

ISSUE 1: SUMMER 2020

BIO-DIVERSITY

ILLUSTRATION
BY:

NILOO
FARAHZADEH

3

JAI ME

BLANKINSHIP

TEXT BY:

ZOE-BLUE

COATES

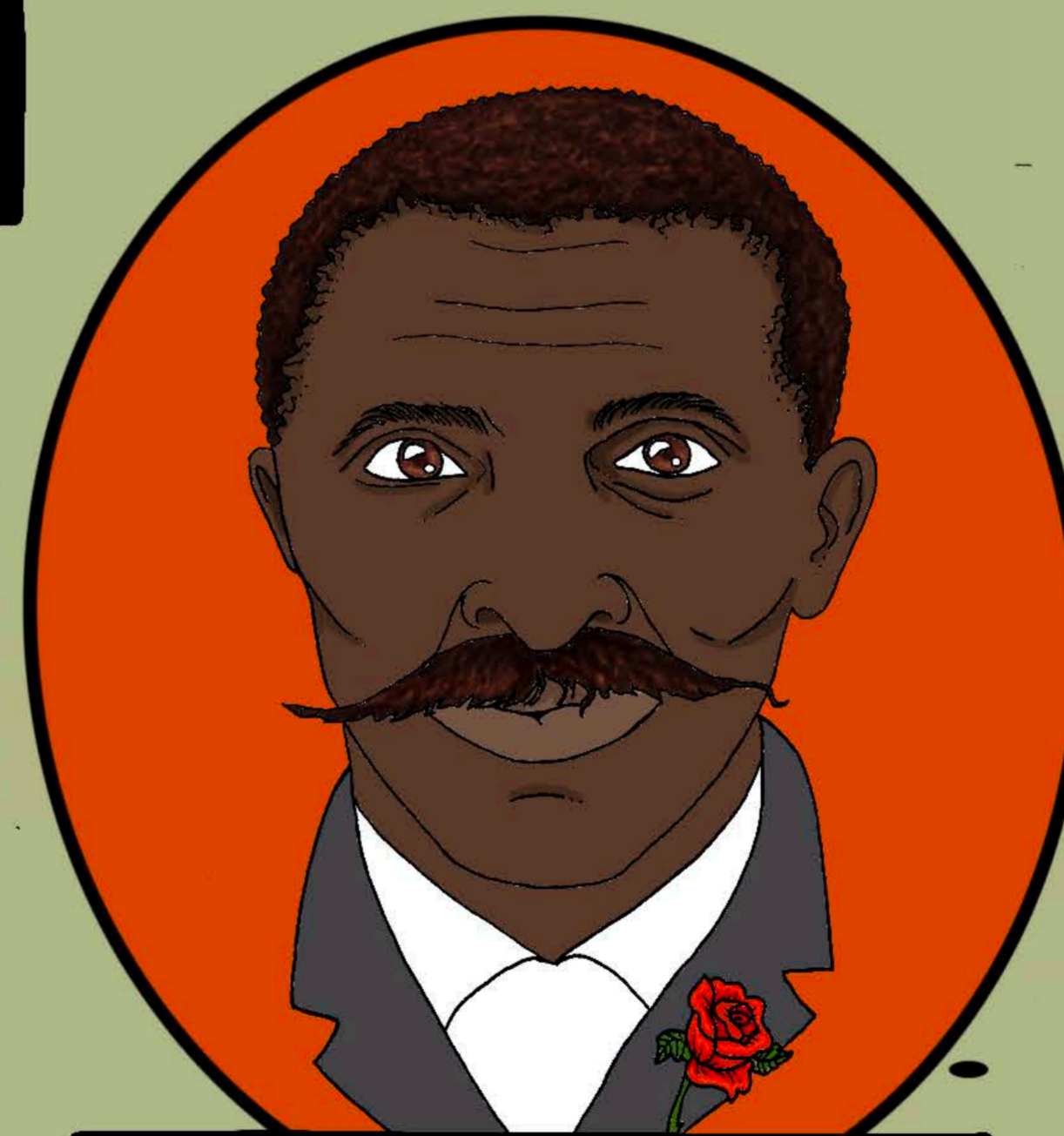
THE FACES OF ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP



THE BLACK MOSES



THE FOURTH SISTER



THE G.O.A.T.



THE GUARDIAN



THE LORAX

Dear Reader,

This project was inspired by the History of Ecological Stewardship here on Lekwungen lands (“lee-kwung-en”). as a young Black woman living in the “Garden City,” I felt that my passion for plants and sustainability was a symptom of my assimilation. Little did I know, I was following in the footsteps of my BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) elders. My love of botany is in honour of my ancestors, not in defiance of them. The notion that agriculture and ecological restoration are sectors dominated by whiteness is a symptom of white supremacy. In order to heal from generations of displacement, genocide, and subjugation, BIPOC communities must stand in our histories and embrace the waves that we have made outside of our local communities. I hope that this zine brings you hope and pride in our communities’ past, present, and future.

