylike fruit, offering even more texture and color to this hardy evergreen.



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Gulf Fritillary Butterfly *(opposite)*

A gulf fritillary butterfly rests on a purple wildflower at the Savannah Wildlife Refuge. With more than 29,000 acres of freshwater marsh, the refuge is home to a wide variety of coastal flora and fauna and offers educational programs for all ages.

Red Dahlia and Friends *(above)*

Red dahlia, purple and white viola, purple petunias, white snapdragons, coreopsis, and oxalis make for a very colorful garden arrangement.



Savannah Wildlife Refuge

Water lilies are of the genus *Nymphaea* and are considered either tropical or hardy plants. Tropical varieties may bloom during the day, opening at mid-morning and retiring a few hours into the afternoon. Night bloomers greet the dusk, closing their show in mid-morning.

Water Lilies (pages 122-123)

Savannah is abundant in saltwater and freshwater marshes, both of which are highly desired among homebuyers. The wetlands produce not only wildflowers and eerily beautiful cypress, but also the plentiful water lily as seen in this serene image of a classic coastal marsh.

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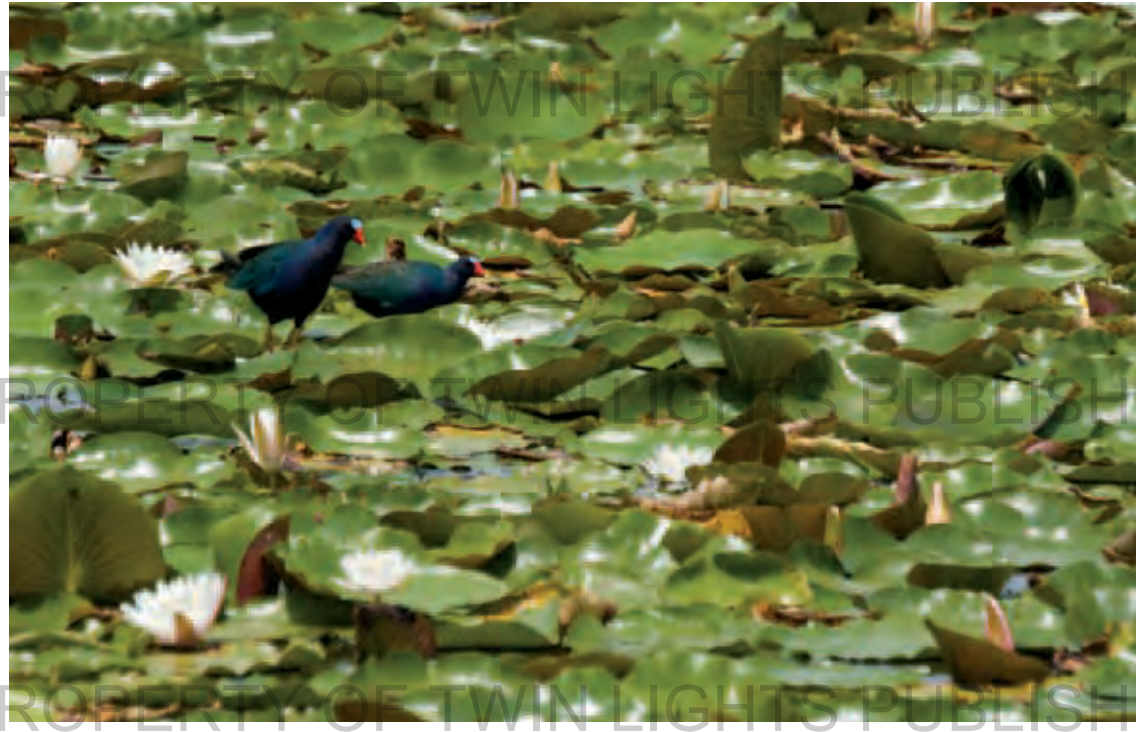
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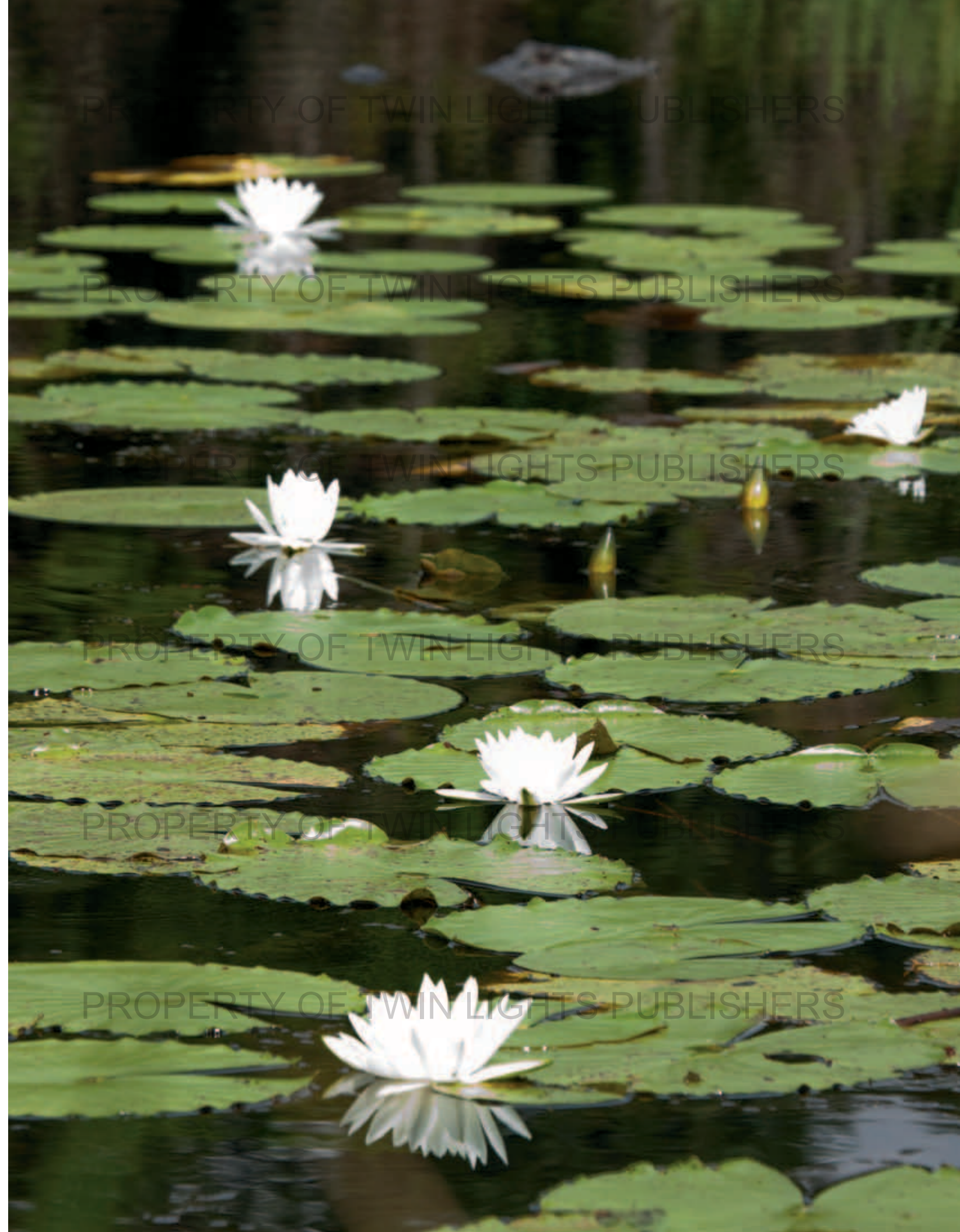




