



INSIDE

THE GARDENS

FALL 2024 A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR
MEMBERS OF DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS

They make me love autumn. Perennials. Those ever-surprising, always-changing plants that make up most of our gardens bring delight and some valuable lessons.

The cycle of perennials is amazing to watch. What looks like barren ground suddenly erupts in all shapes and shades when the weather warms. After a dry winter, they may peek out of the ground as if hesitant. After a wet winter, expect to see a level of bold announcement.

They are the leading actors when in bloom and then take a supporting role as the season changes. But in autumn, they become real stars. My own front yard is a densely planted garden, with a dry creek bed surrounded by an array of Spring Plant Sale and Fall Plant & Bulb Sale purchases. The ornamental grasses frame the view on both sides of the creek that spread toward a variety of species dominated by penstemons. As the weather gets colder, everything begins to create a whole new scene.

The grasses turn gold, yellow and beige and everything else provides a variety of textures that keep the whole tableau interesting. And if you wait until late winter before trimming everything down, this temporarily dormant collection becomes needed habitat for a wide variety of life, not to mention a sight more appealing than barren soil.

Yes, I love perennials because they have purpose in every stage of their lives. They remind us to value times of glory and times of quiet contemplation. Every now and then, we get visitors to the Gardens in the depths of winter who complain that “all the plants are dead.” Au contraire. They are simply resting, awaiting their next revival.

For decades, the Gardens has benefitted from exceptional trustees. Our board is a dynamic, committed, wise and caring group that keeps us focused on doing good work for the whole community.

For the past three years, Mike Imhoff has been at the helm, serving as board chair. His calm demeanor combined with deep interest stewarded us through a time of tremendous change as we emerged from the depths of COVID and countless societal shifts. He is a champion for the staff, the mission, vision and guiding values of the Gardens. He transitions to the role of past chair on January 1, having seen us through unprecedented growth in everything from member households, overall attendance, operating budget and endowment.

For your leadership, kindness and friendship, thank you, Mike.

Brian Vogt, CEO



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INSIDE THE GARDENS

ISSUE 4, 2024

Denver Botanic Gardens

1007 York St., Denver, CO 80206

Hours through Nov. 19: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., last admission 4 p.m.

Holiday Hours: Nov. 20 – Jan. 5, 2025, 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.,
last admission 2:30 p.m.

Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms

8500 West Deer Creek Canyon Rd., Littleton, CO 80128

Pre-purchased tickets and advance member passes only.

Hours: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., last admission 4 p.m.

[Check the website for early closures](#)

General Information: 720-865-3500

Class Registration: 720-865-3580

Donations: 720-865-3528

Gift Shop: 720-865-3595

Membership Services: 720-865-3525

Private Events: 720-865-3551

Volunteering: 720-865-3609

Helen Fowler Library: 720-865-3570

Tours: 720-865-3539

Visit Our Website for More Information:

[Gardening Help from Colorado Master Gardeners](#)

[Kathryn Kalmbach Herbarium](#)

[Sam Mitchel Herbarium of Fungi](#)

Editor: Tiffany Coleman

Graphic Designer: Nick Elias

Photographer: Scott Dressel-Martin

The mission of Denver Botanic Gardens is to connect people with plants, especially plants from the Rocky Mountain region and similar regions around the world, providing delight and enlightenment to everyone.

DENVER BOTANIC
GARDENS

botanicgardens.org

Learn about James' saxifrage
(*Telesonix jamesii*) on page 2.

Photo by Jen Toews



The Gardens is grateful for funds from the Scientific & Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), which enable us to expand services and enhance the quality of our programs and exhibits.



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Museums



American
Public Gardens
Association



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DOCUMENTING ALPINE PLANT DIVERSITY IN THE TARRYALL MOUNTAINS

By Jen Toews, Assistant Manager, Plant Records



Obscured by dense coniferous forests, the Tarryall Mountains appear unremarkable from the car as U.S. 285 descends into South Park. In fact, their beauty is only revealed after a six-mile hike culminating in a series of lung-burning switchbacks. As pine woodlands give way to alpine meadows, an exquisite rock-strewn landscape appears: This was our fieldwork site for the past two summers.

