



The Missouri Botanical Garden offers beautiful horticultural displays.

## Missouri Botanical Garden

Right in the middle of St. Louis, Missouri is one of the nation's oldest botanical gardens. Founded in 1859, this 79-acre horticultural display, which attracts over 800,000 visitors each year, is now also a National Historic Landmark. The privately administered Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG) was established as the gift of Henry Shaw (1800-1889), a native of Sheffield, England, who came to St. Louis in 1819 and became a successful businessman with a thriving hardware business. Inspired by gardens such as Chatsworth and Kew on a trip back to England, he decided to begin his own botanical garden when he returned to the US. It was intended to educate the public about horticulture and ornamental plants, as well as to conduct botanical research. It is adjacent to Tower Grove Park, an unusual Victorian walking park, also a Shaw legacy. The MBG is considered one of the top three botanical gardens in the world. Sculpture is prominent at the MBG, with an extensive permanent collection as well as seasonal exhibitions.

The **Ridgeway Center** is the main entrance of the Gardens. An extensive gift shop and restaurant with patio dining are located in this building, along with a theater, floral hall and education wing. After paying the admission fee, you go upstairs to enter the Gardens. A table near the garden entrance holds fresh cut samples of flowers that are in bloom in the Gardens at the time.



The Ridgeway Center, main entrance of the Missouri Botanical Garden.

From the entry building, visitors emerge into **Spoehrer Plaza**, a courtyard with the spectacular Latzer Fountain, created in 1982 by American Geoffrey Rausch, surrounded by small sawtooth oak trees.



Spoehrer Plaza is surrounded by small trees and has a fountain in the center, here with a mosaic sculpture of an art display.



This virtual tour will go in a roughly clockwise path around the MBG to visit many of the plant collections, conservatories and international gardens. Very near the entry courtyard is the **Linnean House**, built in 1882 and one of the last buildings constructed by Garden founder Henry Shaw, it is the oldest continuously operating greenhouse conservatory in the US. Originally Shaw's orangerie, it was converted primarily to camellias in the late 1930's.

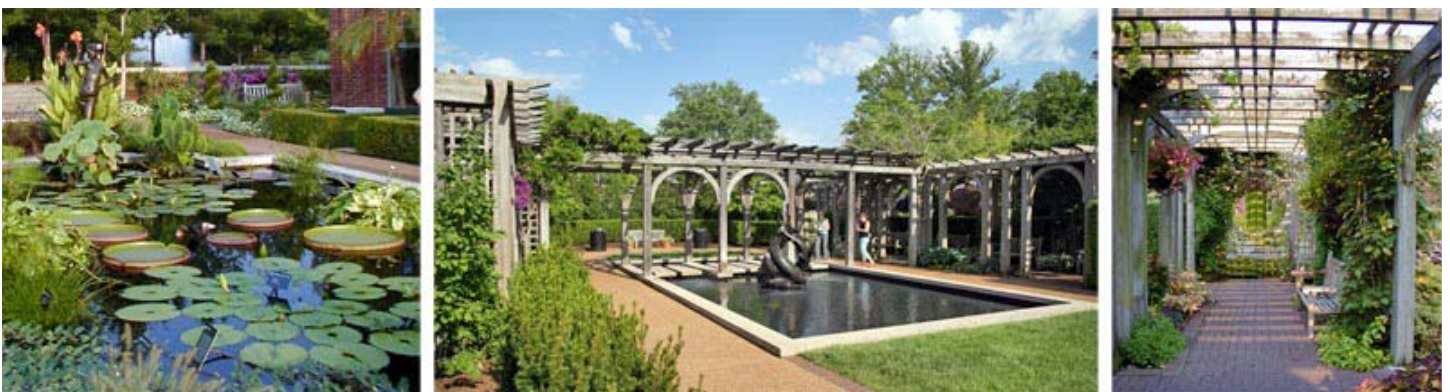


The glass-roofed Linnean House, built in 1882, houses a collection of camellias and other cold-sensitive plants.

