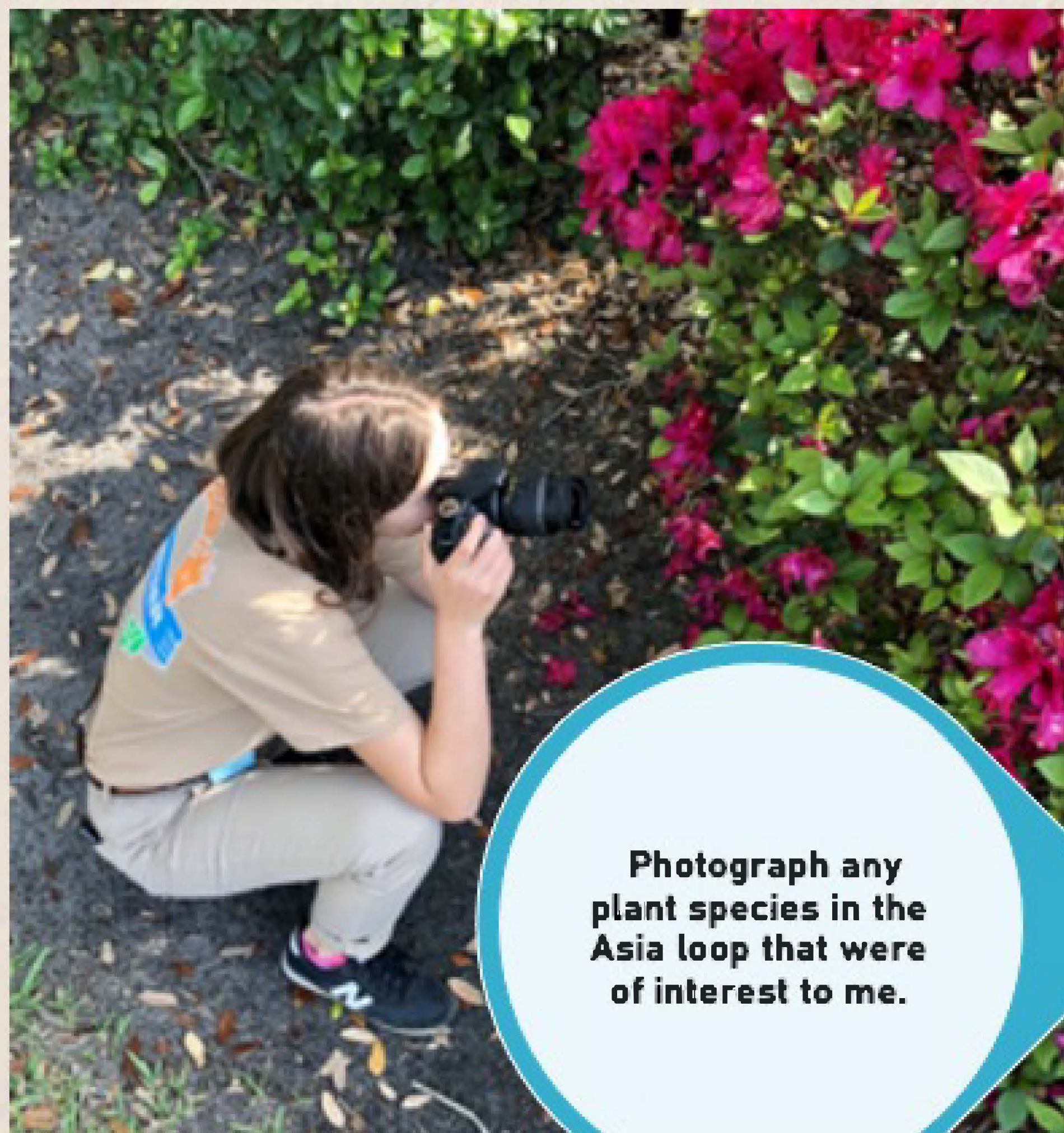


Bringing Awareness to Plant Conservation at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens

Currently the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has limited information for the public about the variety of plant species that they host (many of which are endangered). The zoo is trying to emphasize to the community the equal importance of their gardens for species conservation. The manual being created will be beneficial for the education department to use in programming, community engagement, and volunteer awareness. The conservation of plant biodiversity is instrumental to ensure the future of many other endangered species, both animals and plants. Through education a new found community wide appreciation for plants can be established which in turn would further aid in environmental preservation.



Photograph any plant species in the Asia loop that were of interest to me.

METHODS

Identification of the plants was determined from either the horticulture department at the Zoo, or by using the *National Geographic* and California Academy of Sciences application iNaturalist. iNaturalist is a phone application which allows users to take photos of plants and add them to an online collection where they can be identified by scientists. After identification, research was performed.

If there was an existing sign created by the horticulture department with the species name on it I would use that.

To confirm that the sign matched the plant that I had photographed, I would search the plant in the Missouri botanical gardens database and compare their photograph to mine.