Difficult to access, the highest reaches of the Tarryalls, Bison Peak (12,431 ft.) and McCurdy Mountain (12,168 ft.), had never been thoroughly floristically documented.* Suspecting the area to be an important plant area, staff from Denver Botanic Gardens and Betty Ford Alpine Gardens donned 40-pound backpacks overflowing with provisions for five days and vouchering supplies: field and wooden presses, a data collection tablet and the three-pound “Flora of Colorado” by the Gardens’ Jennifer Ackerfield.

During four trips, we documented a diversity of species from the common and widespread moss campion (*Silene acaulis*) to the Southern Rockies’ endemic James’ saxifrage (*Telesonix jamesii*). Five collections were made of vulnerable species (see definitions on [NatureServe](#)) including Rocky Mountain blue columbine (*Aquilegia saximontana*). While not a highlight, we even vouchered the introduced common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) on the summit of McCurdy Mountain and the saddle of Bison Peak.

We made 176 collections and have documented around 110 unique species occurring near or above tree line. All specimens are housed in the Kathryn Kalmbach Herbarium and are archived digitally on [SEINet](#). Seed collected from nine alpine species will be stored for ex-situ conservation in the National Laboratory for Genetic Resources Preservation.

*Alpine plant documentation is an objective of the [North American Botanic Garden Strategy for Alpine Plant Conservation](#).



WANDERLUST

The Gardens' Center for Global Initiatives offers trips that traverse many continents. [See full itineraries and register online.](#)

Botanical Wonders of Argentine Patagonia

December 3-16

Argentine Patagonia is famous for its rugged beauty, massive glaciers, towering mountains and windswept plains. Patagonian flora showcase remarkable adaptability and resilience, reflecting the diverse microclimates and ecological niches found throughout this breathtaking landscape. Travel along famous Route 40, the longest route in Argentina, crossing from north to south parallel to the Andes Mountains, with Director of Outreach and Senior Curator Panayoti Kelaidis and renowned Argentinian botanist Marcela Ferreyra.

Magical Mexico: Mexico City, Monarch Butterflies and Valle de Bravo

January 25-31, 2025

Every winter, montane cloud forests in central Mexico host millions of over-wintering monarch butterflies. When masses of butterflies are in flight, it sounds like rain falling. Their cumulative weight can even bend branches of towering oyamel fir trees. Spend two days at monarch butterfly sanctuaries, then explore vibrant Mexico City, known for its thriving art scene, charming neighborhoods, world-class gastronomy and its unique blend of old and new. Associate Director of Community Relations Yvonne Garcia Bardwell is your host.

Botanical Wonders of Eastern Turkey

May 8-21, 2025

Explore the steppes of Turkey with Curator of Steppe Collections Mike Bone and renowned plantsman Christopher Gardener. Turkey is at a convergence of two different floristic regions, the Mediterranean and the steppes of Asia. The result is an incredibly diverse plant palette. Begin in Cappadocia with its ancient cultural and geological wonders and floral treasures. Then explore the montane steppe in eastern Turkey, where many transition zones give rise to wildflower displays. Travel through Turkic villages and explore mountains and fertile valleys in search of natural wonders.



A person wearing a blue shirt, a hat, and a face mask is standing on a wooden ladder, pruning a large, dense pine tree. The tree has thick, dark branches and vibrant green needles. The background shows other trees and a clear blue sky.

KŌSHIN 更新

RENEWAL IN SHOFU-EN

By Henry Basile, Assistant Curator Japanese Garden

Since its dedication in 1979, the Shofu-en Japanese Garden has had many caretakers and volunteers. They have skillfully maintained the creative vision that Koichi Kawana held when he first set the position for our native stones and collected ponderosa pines for the garden. Nevertheless—to paraphrase one of the many conversations heard atop an orchard ladder—to many visitors this garden remains “static” between the years, with slight changes being difficult to detect. After a year and a half of tending this garden with the help of a renewed and enthusiastic volunteer staff, we hope that this treasured and quiet space is beginning to look renewed as well.

With a seasonal average of around 110 hours contributed by volunteers, seasonals, interns and myself, we have been able to implement a variety of scale changes to our

rounded *tamamono* shrubs, complete a renovation of our *karesansui* (dry garden or Zen garden), cut out a quiet view through to Shofu-en from the gazebo and carried out a large-scale *sukashi* (open-style pruning) of nearly each one of our ancient, collected ponderosas. Pruning and needling these trees to open negative space and better accentuate the elegant but rugged structure of the branches and twigging takes on average eight hours per tree, but is heavily rewarding to partake in.

