

MARIE SELBY
BOTANICAL
GARDENS



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Selby Gardens Names William Cinéa as Research Associate
Botanist, Conservationist, and Director of Haiti's First Botanical Garden
Will Collaborate with Selby Gardens Staff Scientists on Innovative Research

SARASOTA, Fla., July 24, 2023 – Marie Selby Botanical Gardens has appointed William Cinéa, founder and director of Jardin Botanique des Cayes (Botanical Garden of Les Cayes) in Haiti, as a Research Associate.

A botanist, conservationist, and environmental entrepreneur, Cinéa created and developed Haiti's first botanical garden with no public funding. In addition to welcoming visitors, the institution carries out research, guides conservation and restoration in Haiti, provides education, and promotes horticulture.



"William is energetic, motivated, and inspirational—especially in promoting botanical gardens," said Bruce Holst, vice president for botany at Selby Gardens. "His research and conservation work are vital to understanding and protecting Haiti's rich biodiversity. Many plant species in Haiti are threatened, and the data that William and his team are collecting can inform sustainable environmental decisions and conserve flora essential to the health, food, and natural heritage of Haiti."

Selby Gardens Research Associates are respected scientists who are currently collaborating with the Gardens on a common research interest or collections-based effort. They help Selby Gardens expand its publication base, advance its botanical research, and grow its collections. Appointments last for three years, at which point they may be renewed.

Cinéa's collaboration with Selby Gardens scientists goes back many years. He has worked with research botanist Dr. John L. Clark, a former Research Associate himself who joined the staff full-time this year, for nearly a decade. Clark and Cinéa collaborated on a 2015 expedition to western Haiti, funded by a Research and Exploration Grant from the National Geographic Society, that resulted in the recent publication of three new species to science and documentation of several other poorly known species that hadn't been recorded in

nearly a century. Future fieldwork that leverages Selby Gardens' expertise in horticulture, epiphytic plants, and Caribbean flora could focus on cultivating several critically endangered species.

"This appointment holds great significance for me and for botanical science in Haiti," said Cinéa. "The collaboration and support of Selby Gardens will strengthen research, preservation, and enhancement of the unique flora in the Caribbean. I am excited to be part of an institution that echoes these values and has a resounding impact in the realm of botanical sciences."

In addition to founding Botanical Garden of Les Cayes, Cinéa has launched several conservation initiatives in Haiti, including the Nature Design-Haïti company, Société Haïtienne de Botanique, and Eco-Entrepreneur Pro.

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High-resolution photos available for [download here](#).

About Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens provides 45 acres of bayfront sanctuaries connecting people with air plants of the world, native nature, and our regional history. Established by forward-thinking women of their time, Selby Gardens is composed of the 15-acre Downtown Sarasota campus and the 30-acre Historic Spanish Point campus in the Osprey area of Sarasota County, Florida. The Downtown Sarasota campus on Sarasota Bay is the only botanical garden in the world dedicated to the display and study of epiphytic orchids, bromeliads, gesneriads and ferns, and other tropical plants. There is a significant focus on botany, horticulture, education, historical preservation, and the environment. The Historic Spanish Point campus is located less than 10 miles south along Little Sarasota Bay. One of the largest preserves showcasing native Florida plants and active archaeology that is interpreted for and open to the public, it celebrates an archaeological record that encompasses approximately 5,000 years of Florida history. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens is a Smithsonian Affiliate and is also accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. For more information visit www.selby.org.