ZB



This Project was created through the Growing Together initiative and the Compost Education Centre.



HOW TO USE THIS TEXT

Read through these stories carefully and with intention. Each of the subjects have made great impacts on our world. Harriet, Jane, Chico, Wangari and George achieved what they did because of their connection to the lands they were on.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Choose one story and do some research into the impact this person's work has in the present
2. Was there anything that surprised you about the stories?
3. What are three things these stories taught you about race?
4. What is one action you can take to be a better ecological steward?

KEY TERMS

AGRONOMIST: An expert in the science of soil management and crop production.

CONDUCTOR: A person who guided fugitive slaves to freedom through their knowledge of the surrounding environment.

EXTRACTIVE_RESERVE: Publicly owned land that is protected against mass-deforestation for the explicit use of Indigenous nations.

LAND_DEGREDAION: The temporary or permanent decline in productive soil.

MONO-CROPPING The practice of growing one crop year after year on the same plot of land.

NITROGEN_FIXER: A type of plant who's roots will reintroduce nitrogen into the soil once it decomposes (Ie. clover and beans).

ECOLOGICAL_STEWARDSHIP: The act of caring for all land with respect and reciprocity for other living beings.

LAUDANUM: A tincture made from poppies.

DATE:

NOTES



HARRIET TUBMAN

THE BLACK MOSES

SASSAFRAS



BLACK CHERRY



Harriet Tubman was a conductor on the Underground Railroad. She rescued 70 slaves on 13 different expeditions. She also served as a soldier, scout, and nurse during the Civil War. Throughout her lifetime, Harriet used her knowledge of animals and plants to keep fugitive slaves safe from being recaptured, to heal the wounded, and to feed the groups she led. She guided them to freedom using her knowledge of the stars to tell direction. She used the Barred Owl call to communicate with hidden fugitives, made laudanum tinctures to put crying babies to sleep, and forged for foods like sassafras and black cherry. For many descendants of slaves, our great-great-grandparents might not have made it to freedom if not for Black ecological stewards like Harriet



JANE MT. PLEASANT

"THE FOURTH SISTER"