With the gardens of Japan having been shaped by hundreds of years of caretaking, we hope to slowly grow with this garden and improve upon its unique character, setting the structure for caretakers and visitors to come.

THE SOLAR GARDEN

AT CHATFIELD FARMS

By Josie Hart, Associate Director of Farm Programs

Among a field at Chatfield Farms, a curious new garden has sprung up. This five-acre area is now home to an agrivoltaics system, which thoughtfully combines agriculture and solar photovoltaic panels to support sustainably grown food—thus the term “agrivoltaics.” In this system, crops and pollinator habitat are planted underneath the panels, creating valuable partial shade. The sustainable energy generated will meet 100% of Chatfield Farms’ energy needs and reduce the energy bills of more than 150 Denver families. Produce grown in this solar garden will be distributed to community members through local food banks. We are building a community of food and energy resilience that will slowly grow into an educational demonstration where biodiversity as well job creation can flourish.

The Chatfield Farms Solar Garden is one of the 11 community solar gardens being installed throughout the Denver area. These gardens are a part of the Climate Protection Fund’s efforts to power buildings in Denver with 100% renewable energy. The gardens also provide shade, cooling during the summer and, in the case of agrivoltaics, vegetables!

This program aims to build, host and share the benefits of clean, renewable solar energy. McKinstry constructs the solar gardens and partners with GRID Alternatives Colorado to offer on-site job training at each solar garden. This past summer, the Chatfield Farms’ team attended the International Agrivoltaics Conference in Denver and shared information with global partners doing similar work. There is a vested interest for projects that incorporate the nexus of food, water and energy into cutting-edge solutions. Once these 11 gardens are completed, families in need of energy assistance will receive relief on their energy bills and emissions in Denver will be cut by the equivalent of over 1,000 cars. Over time, we also hope to quantify water savings within an agrivoltaics system.

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), which studies economic and ecological tradeoffs of agrivoltaics systems, is a foundational partner of this project. Chatfield Farms is excited for the collaboration with NREL on this new research area for clean energy and crop production.





Photo by Mike Bone

PLANT PRODUCTION

THE BUILD TOWARD BEAUTY

By Phillip Douglas, FLS, Director of Horticulture & Center for Global Initiatives

If you have ever enjoyed one of our annual displays, eaten fresh produce from the Chatfield Farms' CSA or bathed in the respite of one of our landscapes in its full spring glory, you owe a debt of gratitude to the Gardens' plant production team.

With a little over 22,000 square feet of greenhouse space at Chatfield Farms and York Street, this efficient team is charged with growing a diversity of plants unheard of in most greenhouses—more than 250,000 plants each year, in fact. These plants supplement our plant sales, fill out our living collections, and support our Urban Food Initiatives and educational programs.

The crew is led by Associate Director of Horticulture & Curator of Steppe Collection Mike Bone and consists of Emily McAuley, Brooke Palmer and Alyssa Scott. They are rounded out by the support of dedicated volunteers—and one rambunctious cat, Jamesbrittenia.

The Gardens' production team has mastered the art of growing plants, whether they are orchids, tomatoes, trees, shrubs or seeds of wild-collected plants from our international partners. The knowledge and expertise required to grow such diversity are skills that take years to master, and our team boasts over 30 years' combined experience at the Gardens. All this work generates high-quality plant material for the enjoyment of our visitors.

ENGAGING COMMUNITY SCIENTISTS TO OBSERVE BIODIVERSITY

By Alissa Iverson, M.S., Floristic and Outreach Coordinator

A major focus of the Research & Conservation Department is to document and categorize Colorado's floral and fungal biodiversity. Understanding where plants and fungi occur is crucial for conservation. This challenge has led to a call for community science, inviting everyone—regardless of background—to record and share their observations of nature. Community science contributes to our understanding of biodiversity while connecting people to the science of nature. To engage with community scientists, this year we organized two events—[the City Nature Challenge](#) and Insects Illuminated.

For the past several years we've been coordinating the [Denver-Boulder City Nature Challenge](#) (CNC)—part of a global competition among cities to record biodiversity in a three-day timespan. We partnered with local organizations and agencies to host events aimed at surveying biodiversity using [iNaturalist](#). This free community science app for smartphone devices can be used to observe plants, fungi, animals, insects and more. Here at the Gardens, we held an iNaturalist training and a bioblitz at Chatfield Farms for our staff.