Purple Gallinules (*top*)
The striking purple gallinules thrive in tropical wetlands. Long toes keep this bird upright while strolling atop lily pads.

Pristine (*bottom*)
The American Indians used the entire water lily by drying the roots for flour and eating the leaves and buds as vegetables.

Fleeting Beauty (*opposite*)
Small creatures find a safe haven beneath the leaves of a water lily. While its blooms last only a few days, the leaves actually block out sunlight which can kill other aquatic plants.





Yucca Plant

Yucca plants, also known as Spanish bayonet, have sweet and fragrant blooms. Tolerant of salt water as well as dry soil, the Spanish bayonet is best planted away from children and pets as its leaves present sharp edges.



Passion Flower

The beautifully expressive passion flower is fast growing and features a whimsical show of white, purple, and blue. From the genus *Passiflora*, the passion flower is considered medicinal and is said to assist as a mild sedative when properly used.

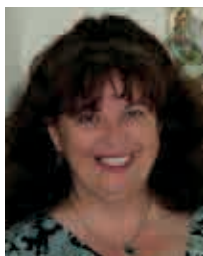


Kirt Witte

Originally from Dallas, Texas, Kirt moved to Savannah in 2001 and loves every minute of the coastal life. He started shooting photographs in 1985 and furthered his career when he received a B.S. in Photography from Sam Houston State University in 1991. In 2005, he earned his M.F.A. in Computer Art from the Savannah College of Art and Design. Kirt is a professional freelance photographer and is currently working on a book about Savannah titled *The Other Savannah*. In addition, he is a Professor of Visual Effects at the Savannah College of Art and Design where he teaches various aspects of 3D modeling and animation and is an Autodesk-certified Maya instructor.

Kirt has been honored to serve twice as a Co-Presenter at SIGGRAPH and SIGGRAPH Asia, the world's largest and most prestigious conference on computer graphics and 3D animation. He has also received the esteemed first place Masters Cup International Award for his image titled "Tybee Lighthouse Shadow".

For more of Kirt Witte's work please visit www.KirtWitte.com.



Kathy Bohannon

Kathy is a lifelong resident of Georgia who, with her husband, John, raised a daughter, a son, and a houseful of cats and dogs in the quiet country of Coweta County. Having begun writing in 1987, Kathy is a professional freelance writer and winner of three highly acclaimed Georgia Press Association Journalistic Achievement awards for her work as a humorist. Kathy pens a weekly column for The Newnan Times-Herald in Newnan, Georgia as well as ongoing corporate, media relations, trade publications, web, advertorial, and travel writing assignments.

Among the publications selecting her work are *Chicken Soup for the Single Parent's Soul*, *Guidepost's Angels on Earth* magazine, *Savannah Magazine*, *Coastal Antiques*, *Coastal Parent*, *Coastal Homes*, *Coastal Senior*, and *Just About Horses* magazine.

To learn more about Kathy visit her agent's site at www.therobinsonagency.com.



Savannah is many things to many people, but one cannot visit this southern lady without taking in her scenic landscape. From the arboretum in Forsyth Park to colorful bursting azalea blooms along Oglethorpe Avenue, Savannah begs to have her picture taken, especially in springtime.