Next to the Linnean House is the **Swift Family Garden**. A series of rectangular pools filled with water lilies and other aquatic plants (and sculptures, some temporary) lead to a large wooden arbor with perennial vines trained up the posts, hanging baskets suspended in the spaces between, and perennials beneath. Off to the side of the main pathway is Cohen Court, a garden room featuring plants with yellow flowers, fruit and leaves.



The Swift Family Garden includes several planting beds and rectangular pool along one side of the Linnean House.



Tropical water lilies and other aquatic plants fill one of the pools of the Swift Family Garden. At the opposite end a wooden arbor provides shelter and support for vines and hanging baskets.



On the other side of the pools outside of the Linnean House is the **Gladney Rose Garden** which was designed in 1915. Shaped like a giant wheel, this circular garden surrounded by a decorative white fence is a favorite location for seasonal weddings. It features over 100 varieties of hybrid teas and floribunda roses, with climbing varieties covering the fence and arbors, and a low fountain in the center. The sculpture Sun of Glass by internationally-renowned glass blower Dale Chihuly is a permanent fixture on one of the curved arbors.



The Gladney Rose Garden, surrounded by a decorative white fence, often hosts weddings. A glass sculpture is a permanent fixture on one of the curved arbors.

The **Ottoman Garden**, which reflects traditional Turkish garden architectural style, was opened in 2006. The first of its kind in the United States, this garden incorporates authentic architectural elements and plants to recreate a typical Islamic garden of the historic 17th century Ottoman Empire. This religious-influenced style, depicting the Koran's Gardens of Paradise, seeks to create a peaceful atmosphere with flowing water and fragrant plants. The central focal point of a shallow pool of water is surrounded by citrus, pomegranate, oleander, lilac fragrant roses, Turkish tulips and drifts of other bulbs, aromatic herbs, and perennials within this walled courtyard. One side of the walled garden is enclosed by a patio with tiled roof, painted murals and textured stucco wall.



The exotic Ottoman Garden recreates a 17th century Turkish garden with central pool and colorful plantings.

The **Zimmerman Scented Garden** is a small space with numerous plants in both ground level and raised beds and containers at various heights to enhance the experience for the visually impaired. An-



The Zimmerman Scented Garden provides fragrance and texture especially for the visually impaired.



nuals, perennials and herbs are chosen for their strong fragrance or textured leaves, and visitors are encouraged to touch the plants. There is also a water feature, an arbor, and several benches for seating.

Continuing along the walkway we come to the **Shields Hosta Garden**, with over 40 cultivars and several species of hostas. The shade-loving plants with green, blue, yellow and variegated foliage are placed among stately trees along with flowering bulbs, astilbes, hydrangeas and viburnums. On the other side of the walkway and south of the Gladney Rose Garden are the **Samuel and Heckman Bulb Gardens**. Both gardens feature spring, summer and fall-blooming bulbs and bulbous plants, including lilies, cannas, caladiums and dahlias. Over 45,000 tulips are planted here and in other places in the MBG each year.



The Bulb Gardens feature a variety of blooming plants over the course of the seasons.

**Spink Pavilion**, built by Henry Shaw, was the original main entrance to the MBG. It has been restored and is now used for special events. Originally known as the Flora Gate, it is situated at one end of the grand plaza overlooking the three large reflecting pools of the **Milles Sculpture Garden**, toward the Climatron. The reflecting pools are filled with tropical water lilies, including the giant Victoria water lilies whose pads spread several feet in diameter, and sculptures held above from the water on tall pil-



The reflecting pools of the Milles Sculpture Garden stretch from Spink Pavilion (L) to the Climatron (C) and feature many tropical water lilies, including the giant Victoria water lilies floating along with colored glass “onions” (R).