This year during the CNC nearly 400 people recorded more than 4,500 observations of almost 1,000 species. The bioblitz at Chatfield Farms led to the first scientific record of the parasitic orchid

called striped coralroot, *Corallorhiza striata*, in Jefferson County since 1905. Overall, the Denver-Boulder CNC culminated in 73 research-grade observations of 10 species listed as rare, endangered or threatened by NatureServe or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In addition to the CNC, this year we relaunched Insects Illuminated—a nighttime public event at Chatfield Farms designed to document nocturnal insect biodiversity. Using ultraviolet lights projected onto bedsheets, we attracted insects and documented them with iNaturalist and scientific collections. The event attracted a mix of community experts, staff and volunteers who were able to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with those new to the joy of insect diversity. Together we collected 35 specimens for preservation in our arthropod collection. Highlights of the night include the grand elm sphinx moth and brilliant yellow geometer moth.

Community science has become a crucial component of understanding biodiversity. Platforms like iNaturalist make this scientific endeavor accessible and engaging. Consider becoming a community scientist yourself by documenting biodiversity on your own or through an event—who knows what you might find in your own backyard!





River's Voice: Textiles by Alexandra Kehayoglou (2024) at Denver Botanic Gardens.



Patrick Marold, *Shadow and Light* (detail), steel bands and copper foil, 2024.

Current Exhibitions

[River's Voice: Textiles by Alexandra Kehayoglou](#)

Through December 8, 2024

Including a work that spills onto the floor, this exhibition invites you to remove your shoes and literally walk through the beauty of the Argentinean wetlands.

[Shadow and Light: Patrick Marold](#)

Through January 5, 2025

Explore a site-specific installation highlighting the ever-changing qualities of light and shadow. Encounter an exhibition that changes with every visit, highlighting the shifting mood of light throughout the day and across the seasons.

[Elliot Ross: Geography of Hope](#)

Through February 2, 2025

The desert walls of Glen Canyon have recently emerged from the waters of Lake Powell after two decades of drought in the American West. Discover the resilience and beauty of Glen Canyon's ecosystem through the large-scale photographs of Elliot Ross.

Opening Soon



Ash Eliza Williams, *Nerve*, oil on panel, foam, gouache, mirror and clay, 2020.

[Language Without Words: Works by Ash Eliza Williams](#)

December 22, 2024 – May 4, 2025

Rediscover the world around you through Ash Eliza Williams' paintings and sculpture and reconsider the natural world through the eyes of its non-human inhabitants. An invitation to notice alternate ways to interact with nature (and one another), *Language Without Words* is an opportunity to contemplate perspectives beyond human experience.



Elliot Ross, *The Magnitude of Loss*, digital pigment print, 2022.

Join Us for SUNDAY STRINGS

October 6, November 3
and December 1, 1-2:30 p.m.

Included with admission

Explore our art galleries
complemented by music from
local musicians.



Karen Kluglein, *Orange Sun Sweet Pepper*, watercolor, 2020.
Artwork © Botanical Interests, Inc.



Anna Kaye, *Dusky and checkered wings (detail)*, charcoal, 2020.

Seeds of Inspiration

January 18 – May 20, 2025

Explore botanical art used to inspire gardeners across the nation. Featuring artwork from the collection of Colorado-based seed and garden products company Botanical Interests LLC, this exhibit highlights the unique connection between art and nature visible in seed packet design. Experience how botanical artists apply their skills to create detailed images of flowers, vegetables, and herbs, helping gardeners envision what they can grow from seed.

Anna Kaye: Finding Light

February 15 – May 20, 2025

Engross yourself in detailed charcoal drawings of fire and scorched forests. Anna Kaye explores the duality of loss and regrowth in nature through the lens of cyclical wildfires and their role in forests. As wildfires increase in size and intensity, making it harder for ecosystems to recover, Kaye's work examines the complexity of fire's ecological impact. Emphasizing hope, *Finding Light* highlights transformation and regrowth as plants and animals return to burned forests.

FALL/WINTER EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENTS



CORN MAZE AT CHATFIELD FARMS

**Fridays – Sundays through Oct. 27,
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

\$10-\$18, must purchase tickets in advance

Mountain lions and moose and bears, oh my! This year a Colorado wildlife theme is woven into the maze. Navigate your way through seven acres of twists and turns. Kids can enjoy a mini maze and barrel train rides. Don't forget to grab your favorite festival snack from our food vendors!



