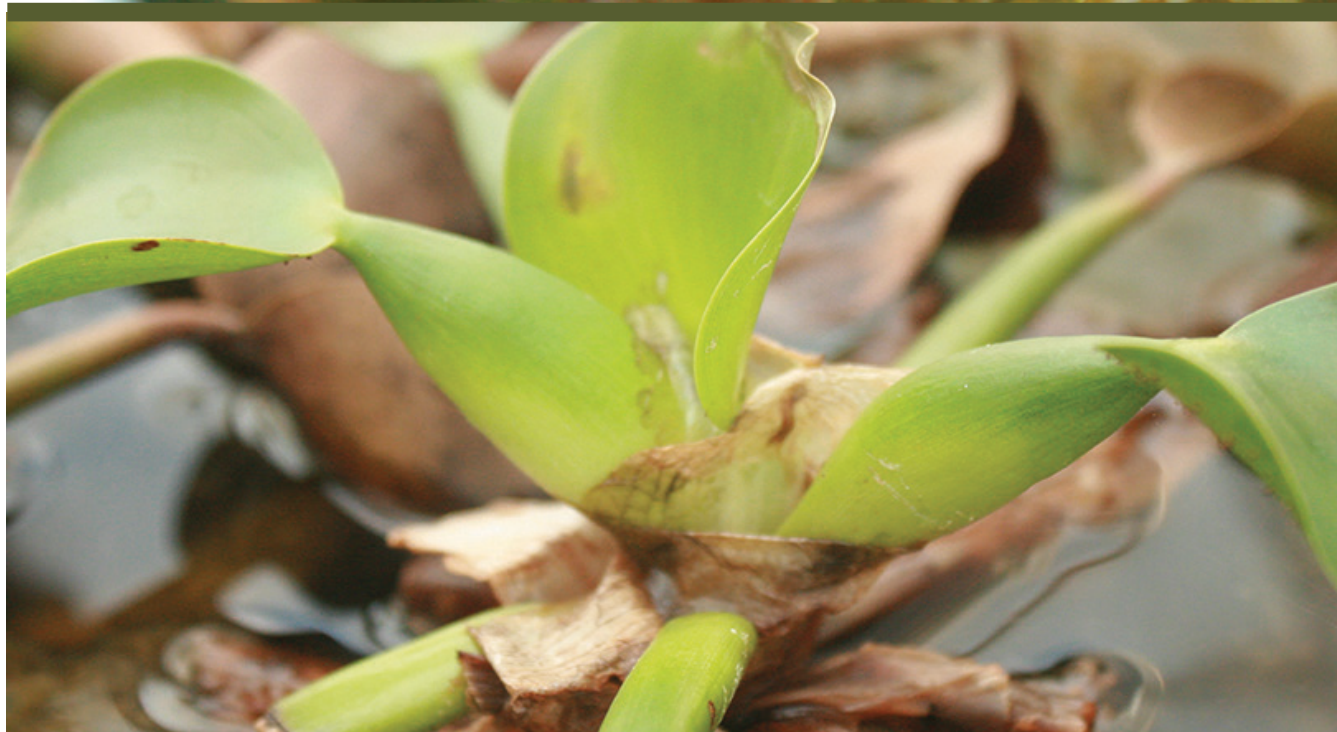


# AROUND CAMPUS Q&A





# The H.F. Thut Greenhouse



**IN BLOOM** The Thut Greenhouse houses a variety of plants such as Aloe Vera, cacti and succulants, as well as other tropical flowers. The greenhouse was originally built in 1962 and is named after the late botony professor Hiram F. Thut.





# THINK GREEN

## The life thriving in the Thut Greenhouse

Q: How long has Malehorn run the place?

A: He's been working at the greenhouse for 20 years. He started at Eastern in 1975 at Eastern for botany, but had a hard time finding a job, and switched to electrical engineering at Lake Land College. He returned in 1988 to finish his botany degree and graduated in 1991. Malehorn returned to Eastern in 1998 when the position opened up.

Q: How'd all those plants get there?

A: Malehorn said he inherited a large majority of the plants from the previous manager, who was a big collector of house plants. Every year, around the time of spring break, Malehorn said he and other faculty in the Biological Sciences Department take inventory of the greenhouse to "justify" its presence on campus.

Q: What's in there?

A: Anything ranging from hanging, Spanish moss, cacti and tropical flowers. One of the more well-known plants is the tropical Titan Arum. The Titan Arum is also known as the carrion flower or the corpse flower because the flower's fragrance is

similar to that of rotting meat. The Titan Arum was discovered in Sumatra. However, in 2001, Malehorn got the fruit from University of Wisconsin- Madison, after hearing about it on a Botany forum. After planting the initial fruit, the plant did not bloom until 2008.

Q: What's so special about it?

A: Malehorn said his working theory about the Titan Arum is it will only bloom if it is stressed. After about one and a half years of leafing and not blooming, Malehorn said the plants tuber will send up a single inflorescence with both male and female flowers. When the flower is fully developed, it can be about 10 feet tall. Malehorn's theory is that the plants sprouts leaves when it is "happy" and content in its living conditions, and if it is under stress or is "unhappy," it will bloom.

Malehorn has already taken cuttings from his "stinky baby" and planted them. Although they initially did look as if they would take, after time passed, they did. Malehorn has also given away the successful planted cuttings to places such as University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

(LEFT) **TITAN** Steven Malehorn, manager of the Thut Greenhouse on Eastern's main campus has been running the plant sanctuary on campus for 20 years. Malehorn said he is in the greenhouse at least once a day, 365 days a year. His favorite plant is the Titan Arum plant, otherwise known as the corpse flower when it blooms and gives off the aroma of a rotting corpse. The very first bloom was in 2008, seven years after the initial planting of the fruit in The Thut Greenhouse (photo courtesy of Malehorn's Titan Arum's blog).