Bronze sculptures are displayed throughout the pools, with plantings of unusual summer annuals around the sides.



lars. The seven bronzes by the Swedish artist Carl Milles include Sunglitter, male and female Orpheus Fountain Figures, Three Angel Musicians, and Two Girls Dancing. Brightly colored glass Chihuly onions (spheres designed with pointed tips that resemble onions) float in the circular pool. Along the sides of the pools, display beds feature unusual summer annuals. Peak display for the water lilies is in August.

The **Alice Hahn Goodman Iris Garden** comes alive in May as hundreds of cultivars and dozens of wild species come into bloom in the arc-shaped beds.



Almost every color of the rainbow is found among the iris flowers blooming in May.

Linking the Iris Garden and the Victorian area of the MBG is the **Jenkins Daylily Garden**, where over 1,250 varieties of daylilies reach peak bloom in June and July, accented by ornamental grasses and hydrangeas. On the other side of the iris and daylily gardens, between the Mausoleum Garden and the Milles Sculpture Garden is the undulating area of **The Knolls**. This landscape features clumps of trees and shrubs, sculptures and the **Dry Streambed Garden**, with a small pond featuring hardy water lilies and a rocky dry streambed surrounded by *Iris pseudacorus*, daylilies, ornamental grasses and shrubs. This section also displays a number of endangered species.



In early spring the daylily garden (L) is just getting going. A stand of *Iris pseudacorus* (R) grows near the pond the dry stream bed garden leads to (C).

Along this edge of the MBG is the attractive **Cleveland Gate House**, which was once a stage coach way station, and the **Museum Building**. Built in 1859, it originally housed Henry Shaw's library and herbarium. Neither of these buildings are open to the public.



The Cleveland Gate House (L) and Museum Building (R).



Across from those buildings is the **Mausoleum Garden and Mausoleum**, enclosed by a wrought-iron fence. Large oak and sassafras trees fill the area, underplanted with spring bulbs, ivy and ferns. Garden founder Henry Shaw is interred in the copper-roofed, octagonal mausoleum of rose-colored granite beneath a white marble sculpture of himself. The marble statue Victory of Science Over Ignorance by Carlo Nicoli (a copy of the original (1859) by Vincenzo Consani in the Pitti Palace, Florence) is located between the Daylily Garden and the Mausoleum Garden. It is installed in the white structure that Shaw originally intended to be his mausoleum, but changed his mind after he realized that runoff from the copper roof was staining the stones.



Pass the statue Victory in the white marble structure on your way from the daylily garden (L) to the Mausoleum Garden entrance (C) to get to garden founder Henry Shaw's mausoleum (R).

Continuing south, we come to the Victorian District, the historic heart of the MBG, defined by medallions, columns and an ornamental iron fence. This area includes Tower Grove House, the Victorian Garden, the Herb Garden, the Maze and the Observatory, with numerous paths leading through and around the various features. Tower Grove House is Shaw's original 1849 Victorian country house built in the Italianate style. It was named for the tower over the central entry way that looks out over the trees of what is now the Mausoleum Garden. The home is open for public tours (except during January and February) that show the dining room, library, Shaw's office, twin parlors, front hall and Shaw's bedroom restored to the way it was when he lived in it.



Tower Grove House, front (left) and back (right).

Just east of the Tower Grove House, the **Kresko Family Victorian Garden** is reminiscent of an earlier garden Shaw built that no longer exists. The design is typical of English gardens of that time, with symmetrical planting beds surrounding the central marble statue (Juno, created in 1885 by Italian Carlo



The Kresko Family Victorian Garden in early spring (L) and summer (C and R).



Nicoli). The geometric beds are densely filled with seasonal plantings (annuals and tropicals) in bright colors. In 2008 featured plants included Mexican petunia (*Ruellia*), bananas, elephant ears, marigolds, petunias, 'Spicy Globe' basil, and 'Black Pearl' ornamental pepper.