GHOSTS IN THE GARDENS

**Friday, Oct. 4, Saturday & Sunday, Oct. 12-13,
Thursday – Sunday, Oct. 17-20,
5:30-10:30 p.m.**

\$34, \$29 member

Join us after dark to hear the true stories of hauntings at the Gardens, which is located on ground that belonged to Denver's first cemetery.

PUMPKIN FESTIVAL AT CHATFIELD FARMS

**Friday – Sunday, October 11-13,
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

\$10 - \$18, must purchase tickets in advance

A fall family favorite, Pumpkin Festival promises three days of fun. Purchase your pumpkins from the 10-acre patch and enjoy carnival games, wagon rides, local vendors, live music, food trucks and autumn-inspired beer and cider selections. Ticket add-ons include a pirate-themed escape room and Ninja Nation obstacle course. Access to Corn Maze is included with Pumpkin Festival tickets. See website for live entertainment schedule.

VOLUNTEER

THE GARDENS' FALL EVENT SEASON IS HERE!

Our amazing events are successful thanks to a great deal of volunteer support. Now is the time to get involved as a volunteer and connect with others while helping to make events enjoyable for all. Get more information on becoming a [Gardens' volunteer](#) and specific details on special event [volunteer opportunities](#) at both York Street and Chatfield Farms, or email us at vol@botanicgardens.org.

SAVE THE DATE – Tickets for Blossoms of Light® and Trail of Lights go on sale starting November 6!



BLOSSOMS OF LIGHT®

Nov. 20 – Jan. 12, 4:30-9 p.m.
(closed Nov. 28 and Dec. 25)

\$18-\$31, must purchase tickets in advance

Consistently lauded as one of the top holiday light shows in the nation, Blossoms of Light illuminates our York Street location in a spectacular celebration of color and light. Wander through immersive, luminous displays that accentuate our plant collections during the winter months. A cherished holiday tradition for nearly four decades, Blossoms of Light is constantly evolving to inspire wonder and delight in our visitors. Most nights sell out, so get your tickets early!



TRAIL OF LIGHTS AT CHATFIELD FARMS

November 29 – January 1, select evenings,
5-8:30 p.m. (closed Dec. 25)

\$10-\$18, must purchase tickets in advance

Follow a winding path glistening with lights that illuminate the Colorado countryside. Warm up with hot chocolate at the start of the path before stopping to enjoy a show of dancing lights in the amphitheater. Shop the holiday market (select dates) and find the perfect gift for everyone on your list. Further down the path walk through tunnels of lights to find the dancing trees. Take a break in the warming hut halfway through the path and grab some Colorado-made chocolate treats. Tickets sell out fast; get yours early.



GLOW BEFORE DARK

Oct. 19-27, general admission hours

Included with admission, free for members

Visit during the day and enjoy enchanting vignettes from Glow at the Gardens™. Nestled into gardens awash with autumn color, many of the decorations from our spectacular nighttime event are equally delightful in the light of day.



GLOW AT THE GARDENS™

Oct. 22-27, 6-9 p.m.

\$24-\$32, must purchase tickets in advance

Join us for Glow at the Gardens™, our spookiest event this fall! Wander an immersive, illuminated path to discover enchanted landscapes animated by live performers with hand-carved pumpkin displays around every bend. While most nighttime Halloween events feature foam “funkins,” every single one of our grimacing jack-o’-lanterns and larger-than-life sculptures is freshly carved from real, locally grown pumpkins. This event sells out every year weeks in advance, so get your tickets early.

YOU HAVE TO SEE THIS...

From the Vault

Friday, October 18, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.
\$18, \$15 member

Enjoy a unique opportunity to see works from Denver Botanic Gardens' art collection up close, from 19th-century botanical prints to works by contemporary artists in the Gardens' Land Line Artist Residency program and recent exhibitions.

Seasonal Discoveries Tour

Various days and dates, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
\$16, \$8 member, \$5 student

No matter the time of year, botanical treasures await your discovery with these guided tours of gardens at their seasonal peaks.

Tropical Trails Tour

Various days, dates, and times
\$16, \$8 member, \$5 student

Weather may be cooling down, but the plants in the Boettcher Memorial Tropical Conservatory enjoy a warm climate year-round. Enjoy the lush vegetation, vibrant flowers and warmth of the tropics as you stroll through the Gardens' tropical collections.