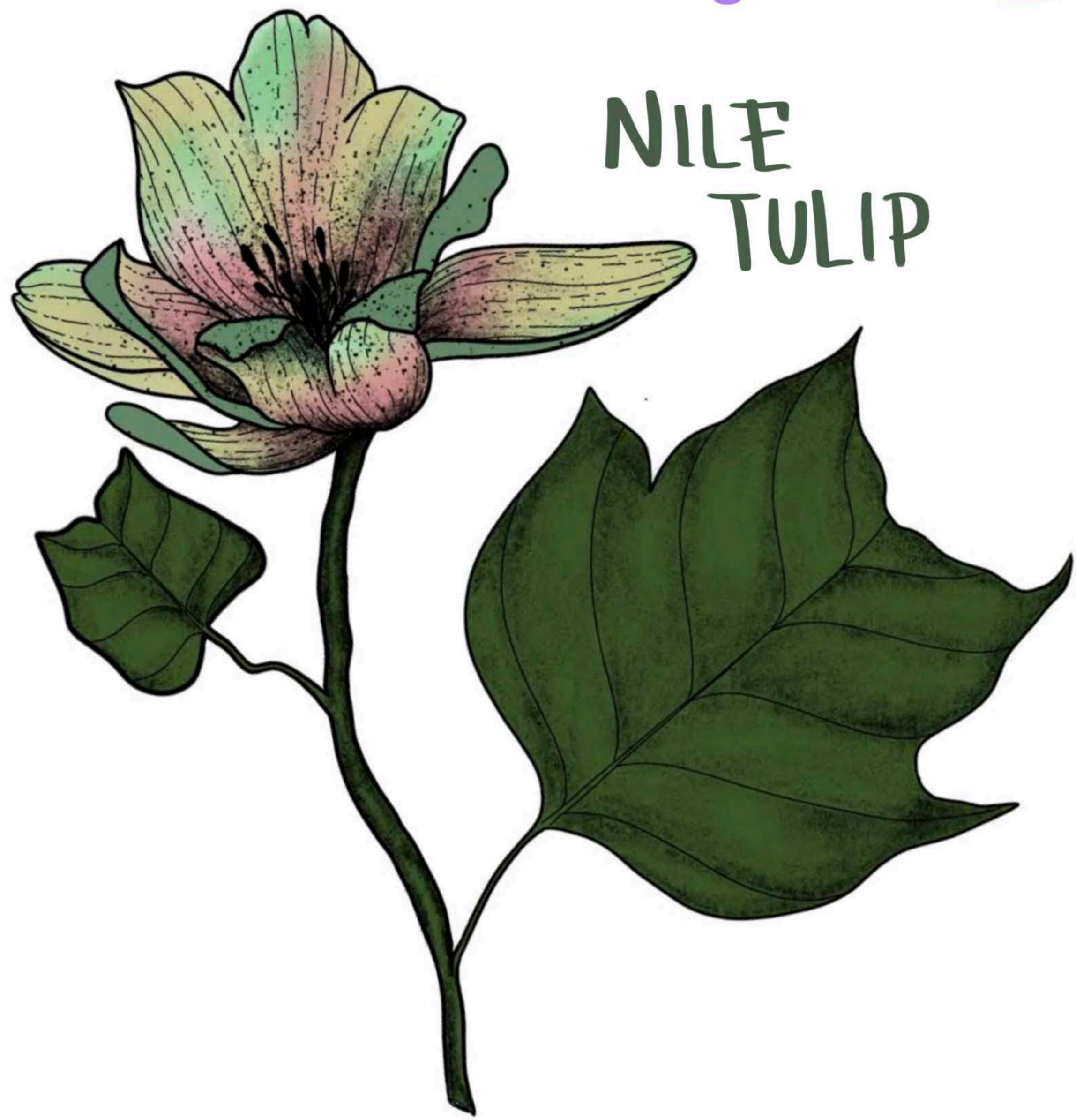


Jane Mt. Pleasant is Haudenosaunee ("Ho-dee-no-sho-knee") from the Turscarora First Nation. She has worked with the three sisters: corn, bean, and squash. As an agronomist, Jane has learned why the three sisters grow so well together. Bean grows up corn's tall stalks and gives off nitrogen gas when the plant breaks down in the soil. Squash creeps along the soil and stops weeds from growing around the plot. With the help of science, Jane proved that the three sisters are good at keeping farmlands healthy for long periods of time. Jane's research shows how we can share farming techniques to have healthy and fertile lands for a long time.



WANGARI MAATHAI

"THE LORAX"



NILE
TULIP

Dr. Wangari Maathai was an environmental and labour activist, the first African woman to receive a Nobel Peace Prize, the first woman in Central or West Africa to earn a doctorate degree, and the first woman to ever teach as a professor in Kenya. Wangari recognized the value of native ecosystems and how they are connected to the health of Kenyan communities. When she founded the Green Belt Movement in 1977, Wangari opened Indigenous tree nurseries to forge a different type of economy. Through the Green Belt Movement, Kenyan women work in nurseries and earn fair wages while caring for sensitive ecosystems that have been greatly impacted by careless agricultural practices. Wangari's legacy is a shift towards forest management that strengthens the economy, empowers the community and prioritizes long-term stewardship of Indigenous lands.



