

East and West Galleries

In the East Gallery, a creative and comprehensive exhibit explores the science of plants. Designed to appeal to the curious of all ages, “How Plants Work: A Guide to Being Green” demystifies the life and reproduction of plants.

Using compelling displays that combine living plants with hands-on activities, the exhibit answers basic questions about plant function and survival. With a huge family tree of plants as the starting point, panels demonstrate how plants nourish themselves, reproduce, and fight off disease and predators.

Two 14-foot fiber sculptures dominate the exhibit. “Scarlet magnifica” shows off its xylem, phloem, and other parts, illustrating how the parts of a plant can vary as the result of adaptation. “Electra botanica,” equipped with sophisticated electronics, demonstrates the steps of photosynthesis and shows how captured energy is used to manufacture seeds.

In contrast, the exhibit in the West Gallery emphasizes the countless ways in which plants enrich human life. Colorful displays feature useful, ornamental, and ceremonial objects, images, architecture, products, and even figures of speech, all examples of the contributions plants make to human comfort and culture.



(ABOVE AND LEFT)

WEST GALLERY.

Bright sculpted canna blossoms invite visitors to smell the spices and essential oils that derive from plants. A giant sunflower (left) presents a short video about plant-based world cuisines.

(OPPOSITE)

EAST GALLERY.

A fiber sculpture, “Scarlet magnifica” helps visitors understand the complicated life processes of plants.

