



# *Visitor Guide*



**UNITED STATES BOTANIC GARDEN**

# The United States Botanic Garden

Steeped in history, rich with tradition, the United States Botanic Garden (USBG) is one of the oldest botanic gardens in North America. It informs visitors about the importance and often irreplaceable value of plants to the well-being of humankind and to earth's fragile ecosystems. The Garden highlights the diversity of plants worldwide as well as their aesthetic, cultural, economic, therapeutic, and ecological significance.



## THE NATION'S CONSERVATORY AND MORE

From jungle to desert to primeval paradise, the indoor gardens and galleries of our Conservatory offer the perfect foil to a winter day or harried schedule. The resplendent diversity of form, color, fruit, and fragrance reminds us that plants make our lives possible and enjoyable. Outdoors, our National Garden offers the finest of mid-Atlantic plants, and Bartholdi Park just across Independence Avenue demonstrates a variety of approaches to the home landscape.

*Globally, about one in every eight known plant species is threatened or nearing extinction. In the United States, the figure rises to about three in every ten plant species.*

## HISTORY

The United States Botanic Garden is rooted in the nation's heritage. During the late 18<sup>th</sup> century George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison shared the dream of having a national botanic garden and were instrumental in establishing one on the National Mall in 1820. The Botanic Garden has been in continuous operation and open to the public since 1850. It was formally placed under the jurisdiction of the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress in 1856 and has been administered through the Architect of the Capitol since 1934.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

The heart of the USBG is its plant collections. The USBG currently maintains about 12,000 accessions comprising more than 60,000 plants for exhibition, study, conservation, and exchange with other institutions. Noteworthy collections include economic plants, medicinal plants, orchids, carnivorous plants, cacti and succulents, Mid-Atlantic native plants, and ferns. Historic specimens include several that date from the original 1842 founding collection. Our staff maintains extensive computerized records of the plants in the Garden's collections.

The USBG also serves as a rescue center for plants confiscated at U.S. borders in cooperation with CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

With the continued support of Congress, the United States Botanic Garden is committed to serving the American people. Just as our forefathers recognized the role of plants in the future development of the fledgling nation, there is even greater need today to renew our understanding of the importance of plants to the well-being of our citizens, our nation, and the world. It is hard to imagine a more important mission.

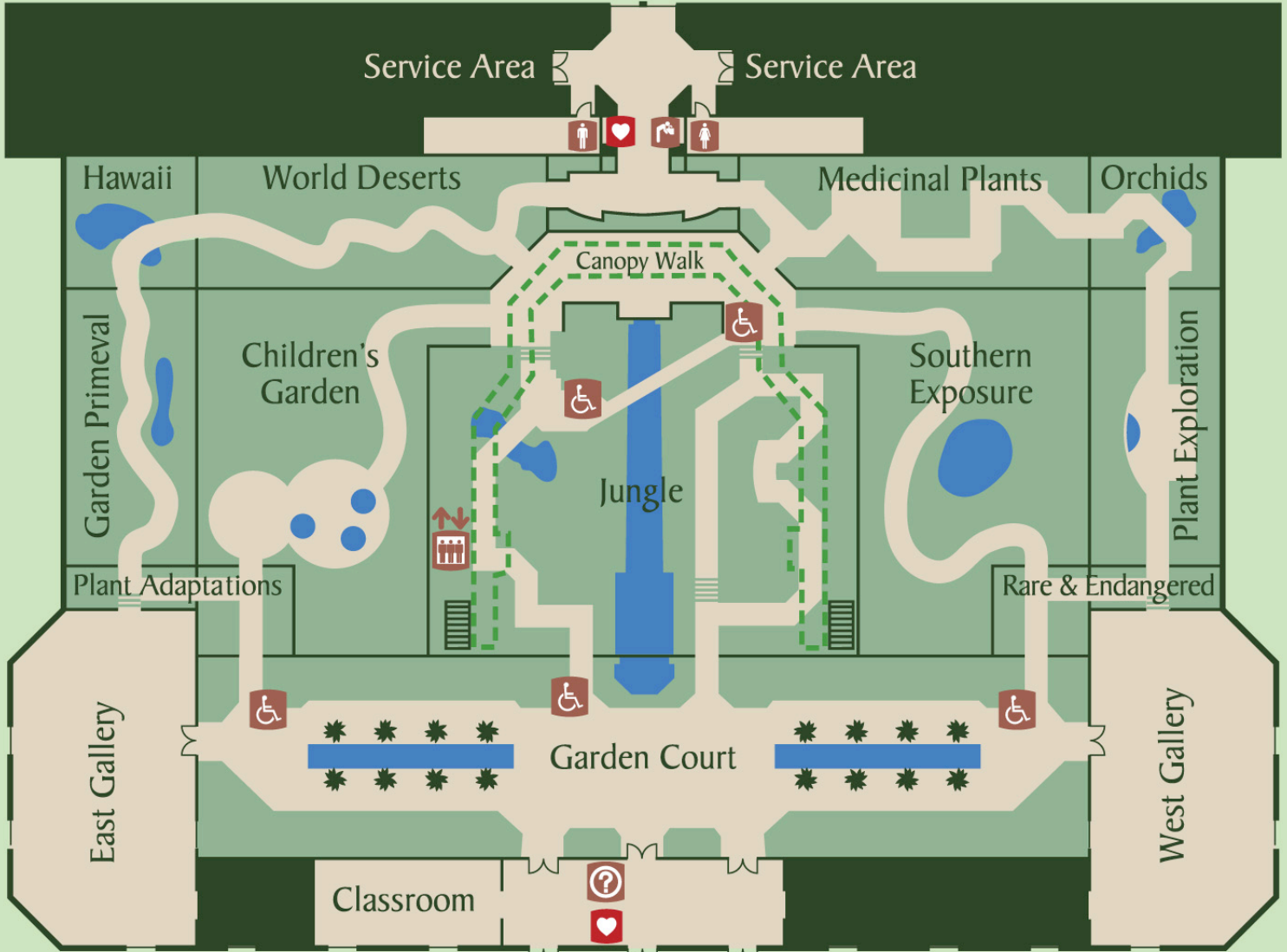
*Plants serve as the source of our oxygen, our food, many of our medicines, and much of our inspiration.*