The **Herb Garden** is in the courtyard behind Tower Grove House, enclosed in an ornamental iron fence. Maintained by the St. Louis Herb Society, it includes culinary and medicinal herbs. Look for the sculpture of a child playing with a sundial in a bed of creeping thyme. It was installed in 1965 with the sundial adjusted to show standard time in St. Louis.



The Herb Garden is surrounded by an iron fence and contains many beds of culinary herbs and a small sculpture (R).

Climb up the tower of **Piper Observatory** for great views overlooking the **Kaeser Memorial Maze**. This Victorian-style hedge maze recreates the maze constructed by Henry Shaw in the 1860's in Tower Grove Park. See if you can figure out how to get through the sunken labyrinth of yew hedges bordered with arborvitae to get to the vine-covered gazebo! The tower is also a replica of one built by Shaw in Tower Grove Park.



The Piper Observatory (L) overlooks the Kaeser Memorial Maze (R).

You can only walk past the John S. Lehmann building, which is not open to the public. It originally held the scientific and library collections, but most of that was moved to the Monsanto Center when it opened in 1997. Some of the Garden's research programs and the archives division of the library remain here. Near the back of the gardens is Shaw's 1849 townhouse that was dismantled after his death and moved from 7th and Locust Streets in downtown St. Louis. It was rebuilt here and forms two sections of the **Shoenberg Administration Building** (not open to the public). An extensive wing was later added to house a library and herbarium, but now contains administrative offices.



The Shoenberg Administration Building.



The Strassenfest German Garden is planted with species native to Germany and Central Europe, as well as plants hybridized or discovered by native Germans, as a tribute to St. Louis' German heritage. There is a representation of Unter den Linden Boulevard, the main thoroughfare in Berlin which is lined with linden trees. A bust of George Engelmann, a distinguished German botanist who moved to St. Louis, served as Shaw's scientific advisor and described several hundred plants including the Chinkapin oak, coral bells, and Virginia creeper is also a feature in this garden.

From here we walk along the peaceful, winding paths of the **Cherbonnier English Woodland Garden**. Developed in 1976, this quiet, informal garden has a variety of herbaceous and woody perennials beneath the leafy tree canopy typical of a mature woodland. Azaleas, dogwoods, trilliums and bluebells bloom in spring.

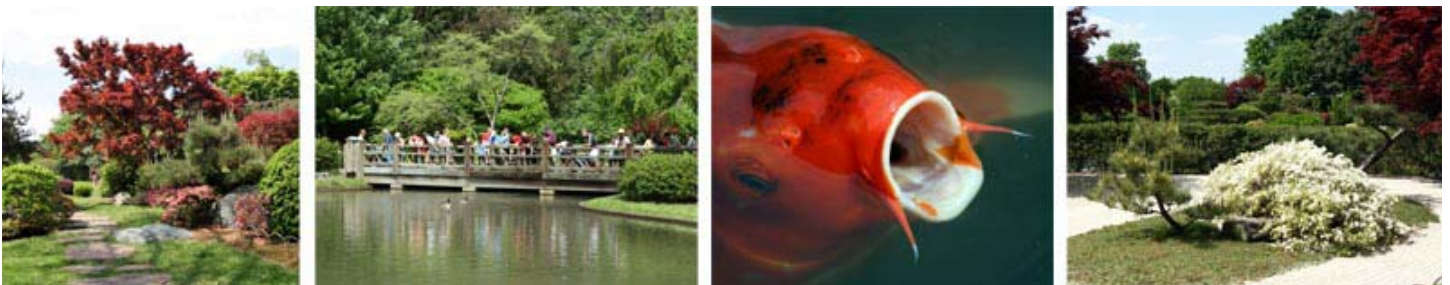


The Cherbonnier English Woodland Garden is a peaceful place anytime of year.