SCHOOL OF BOTANICAL ART & ILLUSTRATION

Intersections Lectures

Select Wednesdays, 6–7 p.m.

\$12, \$10 member

Join us for talks by artists, scientists, thinkers and makers exploring the synergy between art and science. Lectures are typically 45-60 minutes followed by discussion.

Film Screening and Director's Talk with Billy Kanaly: Denver Botanic Films – ONSITE

Wednesday, October 9, 6 p.m.

Hear from Denver Botanic Films' director and producer Billy Kanaly about recent projects and learn about his process to create engaging content about plants and the natural world.

Artist Talk with Kiki Gaffney and Cherish Marquez: Land Line Artist Residency Reflections – ONLINE

Wednesday, November 13, 6 p.m.

In this combined presentation, artists Kiki Gaffney and Cherish Marquez share about the projects they cultivated during their 2023 Land Line Artist Residencies at Denver Botanic Gardens.

Artist Talk with Viviane Le Courtois & Julia Zoltowsky: The Urban Food Forest – ONSITE and ONLINE

Wednesday, December 4, 6 p.m.

Can you grow food successfully in an urban environment? In this lively discussion, join artist Viviane Le Courtois and manager of urban food initiatives at Denver Botanic Gardens, Julia Zoltowsky, as they share their experiences and passions around growing food and engaging with communities.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Have Camera, Will Travel

Wednesday, Nov. 13, 6-9 p.m.

\$51, \$41 member

Learn how to take great photos of your travels, including what gear to use, best practices, subject ideas and tips.

Singing Bowls at the Gardens

Saturday, Nov. 16, Dec. 7 or 14,

10-11:30 a.m. or 12:30-2 p.m.

\$25, \$22 member

Find blissful balance during this sound-healing meditation.

Tincture and Cordials

Tuesday, Nov. 19, 4-6 p.m.

\$43, \$38 member

Prepare herbal remedies and learn herb qualities, characteristics and functions. Take home a 1 oz tincture and a jar to make one at home.

The Basics of Fountain Pens

Friday, Dec. 13, 1-4 p.m.

\$60, \$55 member

Learn the basics of using and maintaining a fountain pen and sample various types of pens, paper and ink to decide which you prefer.

Orchid and Air Plant Living Sculpture Workshop

Saturday, Dec. 14, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

\$86, \$76 member

Create a free-standing, living sculpture and bring some tropical beauty into your home.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

By Matthew Cole, Director of Education

The Gardens' educators strive to reduce barriers for the variety of experiences and programming we offer. We do this through cost reductions, partnerships and a wide range of learning opportunities.

For more than 20 years, the Gardens has offered cost reductions for school field trips based on the percentage of free and reduced lunches at participating schools. This removes pressure from school budgets and parents. As costs have risen, we've kept prices low and expanded access. Thanks to generous support, we have been able to add bus cost reimbursement, participate in regional partnerships, and bring students to engaging, hands-on opportunities that help them learn and make meaning.

Among our long-term partnerships is Growing Scientists. Several SCFD nonprofits came together to improve science learning for the youngest students from Title 1 schools. Ages range from pre-school to third grade, and teachers select from age-appropriate curriculums. Students participate in field trips and in-school visits with authentic experiences that help them learn. The students' families enjoy access to the Gardens and other museums. At the end of the school year, the Gardens hosts a science celebration for families, students and teachers.

We also offer parent-child programs for preschoolers, days for homeschool families, summer camps, scout programs and more. As our offerings have grown, so have requests from other nonprofits for partnerships. Our efforts to serve these communities have led to expanded programming for our members and the public. As we've grown, we've improved systems to help individual families, too. Today, a parent experiencing financial hardship, facing crisis situations or navigating other barriers can apply for a Gardens' scholarship.

Adult students have expanded options as well. Programming for adults covers topics including gardening, health and wellness, art and other subjects that connect people to plants. Our scholarship opportunities for adults focus on gardening classes and programs. As we have expanded to offer online courses, scholarships are available for both onsite and online options.

Lastly, Helen Fowler Library predates Denver Botanic Gardens, making the library one of our longest-standing access points. The library is free for members and the public. Individual scholars and students have long been able to make appointments to access our collections, while members can check out books. With materials for children and their own Book Burrow, the library is also a place for the next generation.

Through these initiatives and partnerships, Denver Botanic Gardens remains committed to fostering a love for nature and learning, ensuring that everyone can experience the beauty and education the Gardens has to offer.