*Humans are inextricably intertwined with plants and other life forms, locked in a dynamic, co-dependent struggle for survival. It is in our own self-interest to pay them more attention.*



# UNITED STATES BOTANIC GARDEN CONSERVATORY DIRECTORY

Emergency Exit



Service Area

Service Area

Hawaii

World Deserts

Medicinal Plants

Orchids

Garden Primeval

Children's Garden

Jungle

Southern Exposure

Plant Exploration

Plant Adaptations

Rare & Endangered

East Gallery

Garden Court

West Gallery

Classroom

Exit Entrance Exit



Rest Rooms



Information



Elevator



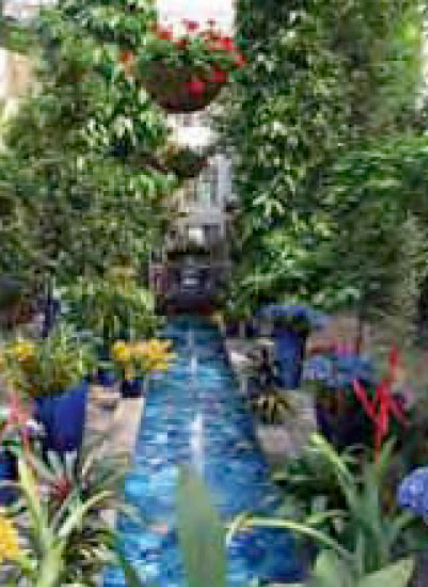
Water Fountain



Wheelchair Access



Automated External Defibrillator



### **Garden Court**

Features economic and ethnobotanical plants—those used in products such as fibers, food, beverages, cosmetics, wood, spices, and others.

### **East Gallery**

An ever-changing venue for temporary exhibits, programs, and events. Check our website for the current schedule.

### **Medicinal Plants**

Explores the origin of plant medicine and displays a collection of medicinal plants from all over the world.

### **Garden Primeval**

A reconstructed Jurassic landscape of ferns and other ancient plant groups that have survived for 150 million years.

### **Children's Garden**

An area where children can play in a garden and learn informally about plants. Closed in winter.

### **Plant Adaptations**

Shows some of the fascinating adaptations that have evolved in the plant world.

### **Hawaii**

Features native plants from this remote volcanic island chain.

### **World Deserts**

Filled with succulents, grasses, shrubs, and other arid-land plants.

### **Orchids**

An ever-blooming, ever-changing display of these mythic plants. The USBG orchid collection numbers about 5,000 specimens, and hundreds of orchids are on display at any given time.

### **Plant Exploration**

Highlights plant discoveries in the wild and in the laboratory. Features changing and seasonal exhibits.

### **Rare and Endangered Species**

A changing display of rare, threatened, or endangered plants and habitats.

