YAMPA RIVER BOTANIC PARK

About the Park

Mission: "A place of serenity celebrating the trees, shrubs, plants and birds of the Yampa Valley."

Gardening at 6,800 ft (2,000 m) in the mountains is a challenge. Winter snowfall averages 180 inches (15 ft/4.6 m) and blankets the ground from November to April. Annual precipitation of 24 inches (2 ft/70 cm) comes mostly as snow, with little summer rain. Winter temperatures get down to -30°F (-35°C) and on average there are only 59 frost-free days per year. The Park is in USDA Hardiness Zone 4. Native and high altitude plants from similar environments worldwide thrive here. The Park has 500 trees and 63 gardens, many sponsored by individuals and organizations.

The Yampa River, for which the Park is named, runs from the Flattop Mountains at 12,000 ft (3,700 m) to its confluence with the Green River at 5,100 ft (1,600 m) in Dinosaur National Monument.

The Park charges no entrance fee because its operations are generously supported by members, garden sponsors, and donors. It is a City of Steamboat Springs park but the city does not provide funding. The Park receives no tax dollars.

A 6 acre parcel of flat land was donated to the city in 1992 by a local couple who constructed the Park with their own funds in 1995-97. It was opened to the public in 1997 and since the year 2000 has been managed by the Yampa River Botanic Park Association, a volunteer organization that was delegated by the city to manage the Park, raise funds, hire staff, and design, create and maintain the gardens.

Serenity and Design Vision

The Park is an oasis. The Park's design avoids straight lines, the paths twist and turn, the gardens are three-dimensional, the ponds are free-form with clusters of trees that filter out the sounds of traffic.

Self-Guided Garden Tour

The neighborhoods below are color-coded to the map (over). The Tour starts from the Main Entrance, goes south and clockwise round the Park then to the center. The gardens are framed by native pine trees, spruces, firs, junipers, cottonwoods, aspens and non-native fruit trees. Most of the plants here are perennials and are labelled.

Hummingbird Neighborhood

The Butterfly Garden features plants on which butterflies feed or lay their eggs. **The Hummingbird Garden** has flowers that attract these tiny birds, mostly broad-tailed. They arrive in the summer to breed and in August they migrate 1,000 miles to return to the mountains of NW Mexico. **The Crevice Garden** displays plants growing between vertical rock faces as they do naturally in the nearby mountains.

Rainbow Neighborhood

Each of the **Color Gardens** has flowers of a different color. Some annuals are used to maintain color throughout the season. The west-facing **Tranquility Garden** has two benches with views of Emerald Mountain.

Wind Neighborhood

Continue south to the **Medicinal Herbs**, **Culinary Herbs** and **Sensory Gardens**. Beyond is **Windigo Garden** and the Wind Sculpture, which has turned continuously since 1998. The **Waterwise Garden** features dryland plants of the intermountain west. Enjoy **September Charm**, the grove of aspen trees and the **Garden for All Seasons** with its sandstone blocks from the mountains near Rocky Mountain National Park. Follow Loop Walk to see the **Pioneer Garden**, featuring plants that the early settlers brought across the prairies.

Reflecting Neighborhood

Wander left to see the **Hidden Garden**, shaded by tall native cottonwood trees that were here before the Park. Above it are the gardens around the Reflecting Pond: the **Reflecting Garden**, the **Grove Garden** and the **Penstemon Garden**. The ponds' source of water is Fish Creek, a half-mile away and the water travels in a ditch through other properties, a right protected by Colorado water law.

Natives Neighborhood

The adjacent **Painter's Garden** features plants that grow in the niches between large rocks on this cool north-facing slope, but the Secret Trail is only for the agile. Next is the **High Country Natives Garden** which has thickets of native shrubs and plants from the surrounding mountains and is left to grow fairly wild. At the end of this garden, backtrack to Jeff's Walk.

Trillium Neighborhood

The high wooden fence provides privacy for the Park's neighbors. **Jeff's Garden** climbs the south-facing bank and has volcanic rocks from the flanks of the Flat Top Mountains, a crevice area, troughs and tufa rock. Beyond the stands of evergreens is **Trillium House**, the Park's headquarters, named for the three-petalled flowers that push up through the snow in nearby mountains in spring. Here are restrooms, the Park Office and Resource Center. The Emerald Room and the patio are used for small functions, and may be rented. **Carol's Garden** sits in the rocks on the west side of the building facing the Yampa River. From the Patio, walk up to enjoy the Eagle Garden.

Foliage Neighborhood

Follow the South Ridge Trail to Loop Walk and turn left to **Wolf's Retreat**, where the Wolf is resting among columbine flowers and aspen trees. Around the corner the **Foliage Garden** was planted to provide a mosaic of textures. To the left of the Yampa River Entrance is the **Spring Bulbs Garden**, a riot of color in May and June.