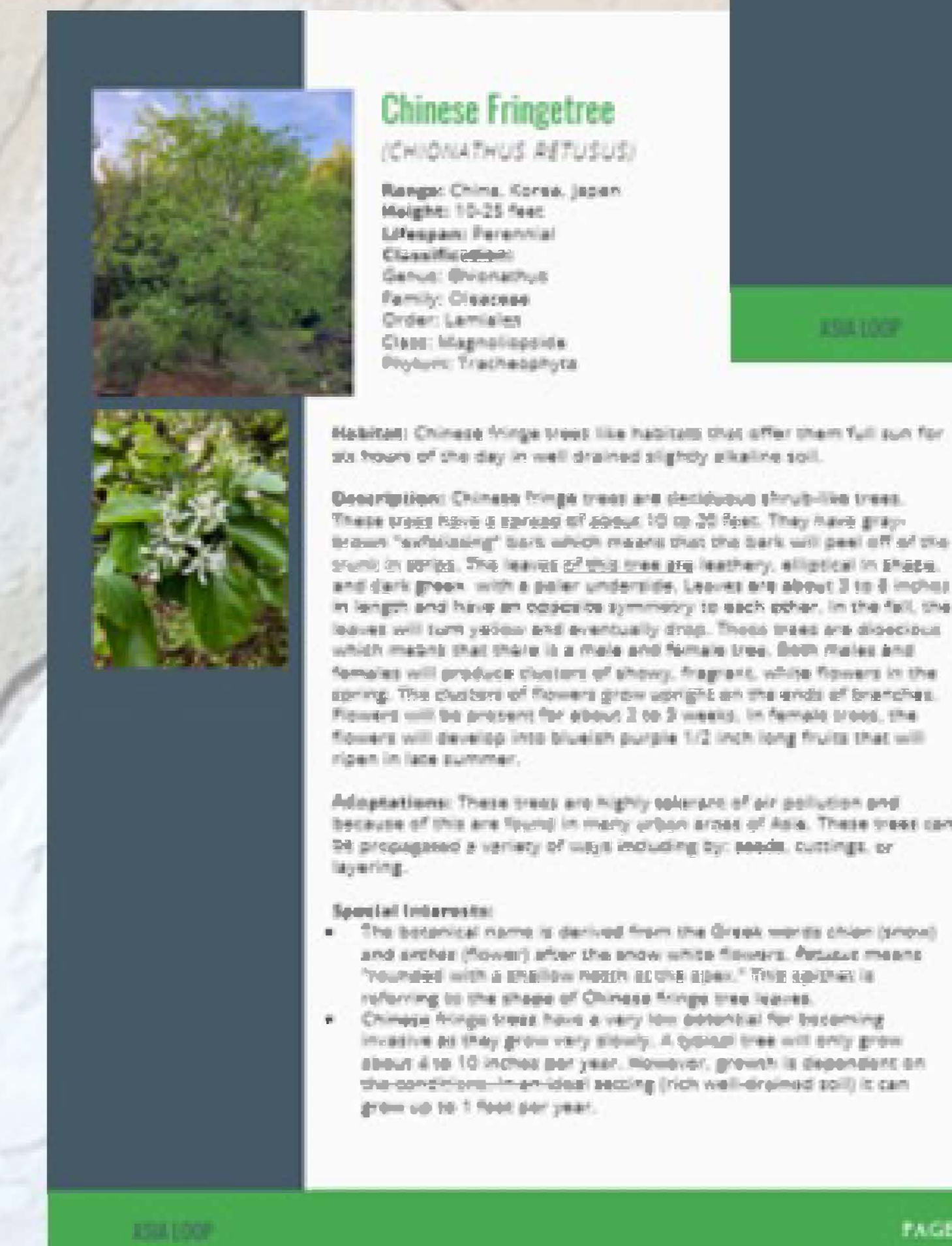
If the species was correctly identified I would move on to the research process by looking for the species in the Missouri botanical gardens, UF IFAS, the USDA, and in the U.S. national arboretum databases.

If no sign or placard existed I would use the iNaturalist application to identify the plant. After identification I would move onto research.



OBJECTIVES

- Compile a casual grade manual on the plants at the Jacksonville Zoo for the use of the education center.
- Bring awareness to the diverse collection of plant species at the Zoo.
- I will be specifically looking at the species on the Asia loop.
- Instilling a passion and curiosity for the conservation of plants at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens.
- Provide a resource that active volunteers could use while educating the public about the gardens.



What information is included on each page?

Classification and Botanical Name

Height and Lifespan

Range and Habitat

Description

Adaptations

Special Interests

OUTCOMES

- Over 25 different species on the Asia loop were identified, photographed, researched, and cataloged.
- Some notable species are: Jane Japanese magnolia, azalea, tropical blue bamboo, strangler fig, and banana.
- "The education Department, including the volunteers, Exhibit Guides (paid part-time employees), and educators [will] use them for programming or speaking with guests."
- Over 400 active volunteers at the Zoo will have access to the book.
- Gives a wide breadth of plant information that the Zoo education department will be able to utilize.