TUNING INTO YOUR SENSES

By Helena Nitz, Family and Children's Program Coordinator

The next time you visit the Gardens, come together as a family and tune into your senses to learn about and explore the world around you in a whole new way!

LISTEN Instead of bird watching, close your eyes and count how many different bird sounds you can hear.

TOUCH Stretch your hands or feet out into the world around you. What do you feel? Is there grass, soil, maybe some rocks? Spend time feeling and naming each texture.

SMELL Turn your head slowly to the right and then to the left. What can you smell? Are there scents from nature, like nearby plants, or maybe scents made by humans, like food cooking?

LOOK Look around. Do you see any shapes or colors that you recognize or any that are new? Try to name the ones you recognize and come up with names for the new ones.

DEEPENING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

THE CLINTON FAMILY FUND GO2GARDENS FREE SHUTTLE PROGRAM

Claire Shepherd Lanier, Ph.D., Associate Director of Development

What began in 2016 to bring community members with limited resources to Denver Botanic Gardens has become a lively network of buses and vans that transport enthusiastic groups to bilingual cooking and yoga classes and provide tickets to popular seasonal events, like Blossoms of Light®.

At the end of the year, [The Clinton Family Fund Go2Gardens Shuttle Program](#), intended to address barriers to access, will have introduced as many as 1,500 community members to the Gardens. Without this carefully choreographed program, many in this community would not benefit from the Gardens' activities, serenity and learning opportunities. Over the past eight years, the program has impacted Denver and diversified the Gardens' visitors.

Community members include nonprofits catering to youth, low-income people, refugees, students, Native Americans and others challenged by transportation issues. An example is Project Worthmore, a refugee-focused nonprofit in Denver. In the fall of 2023, the program took 110 students, family members and chaperones to Chatfield Farms, where the group, wearing traditional attire,

shared Burmese, Afghan and Sri Lankan food. Other popular activities have included exploring the exhibition *Spirit Guides: Fantastical Creatures from the Workshop of Jacobo and María Ángeles*, floral design workshops, Ghosts in the Gardens at Halloween, piñata making and much more.

The program's exponential growth testifies to its popularity, but it has brought new challenges, like the need for a waitlist. Earlier this summer, the Gardens proactively addressed this situation to ensure that every organization on the waitlist can visit. In future years, The Clinton Family Fund Go2Gardens Shuttle Program will continue to seek innovative solutions to remain a valued access point for many in our community.



ACCESSIBLE GARDENS FOR ALL PEOPLE

By Sean Grimes, On Call Librarian

Our vision is to create gardens and experiences for all people. We achieve this in part by providing equitable access, regardless of the physical challenges a person faces or other needs they may have. This can be as simple as a pathway designed to accommodate wheelchairs or as complex as designing entire gardens and events around the concept of varying sensory needs.

These selections from the [Helen Fowler Library](#) help navigate this topic and give insight into accessible garden design principles:

“Nature, Design, and Health” follows landscape architect and author **David Kamp** through his lifelong pursuit of designing landscapes that are accessible to all, regardless of physical disabilities or other needs. A treasury of photographs and stories help explain the gardens’ construction and design.

“Designing, Planting, and Using a Therapeutic Garden” is a detailed guide by **Sue Jeffries** to assist with the creation of a therapeutic garden. Included are tables and directories that aid with the selection of plants and seasonal tasks that best fit the abilities and needs of the garden and its visitors.

Focusing on gardeners with physical disabilities and older adults, **“The Enabling Garden”** by **Gene Rothert** guides readers in tasks ranging from choosing the right paving materials and tools to plant selection based on maintenance needs.

For fiction, we suggest younger readers check out the **“A Boy Called Bat”** books by **Elana K. Arnold**. Starring a boy on the autism spectrum, the series follows his challenges at school and interactions with nature.

Join Logan as he searches for carrots in **“Logan’s Greenhouse,”** a picture book by **JaNay Brown-Wood** featuring a main character with a disability, lots of learning fun for younger readers and a recipe to use all the vegetables in the story.

Sensory Processing and Autism Resource Kits (S.P.A.R.K.) include resources for those on the autism spectrum or who have other sensory needs, including a weighted lap pad, noise-reducing headphones, and more. Available to all visitors, the kit may be checked out from the library or Gardens’ information desk.



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