Kiosk Neighborhood

To the right of the Yampa River Entrance is a ridge and **Sascha's Rock Garden** with a profusion of rocks and rock plants from around the world. Sit on the bench above to enjoy the Yampa River flowing by. Beside the kiosk is the **Rose Garden** with the few shrub roses that can survive in this climate. Cross the bridge and turn right to see the potentillas beside the creek and take a look at the **Cactus Garden** opposite.

Members Neighborhood

Beyond the shed, on the left is **Dorothy's Garden** filled with native species. Above sits a bench with a ramada overlooking Emerald Mountain. On the right is the **Members Rock Garden**, the largest garden in the Park. It gets full sun, but large rocks and gravel trap moisture to permit many interesting rock plants to grow.

North Neighborhood

North of the Members Garden, between the arches, is the **Childrens Garden**. It contains a covered amphitheater, a constructive play table called **Stumpyland**, a play house, a teepee covered in hops. Beyond are vegetable gardens for the staff and **Junior Master Gardeners** and raised beds which are planted by members of **Community Cultivation**, a local non-profit. The north-facing slope to your right has a stand of sub-alpine and Douglas fir trees.

Sundial Neighborhood

Returning to the Main Entrance turn right to the flat gardens beyond the Y. The first garden you will see is the colorful **Corner Garden** and beyond it the **Lily Garden** with showy oriental lilies. Beside the sundial, the **Yin Yang Garden** showcases unusual shrubs and grasses. The **Sundial Garden** is a miniature alpine landscape using tufa rock and the **Subalpine Garden** showcases dwarf shrubs. The **Shrub Garden** provides shade for the unusual fall crocus that leaf out in spring but display their bright pink blossoms in September. Next, **Doris' Arbor Garden** features a variety of plants providing blooms most of the year and an arbor with climbing rose and clematis.

Green Neighborhood

Think of **The Green** as a theater. The pines, spruces and firs are the walls, the grass is the seating. Peter's Pond and surrounding trees and benches are the scenery. The stage is ready! The Green is the venue for Music on the Green as well as yoga classes, theater and opera. It is available for beautiful weddings and other events each summer.

Pond Neighborhood

Peter's Pond is shaded by native narrowleaf cottonwood trees. To avoid a killing frost, the **Annuals Garden** is not planted until June, which is when the water lilies begin to flourish in the warmer water. The water from Fish Creek has now travelled through three ponds and from here it will travel under the Loop Walk, under the bridge, through a wetland into the Yampa River, then the Green and the great Colorado River. It will be tap water for Phoenix, irrigate vegetables in California and a trickle may enter Mexico's Gulf of California.

Take only photographs, leave only footprints.

Feet are for paths, not for gardens.

Membership

Become a member online at yvcf.org/park

Memberships and gifts are tax-deductible. You can have the satisfaction of knowing you have taken action to sustain the Park if you become a member at one of these levels:

Membership Levels

Individual - $40 • **Family** - $60 • **Business** - $100

Leadership Giving Levels

- ☐ Columbine $100
- ☐ Trillium $250
- ☐ Sunflower $500
- ☐ Shooting Star $1,000
- ☐ Sego Lily $2,000
- ☐ Forget-Me-Not $5,000
- ☐ Penstemon ..... $10,000+

Or, mail your donation.

Make checks payable to "Yampa River Botanic Park"

Name _____

Phone _____

Billing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Amount enclosed _____

Mail to: Yampa River Botanic Park
PO Box 776269, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