MERU
OAK



CHICO MENDES

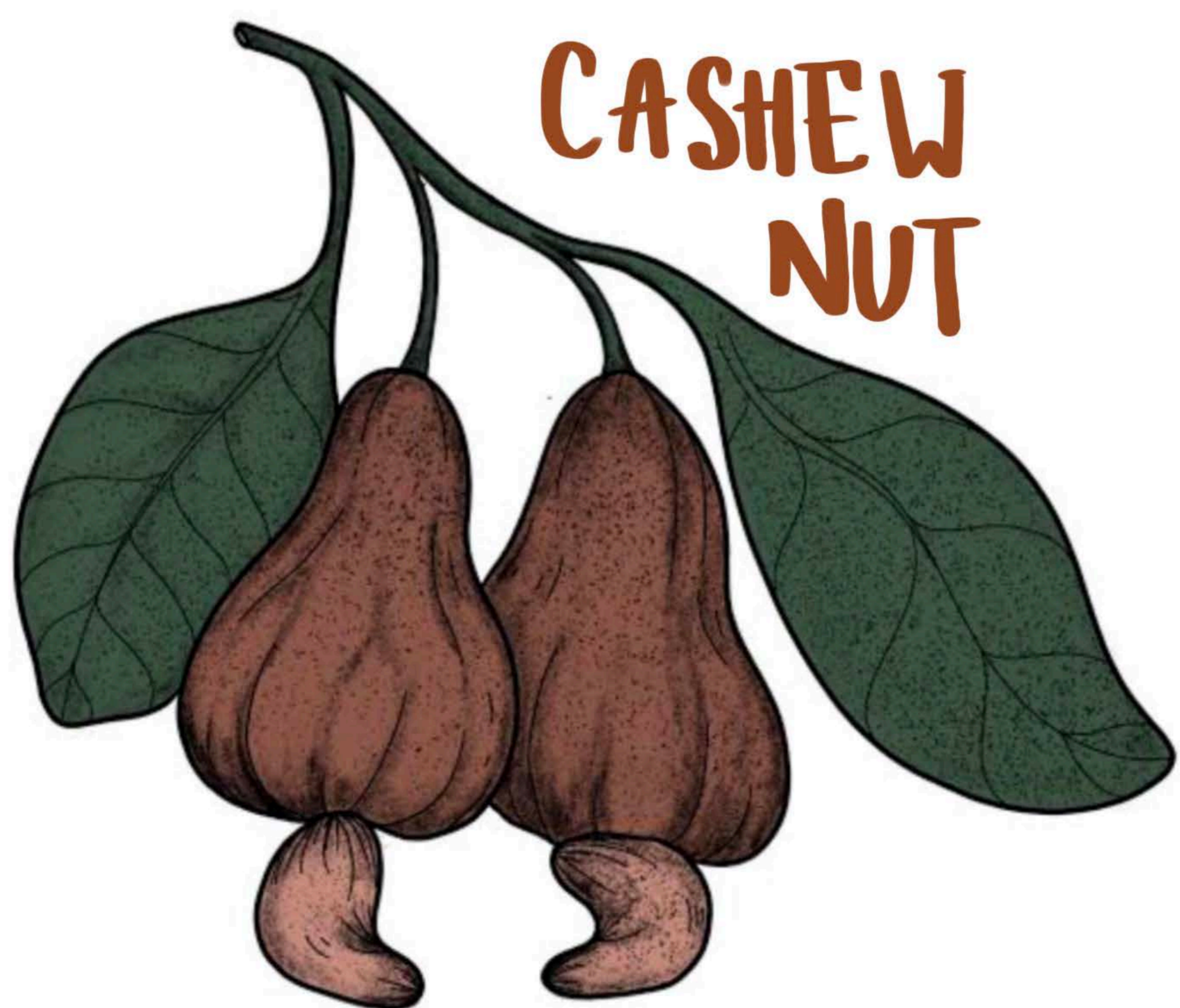
“THE GUARDIAN”