Seiwa-en (which means the garden of pure, clear harmony and peace), the 14-acre **Japanese Garden**, designed by Koichi Kawana in 1977, is the largest Japanese garden in the Western Hemisphere. This authentic chisen kaiyu-shiki (wet strolling garden) has broad lawns, large trees, huge rocks, and a wide path on the gently rolling hills set around a large central lake (4 acres), complete with giant koi (Japanese carp) in the murky water. There are even dispensers to purchase pellets to feed the koi from the bridge over the pond. (Despite being fat and overfed, the huge fish still gulp air in search of food, which of course, also attracts the numerous ducks and geese.)



Large trees, huge rocks and a broad lawns surround the central lake in the Japanese Garden.



Japanese maple and other typical Japanese plants (L,R). The bridge over the pond (LC) where you can feed the koi (RC).



This area features typical Japanese plants including peonies, Japanese maples, cherry trees, lotus and various pines, along with a tea house, waterfalls, stone lanterns, a carefully arrange pebble beach and several bridges. A dry gravel garden is raked in rippling patterns to represent nature's water-and-land relationships.



The Japanese tea house (L) and its water feature (LC). A swath of lotus along the lake's edge (RC) and the zig-zag bridge (R).



Stone lanterns (L), waterfalls (LC), a pebble beach (RC) and raked dry gravel gardens (R) are just some of the features in the Japanese Garden.

The **Blanke Boxwood Garden**, created in 2006, is a half-enclosed space containing a collection of boxwood species. Enter through the walled brick courtyard and along the walkway lined with perennials to the center of the garden. Here the carefully structured, formal oval boxwood parterre is accented with flowers and low hedges of boxwood shaped to form the initials HS for the Garden's founder.



The entrance to the Blanke Boxwood Garden (L), glimpses into the center (C), and perennial-lined walkway (R).



The walled Boxwood Garden has a formal boxwood parterre filled with flowers.



The Margaret Blanke Grigg Nanjing Friendship Garden – the **Chinese Garden** – was added in 1995. It was designed by architect Yong Pan to incorporate the major features of a moon gate, lotus gate pavilion and Chinese scholar's rocks from Tai Hu, which were gifts from St. Louis' sister city Nanjing. It is considered the most authentic "scholar's garden" of its size in the US. This traditional garden features a pavilion of black, white and gray. A hand-carved white marble bridge crosses a narrow, cascading stream that falls into the central pond. This area features typical Chinese plants including pines, bamboo, plum trees, wisteria, azaleas, camellias and bonsai, along with poetic inscriptions.



Enter the Chinese Garden through the Moon Gate (L), and walk around the pond (C) to get to the lotus gate pavilion (R).

The **Lehman rose garden**, started in 1974, features a beautiful gazebo and waterfall surrounded by over 160 varieties of roses, including historic cultivars, miniatures, hybrid teas and All American Rose Selection trials. This is another favorite spot for weddings and other special outdoor events. At the north end of the garden is Shapleigh Fountain, a dramatic in-ground spraying water feature that kids particularly enjoy playing in when the weather is hot.



The Lehman Rose Garden features many flowers and the Shapleigh Fountain at one end.

The **William T. Kemper Center for Home Gardening** is a large information center and 8.5 acres of inspiring demonstration gardens to give homeowners practical ideas to take home. The 8,000 ft<sup>2</sup> pavilion contains a reference library, demonstration potting room, greenhouse and a snack bar. Inside the building there are computer terminals to search online as well as Master Gardener Volunteers staffing the Plant Doctor desk to provide personalized answers to specific gardening questions. Plants of Merit and Plant Finder are online resources for gardeners around the world.



The interior of the Kemper Building.



There are 23-residential scale gardens within the Kemper Center grounds (not all listed and no photos of many), with displays for terraces, backyards, and city plots, and others that focus on vegetables, flower trials, experimental crops, children, birds, prairies, butterflies, shade gardens and more. The **Entry Court Garden** has heat-tolerant, low-maintenance plants, benches, and a four-season flowering display. The Mildred Lane Kemper Terrace Garden has lots of perennials, including lilies and ornamental grasses, small evergreens and shade trees, and an interesting water feature with raccoon sculptures. The patio is backed by a vine-covered trellis and surrounded by containers. Otters play in the fountain of the **Cornelia Sunnen Backyard Garden** which shows plants with continuous seasonal interest, a succession of flowering bulbs and annual flower containers. The Jane and Whitney Harris Secret Garden is enclosed by a double hedge of juniper. A wide variety of perennials surround the round lawn.