### **West Gallery**

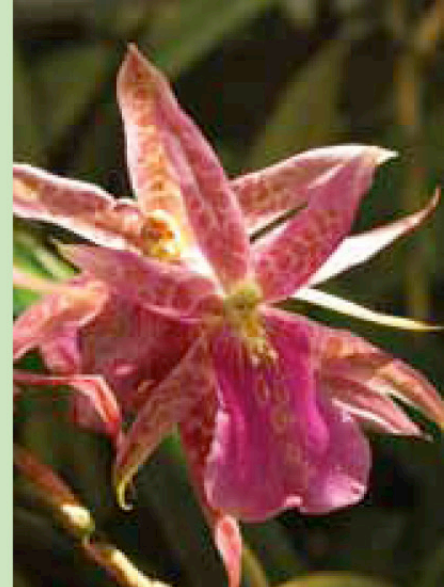
*Plants and Culture*, a permanent display, demonstrates how plants provide livelihood, meaning, therapy, ornamentation, tools, symbols, and other enrichments to our everyday lives.

### **Jungle**

A tropical rainforest overtakes an abandoned plantation. The dome rises to 93 feet and has a mezzanine level from which to view the jungle canopy.

### **Southern Exposure**

A microclimate garden featuring North American plants native to the Southeast, the Southwest, and Mexico. Closed in winter.



# NATIONAL GARDEN



Leave plenty of time to stroll through our newest outdoor garden. The National Garden features a Regional Garden of Mid-Atlantic native plants. The National Garden also honors our national flower, with a rose garden where roses are grown organically. Don't miss the spectacular view of the USBG Conservatory and the U.S. Capitol dome from the National Garden's amphitheater.



# BARTHOLDI PARK

Bartholdi Park was created in 1932 and named for Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, the sculptor of the historic 1876 fountain located at its center. It is a favorite "secret" garden of many Washingtonians. The plantings have been redesigned during the last decade and are continuously updated to reflect modern trends in American horticulture and new plant introductions. The Park now serves as a home landscape demonstration garden and showcases innovative plant combinations in a variety of styles and design themes. The USBG Administration Building is located in the Park.



-  Wheelchair Access
-  Bicycle Rack

The Garden is accessible except in locations where steps are shown.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Hours

The Conservatory and National Garden are open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors are welcome in Bartholdi Park from dawn to dusk.

### Admission

The U.S. Botanic Garden is free of charge.

### Access

Most public areas are accessible. For information about sign language interpretation, please call 202-225-8333. Handicap parking is available on Maryland Avenue at Garfield Circle.

### Location

The U.S. Botanic Garden is located between First and Third Streets SW, adjacent to the U.S. Capitol on the National Mall.

### Entrance

The entrance to the Conservatory is on Maryland Avenue SW.

### Parking

Metered street parking and a limited number of accessible spaces are available. Use of public transportation is encouraged.

### Public Transportation

Take Metro Rail to Federal Center SW or Capitol South stations on the Blue and Orange lines. Take Metro Bus #30, 32, 34, 35, or 36 to Independence Avenue and First Street SW.



Conservatory: 100 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20001  
202-225-8333

Administration Office: 245 First Street SW, Washington, DC 20024  
202-225-8333, Fax: 202-225-1561  
Email: [usbg@aoc.gov](mailto:usbg@aoc.gov)

## VISITOR SERVICES

### Information

Information and visitor assistance are available at the Visitor Services desk in the north lobby of the Conservatory.

### Amenities

Public restrooms, and water fountains, are located in the south lobby of the Conservatory.

### Wheelchairs and Strollers

Wheelchairs are available and you may reserve one in advance at 202-225-8333. Strollers are permitted but may be restricted in the Conservatory during periods of high visitation.

### Lost and Found

Turn in or check for lost items at the Visitor Services desk. The U.S. Capitol Police also manage Lost and Found items; call 202-224-2985.

## EDUCATION

### Exhibits and Educational Programs

The Garden offers a variety of exhibits, workshops, lectures, and classes for children and adults. A current schedule is available at the Visitors Services desk or on the website at [www.usbg.gov](http://www.usbg.gov).

### Group Visits

Groups are welcome. Free docent-led tours are available by advance reservation at 202-225-1116 for groups smaller than 25 persons. Please call at least four weeks in advance for a reservation.

### Tours

Guided Conservatory tours are available without reservation. See the schedule at the Visitor Services desk for the day's events. A cell phone tour is also available.

### Plant Hotline

The USBG will answer your plant questions at 202-226-4785 or at [www.usbg.gov](http://www.usbg.gov).

## POLICIES

### Food and Drink

Food and drink are discouraged inside the Conservatory. A restaurant is not available on the premises.

### Smoking

Smoking is not allowed in the Conservatory, National Garden, or Bartholdi Park. Please dispose of all smoking materials in the containers provided.

### Photography and Sketching

Handheld film or video cameras may be used at any time. Sketching is allowed. The use of easels, tripods, or art materials containing solvents requires special permission and a permit. Inquire at the Visitor Services desk or call 202-225-8333 for more information.

### Private Events

Weddings and other private events are not permitted.