RUBBER
TREE



BRAZIL NUT



CASHEW
NUT

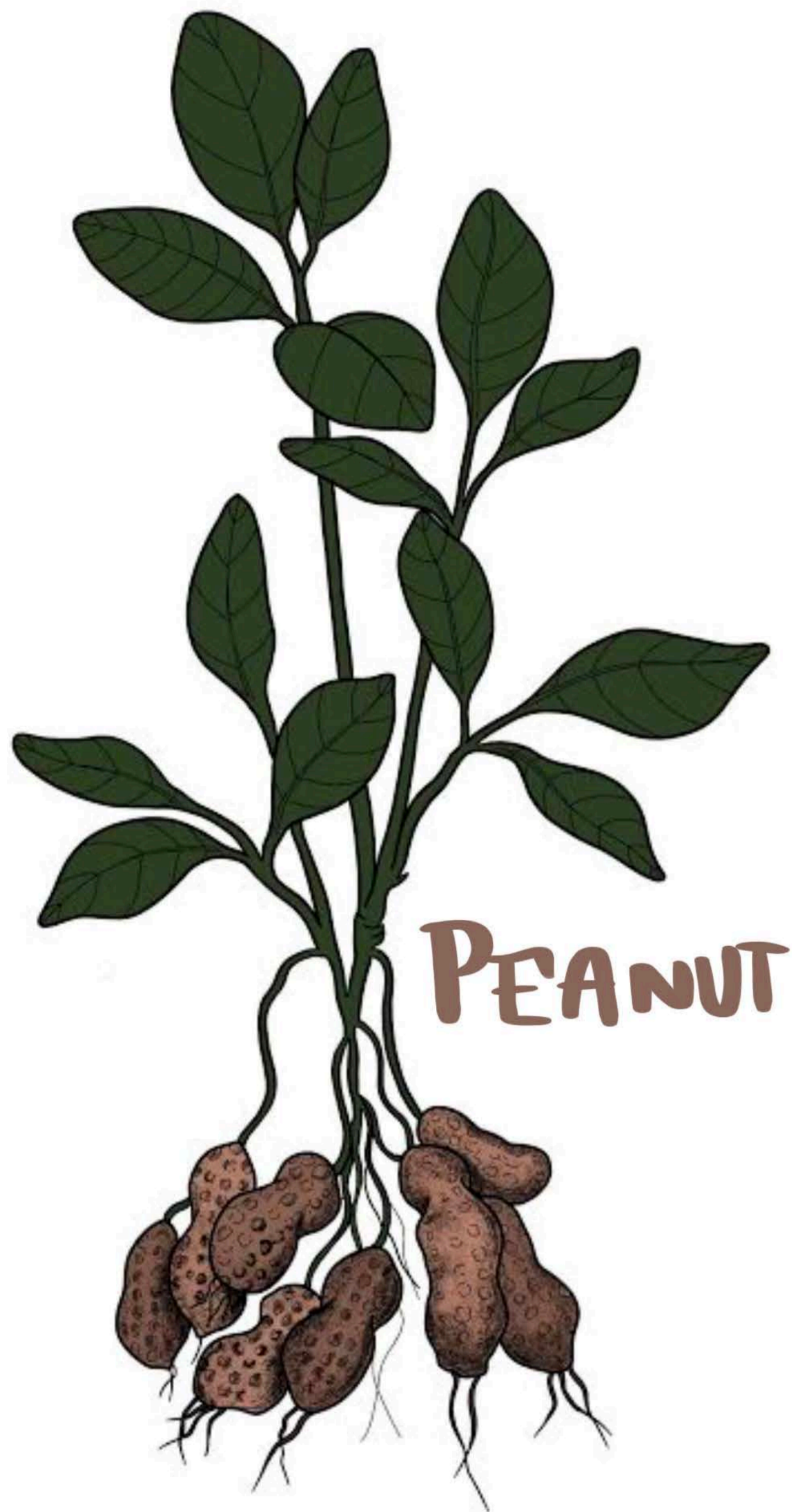
Chico Mendes was part of a long line of rubber tree tappers in Brazil's Amazon Rainforest. The Amazon has been at great risk of deforestation for decades because of large-scale cattle ranches and produce farms. These industries threatened Mendes' family and other Indigenous communities whose lives depend on the health of the rainforest. Mendes became involved with a worker's rights movement which demanded the creation of an extractive_reserve. This reserve would ensure that the families who rely on the strength of the Amazon could continue to harvest their food in the same ways as their ancestors. Chico Mendes showed us the undeniable connection between worker's rights, the right to live on your homelands, and the protection and safeguarding of all ecosystems. These points cannot succeed without one another.