The entry to the Kemper Center (L) and the playful otter sculptures in the Backyard Garden (R).

A cedar pergola forms the backdrop for the display of hundreds of perennials in the **Enterprise Rent-A-Car Flower Borders**. The plants are combined to provide year-long color in the home garden, for both sunny and shady spots.



The Flower Borders follow the long sweep of lawn and along the curved pergola.

The **Bank of America Family Vegetable Garden** presents sequential plantings of the best vegetable varieties for the St. Louis region growing. It includes a wide variety of new vegetable cultivars, espaliered fruit and demonstrations about soil preparation, season-extending techniques, and solutions for common problems. The culinary herb garden that is part of the Vegetable Garden has both common and unusual kitchen herbs you find in your kitchen.



Find all kinds of interesting cultivars and growing techniques in the demonstration vegetable garden.



In the **Justin A. and Rose J. Naumann Experimental Garden** a variety of demonstrations about ways to improve soils, new techniques for increasing yield, methods of pest control, evaluation of plant selections, and other experimental trials are presented.



The Herb Garden (L). See new cultivars, planting examples, unusual annuals and more in the Experimental Garden.

The **Joseph F. Ruwitch Garden For All** demonstrates features such as raised beds, vertical gardening, wall mounted pots and more to make gardening easier for the physically challenged gardener. Within the walls of this bricked space are a raised water garden, display of specially designed tools and low-maintenance plants.



The Joseph F. Ruwitch Garden For All offers practical ideas for the enabled garden and gardener.

The **Lois Whiteside Franklin Flower Trial Garden** displays side-by-side plantings of new and standard varieties every year of annual and perennial varieties. They are evaluated for their durability, aesthetic appeal, and suitability for the gardening public.



The Flower Trial Garden always offers a colorful display of annual and perennial flowers.



The **Lang Family Bird Garden** shows what to plant to provide food and shelter to encourage birds to visit. A dense screen of deciduous and evergreen shrubs provides protection, while hawthorn, winter-berry and coneflowers have fruit and seeds to eat. Bunch-type grasses and perennials offer cover for ground feeding birds, while nectar-producing plants such as lobelia, trumpet-vine, and salvia lure in hummingbirds. Feeders, bird houses and water baths add to the plantings.



Enter the Lang Family Bird Garden under the pergola that supports trumpet-vine and other vines (L) to see the dense plantings of shrubs, perennials and grasses that provide shelter and food for feathered visitors.



A female ruby-throated hummingbird visits the *Lobelia cardinalis* in the Bird Garden (L); a house sparrow eats millet seeds from the plant (LC); a female cardinal feeding on lantana seeds (RC); another female ruby-throated hummingbird sampling the flowers of *Cuphea* 'David Verity' (R, in the Experimental Garden).

The **Spoehrer Children's Garden** is a fantasy setting with a different theme each year. Plants with striking colors, unusual forms, fragrances and textures, and a shrub-bordered maze, winding around to a peacock fountain in the center, all stimulate kids' curiosity about plants and nature. A model train passes over a small stream (which birds like to use for bathing) and past a miniature town and landscaping on its circular track.



Kids love racing through the Spoehrer Children's Garden (L and C), while birds visit the small stream to bathe or drink (R).



