

ILS Preservation Committee Accomplishments

During the past few years, the International Lilac Society's Preservation Committee has executed several actions that have aligned with our two main goals. Notable accomplishments have included:

1. grafting over 175 different rare cultivars, ensuring that these varieties will continue to exist should the original specimen be lost.
2. locating ~30 lilac cultivars in the US that were thought to no longer exist and taking steps to replicate and preserve them.
3. establishing a preservation garden of over 225 specimens (and growing) to build redundancy of cultivars identified to be rare.
4. conducting over a dozen preservation trips to public and private lilac collections that were identified as being collections in peril to harvest and preserve divisions of over 120 different rare lilac cultivars.
5. replicating the first generation of grafted lilacs through tissue culturing, producing multiple plants of over a dozen cultivars that can now be distributed to public gardens and private collectors to ensure their preservation.

Over the past several years, the Preservation Committee has also established joint partnerships with 18 different public gardens throughout the United States, including the US National Arboretum, Denver Botanic Gardens, Highland Park, Descanso Gardens, Arbor Lodge State Historical Park, and the Morton Arboretum, with new partnerships formed every year. By working with these organizations, we have been given access to countless rare lilacs that need to be preserved, while giving back to these organizations as well. Some of the ways that we have provided support to these public gardens have included:

1. Inventorying the specimens in collections and validating the accuracy of their labeling.
2. Reintroducing cultivars to collections that were of historical value.
3. Providing rare cultivars, significantly contributing to the expansion of several collections.
4. Aiding in the restoration and rejuvenation of several collections.
5. Donating cultivars for use in plant breeding programs.

As you can see, the Preservation Committee has been particularly busy in the past 5 years, and more is planned for 2025! Stay tuned!