GEORGE WASHINGTON-CARVER

THE G.O.A.T*

*greatest of all time

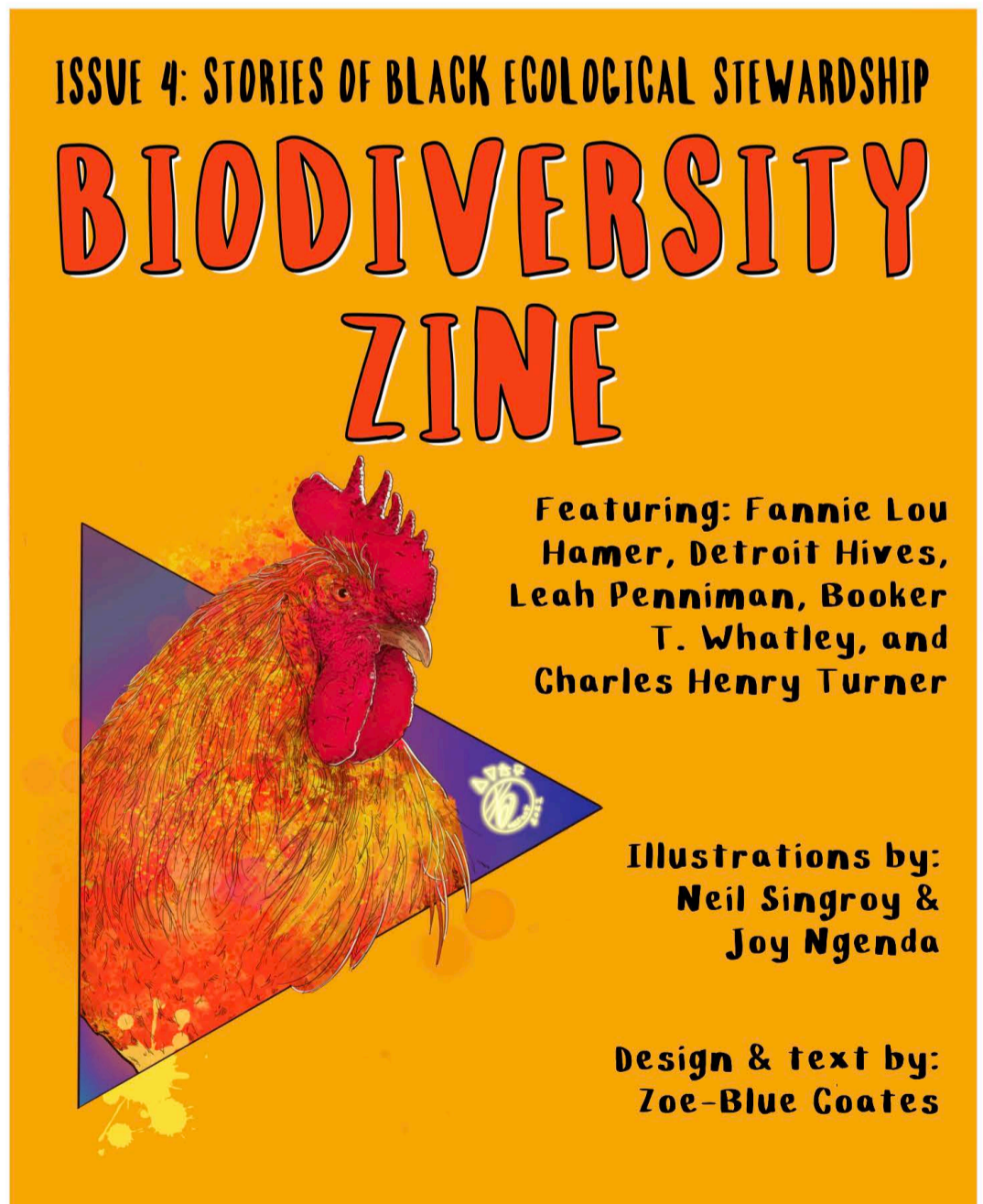
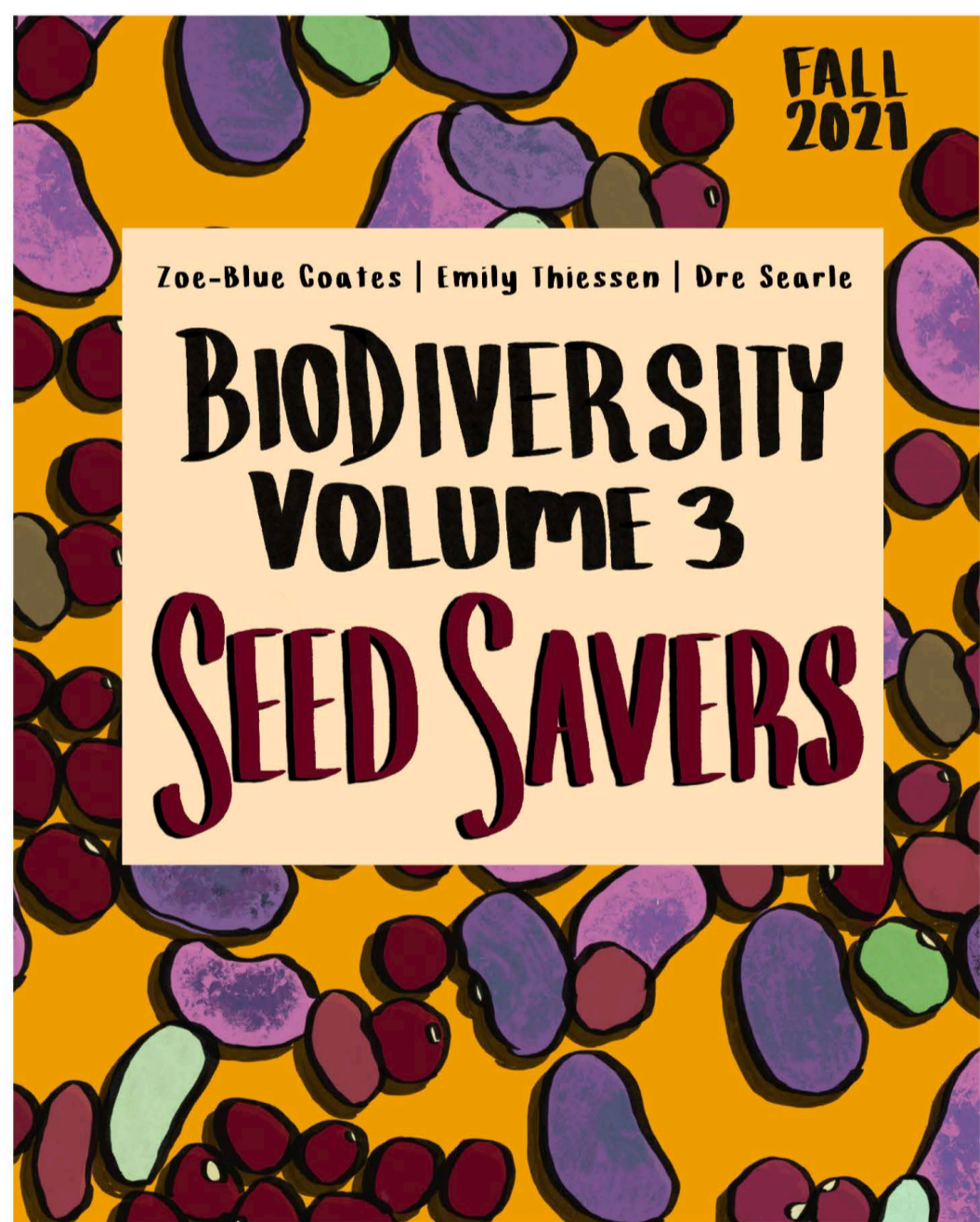
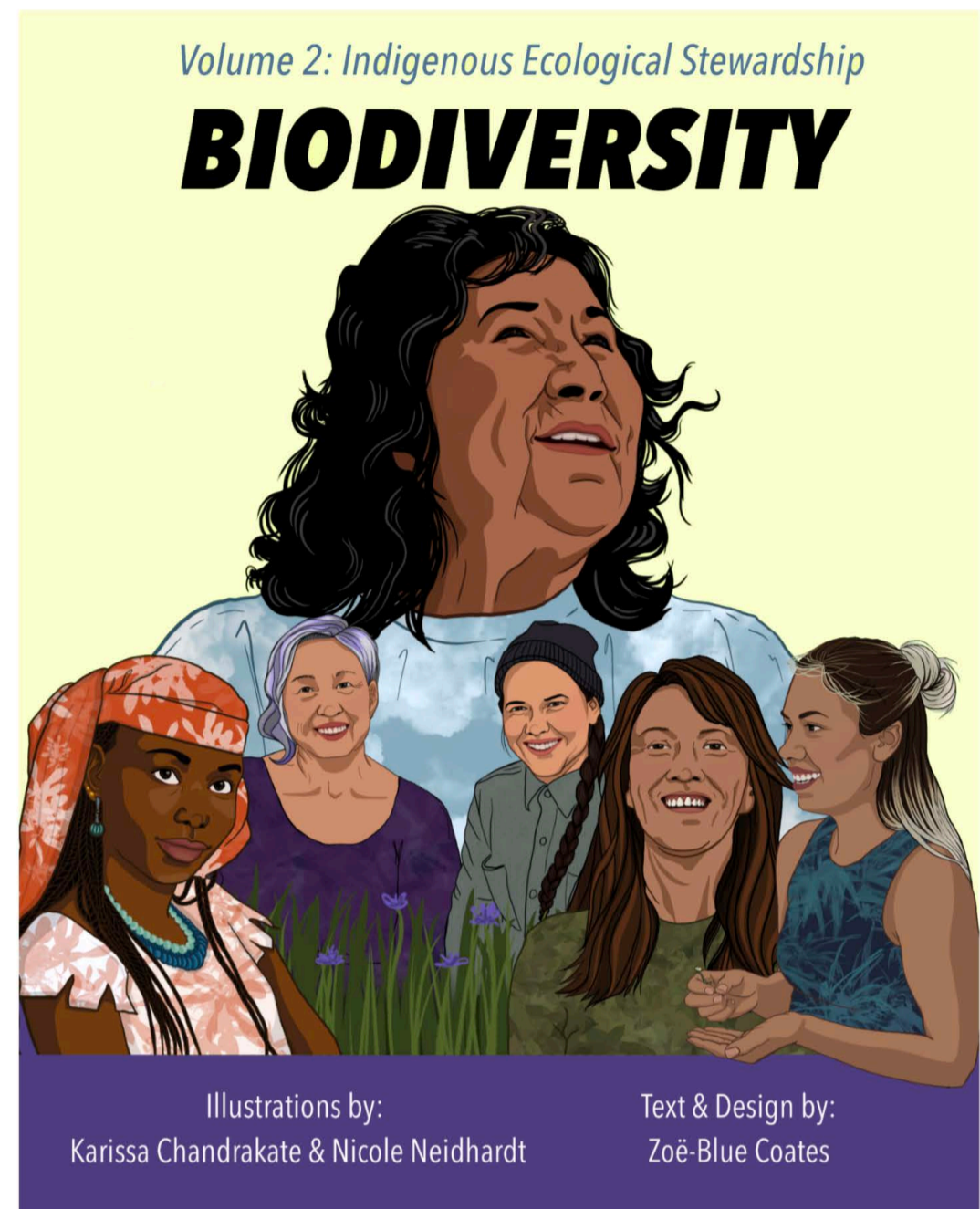
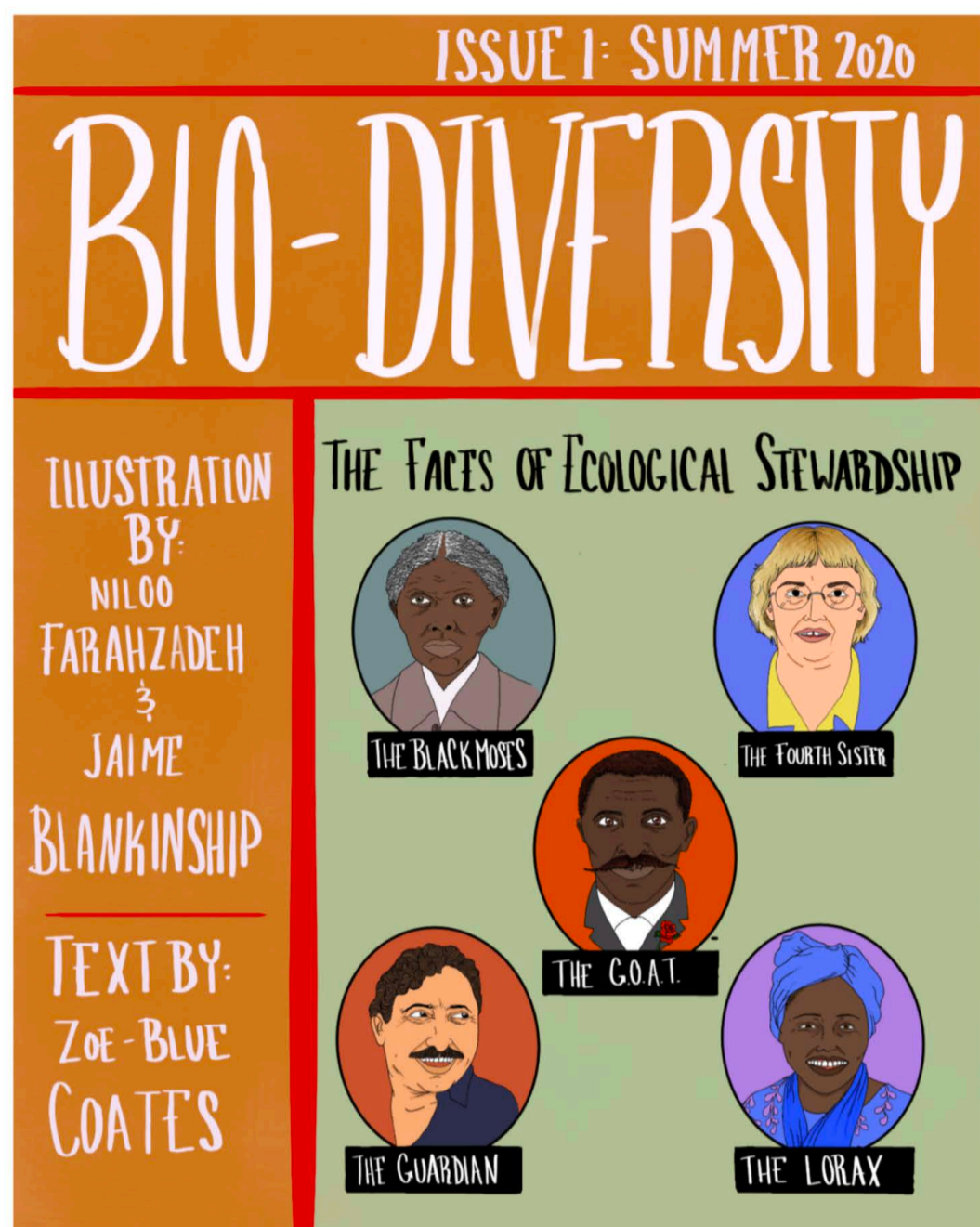


COTTON



George Washington-Carver was a Black agronomist and inventor. George pursued an education in biology, botany, visual arts, and music. He was the first Black man to graduate university in the state of Iowa. Through a mobile education program called the "Jesup agricultural wagon," Carver would travel to different rural farming communities where Black farmers in the Jim Crow South were hard hit by poverty caused by racist structures and environmental factors. An example is the impacts of monocropping on cotton plantations. The use of monocropping led to land degradation in the region, resulting in lower and lower cotton yields for Black and White farmers alike. Carver travelled the South teaching inexpensive farming techniques like composting as an alternative to buying fertilizers, and crop rotations with peanuts, a nitrogen fixer. Carver's work continues to inform sustainable agricultural practices around the globe.

BIODIVERSITY ZINE SERIES



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