Several other parts of the Kemper Center focus on more naturalistic plantings. The Lucy and Stanley Lopata Prairie Garden features this plant community that once dominated Missouri's landscape. Little bluestem, prairie blazing star, black-eyed Susan, and tickseed are just some of the many species here. The Martha Love Symington Missouri Native Shade Garden shows shade-tolerant native plants that can be used in gardens dominated by trees such as oak, hickory and maple. The Christopher Biraben Butterfly Meadow has nectar-producing flowers and water to attract butterflies. In the Suzanne Stagg Wright Rock Garden, native and cultivated plants grow in and around limestone and sandstone rock ledges, unique geological features of Missouri.



**The naturalistic gardens focus on plants found in native prairie, woodland, and rock outcropping ecosystems.**

Near the Kemper Center is the **George Washington Carver Garden**, opened in 2005, which is a learning space honoring this great American scientist, a Missouri native who made many important contributions to agriculture and education. The 1.5 acre garden features a central reflecting pool with the life-size bronze statue of Carver at about 65 years old, wearing a lab jacket and a wise, gentle expression as he stands holding a small plant to the sunlight. Benches and plantings that include fragrant viburnums, hydrangea, callery pear and sweet potato (one of the crops he researched and promoted as an alternative to cotton in the south) surround the water.



**The George Washington Carver Garden features colorful plantings and a large central reflecting pool with a statue of Carver.**

The new two-acre **Doris I. Schnuck Children's Garden: A Missouri Adventure**, opened in 2006, features Missouri's major ecosystems. Designed to resemble a mid-1800's Missouri river town, it features



**Children love to explore the exciting displays of the Doris I. Schnuck Children's Garden.**



paths through woodlands and over streams to a pioneer village, tree house, fort, cave, splash area, Osage Indian camp, and other representations of historical Missouri. This learning center/garden gives kids the opportunity to learn about science and the environment while playing outside.

At the center of the MBG is the distinctive **Climatron**®, a 175 foot diameter conservatory containing over 1,200 species of lowland rainforest plants from around the world and a number of tropical birds. Dedicated in 1960 to replace an old house built in 1913, it was the world's first geodesic dome greenhouse, incorporating principles established by architect R. Buckminster Fuller. The climate-controlled conditions in the 70 foot tall dome allow tall palm trees to flourish above the streams and waterfalls surrounded by exotic foliage to simulate a tropical jungle. Orchids, hibiscus, cycads, Amazon aquatic life and many endangered species are showcased along the paths.



The distinctive Climatron houses a huge diversity of tropical lowland rainforest plants and even some animals.

The **Shoenberg Temperate House**, just north of and connected to the Climatron, features plants from five regions of the world that share a warm, dry Mediterranean climate, as well as plants from the southeastern United States and temperate areas of Asia. There is one display with plants mentioned in the Bible; another with carnivorous plants such as pitcher plant and Venus fly trap in a bog; on the California wildflower slope flowers bloom primarily in April and May. A historic stone portico (originally the main entrance to St. Leo's School in south St. Louis, built in 1902, and salvaged when the school was demolished in 1978) overlooks the lovely tiled Moorish walled garden modeled to resemble the 11th century garden at the Alhambra in Granada, Spain. This space has benches for relaxing amid the citrus, pomegranates, fig trees and and other plants around the central fountain. Containers with blooming flowers or colorful foliage set on the orange, blue and white tiles add a splash of color.



The portico, salvaged from a local school (L), overlooks the serene Moorish walled garden with tiled floor and colorful container plantings (C and R).





The bog features carnivorous plants including many types of pitcher plants (L, LC in bloom, and RC) and venus fly traps (L).

As you exit the Temperate House, you walk through the **Heckman Rock Garden** featuring alpine plants and bulbs, and a few perennials that have similar growth habits, such as pasque flower, rose campion (*Lychnis coronaria*), and Missouri evening primrose. Look for Cora, a life-sized bronze by St. Louis sculptor Don Wiegand, here in the Rock Garden.



The Heckman Rock Garden is situated next to the Temperate House (L and C). Look for the “Cora” sculpture here (R).

