Peter Crane’s book inspired us to gather a few ginkgo images. These pages show just a few of the aspects that make ginkgo such a fascinating plant.

An artfully espaliered ginkgo graces a wall of the Sterling Morton Library at the Morton Arboretum (right). At about 55 years old, this ginkgo is a youngster compared to the “Old Lion” ginkgo at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. That venerable tree was planted in 1762 and is seen here in an engraving that originally appeared in the British publication Gardeners’ Chronicle in March 1889 (lower left), and in a photograph from May 2010 (lower right).

Credit photos, clockwise from upper right: Kris Bachtell, Tony Kirkham, Archives of the Arnold Arboretum

Ginkgo biloba in the Royal Gardens at Kew.
(From the Gardeners’ Chronicle.)
PEOPLE LOVE GINKGOS. Clockwise from upper left: This wonderful 1921 E. H. Wilson photograph shows a woman hugging an enormous ginkgo at the Temple of the Yellow Dragon, Kuling (Su-shan), China (Wilson recorded the tree at 100 feet tall and with a trunk circumference of 19.5 feet, measured at 3 feet above ground level). Ginkgos stand behind a Buddha statue at the Sensō-ji temple in Tokyo. Over 100 (possibly 200) ginkgo cultivars have been selected, including those with dwarf, fastigiate, weeping, and globe-shaped habits as well as different leaf forms (‘Variegata’ is seen here). Ginkgophiles enjoy the golden glow under a ginkgo alleé along Icho Namiki (Ginkgo Avenue) in Tokyo.

Credit photos, clockwise from upper left: Archives of the Arnold Arboretum, Peter Del Tredici, Nancy Rose, Peter Del Tredici
THE GINKGO LEAF’S simple but elegant shape and unique dichotomous venation make it a work of art in itself. Over many centuries its iconic form has appeared on everything from street signs to silverware to shampoo bottles. Shown here (clockwise from upper left) are a live leaf, a plate from Japan, the 1916 woodblock print *Crow and Ginkgo Leaves* by Japanese artist Watanabe Seitei, a pair of silver sugar tongs, and a decorative wall tile.

*Credit photos, clockwise from upper left: Peter Del Tredici, Peter Del Tredici, Smithsonian Institution, Nancy Rose, Kris Bachtell*