Below the Rock Garden is the **Kassabaum Dwarf Conifer Garden** which showcases small or slow-growing cultivars of spruce, pine, hemlock, cypress, and other conifers, interspersed with low and spreading perennials and groundcovers.



A variety of small conifers fills the Kassabaum Dwarf Conifer Garden adjacent to the Climatron and Temperate House.

The **Lopata Azalea-Rhododendron Garden** is at its peak in late April when the numerous rhododendron species and cultivars come into bloom. This area also has shade tolerant perennials beneath the



native tree canopy. The **Kiefer Magnolia Walk**, lined with saucer magnolia trees that bloom in mid-spring, connects the Azalea-Rhododendron Garden with the Gladney Rose Garden and brings us back to just about where we started from.



**The shady Azalea-Rhododendron and Magnolia Walk are still pleasant later in the year after peak bloom is over.**

The MBG hosts many plant society programs, community events and other cultural events, including the annual Japanese Festival and Chinese Culture Days which showcase the different arts, music, and food of those cultures. Seasonal shows include the orchid show in late winter; the free summer jazz concert series; the Henry Shaw Cactus Society's big show and sale in August; the Best of Missouri Market in early October; and holiday flower and train show from Thanksgiving through New Year's. (For up-to-date information about festivals and events, check the MBG website.) The MBG is also a popular venue for special private events, parties, and weddings.

The MBG has often featured different artists' sculptures in the garden. In 2006, glass sculptures by Dale Chihuly were placed throughout the garden for their "Glass in the Garden" display. Four pieces remain at the gardens, including the Blue Chandelier hanging in the main entrance building. This amazing sculpture is 20 feet long and six feet across at its widest point, and weighs 2,300 lbs! In 2008 enormous, whimsical mosaic sculptures of the French artist Niki de Saint Phalle were on display throughout the garden.



**Glass sculptures by Dale Chihuly in the Climatron (L, 2006) and in the Ridgeway Center (LC, permanent) and two of many of the mosaic sculptures of Niki on display in 2008 (RC and R).**

Also, keep an eye out for the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) living in the gardens – you never know when it might cross your path!



**The resident red fox makes frequent appearances in morning and late afternoon.**



But this isn't just a place for pretty flowers; the MBG has an international reputation for excellence in science education and botanical research and. It houses one of the world's largest collections of rare and endangered orchids, and it has one of the world's finest botanical reference libraries. The herbarium contains about 6 million specimens collected from six continents and 36 countries, some dating from the 18th century. Selective purchase and demolition of nearby properties allowed the MBG to construct a large research center and off-site education center, dubbed the "The Unseen Garden" by the staff. This multi-story brick building houses the herbarium, offices and research space. MGB scientists are world leaders in botanical and environmental research, with an emphasis on the study of tropical botany and exploration of tropical ecosystems, and the planet's overall environmental quality.

The MBG is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd, just south of Hwy 44 between Vandeventer and Grand in a primarily residential area, about a 15-minute drive southwest of Downtown. There is free parking at the main entrance. Tickets can be purchased in person at the garden itself, or in advance online; there may be an additional charge for some special events. The Gardens are open daily from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., with special hours on Wednesdays and Saturdays. There is a tram with a 25-minute guided tour of the Garden in the early afternoon during spring, summer and fall.

Other off-site features include The Sachs Butterfly House, an 8,000 ft<sup>2</sup> conservatory located in nearby Faust Park, where more than 60 species of the world's most beautiful butterflies are seen in free flight; Shaw Nature Reserve; and The Monsanto Center (a block and a half west of the MBG grounds) which is home to the Garden's botanical research staff, the herbarium, and the library. It is occasionally open for tours.

– *Susan Mahr, University of Wisconsin*

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#### **Additional Information:**

- Missouri Botanical Garden – the official website at [www.mobot.org/](http://www.mobot.org/)
- Sach's Butterfly House at [www.butterflyhouse.org/](http://www.butterflyhouse.org/)