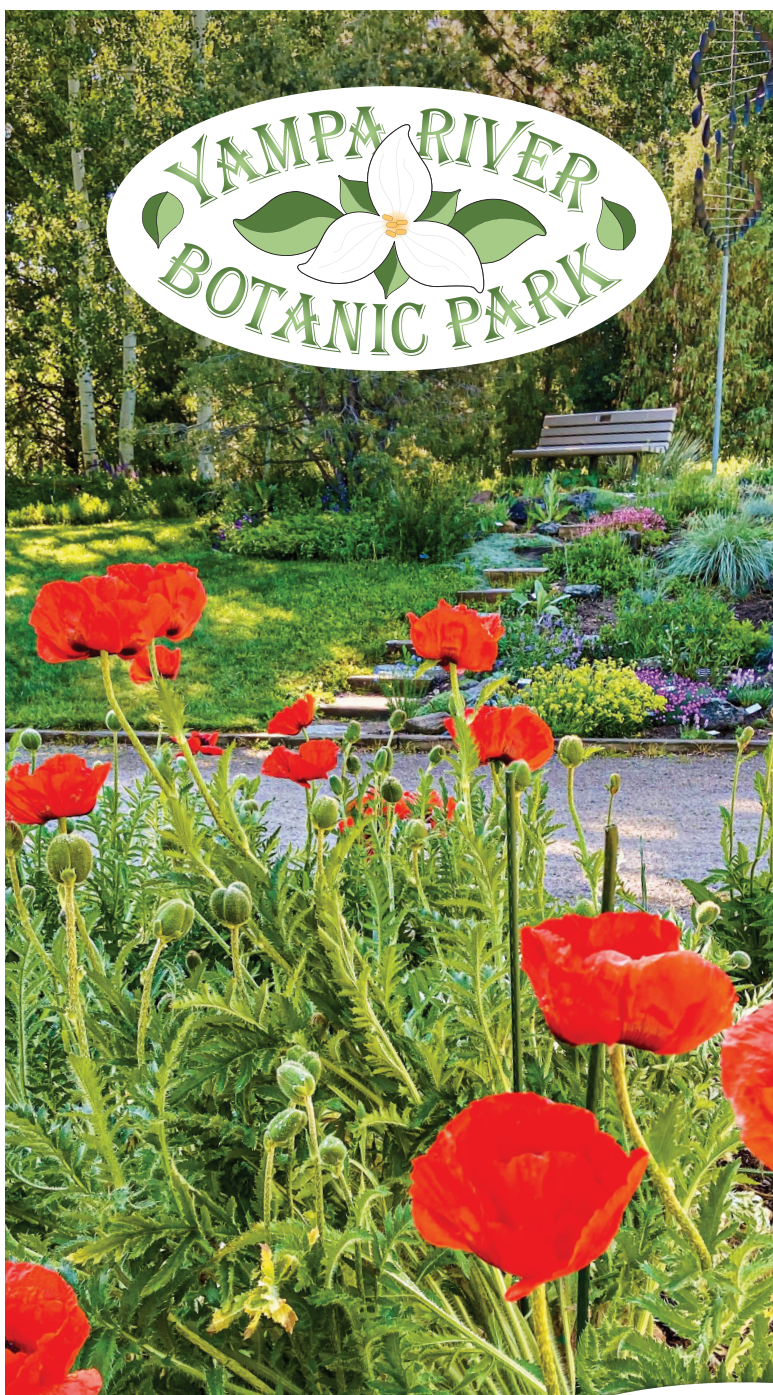
Thank you. Your donation helps keep the Park free for all.

Contact Us

970.846.5172 • info@yrbp.org • yampariverbotanicpark.org

Visit our website to learn about volunteer opportunities.

@YRBotanicPark @yampariverbotanicpark



MAP

& Self-Guided Tour

FREE ADMISSION

Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Yampa River Botanic Park

Park Hours:
Dawn to Dusk, May 1 - October 31
yampariverbotanicpark.org

Privacy Fence
Staff & Board Parking
Restrooms
Trillium House
Carol's Garden
Patio
Osprey Viewing
Planter
to Mt. Werner
Yampa River Core Trail
Yampa River
Ditch
Culvert
Jeff's Walk
Mixed Trees
Jeff's Garden
Evergreen Trees
Trillium Neighborhood
Narrowleaf Cottonwood Trees
A Painter's Garden
The Secret Trail
High Country Natives
Natives Neighborhood
Shrub Bed
Triangle Planter
Eagle Garden
Eagle
South Ridge Trail
Daylilies
Trail Garden
Reflecting Pond
Penstemon Garden
Waterfall
Reflecting Neighborhood
Middle Pond
Tree Info
Cherish
Loop Walk
Water Fountain
Mixed Trees
Reflecting Garden
Grove Garden
Aspen Grove
Hidden Garden
Bear
Precious
Cottonwood Trees
Spring Bulb Garden
Bike Racks
Wolf's Retreat
Wolf
Donation Box
Foliage Neighborhood
Foliage Garden
Self-Guided Tour starts at Main Entrance
Trail Entrance
Bike Rack
Tree Nursery
Pioneer Garden
Pond Neighborhood
Peter's Pond
Turtle
Annuals Garden
Trumpeter Swan
Joy of Life
Trail Entrance Walk
Map
Kiosk
Plaque
Sascha's Rock Garden
Rose Garden
Kiosk Neighborhood
Creek
Potentillas
Sunrose Garden
to Downtown
Garden for all Seasons
Stag
East Ridge Trail
Hot Frog
Wind Neighborhood
Aspen Trees
September Charm Garden
Waterwise Garden
Wind Sculpture
Windigo Garden
Plant Select Demonstration Garden
Stage & Umbrella
The Green
Cactus
Seasonal Display
Bridge
Osprey Nest
Fence
Railroad
Narrowleaf Cottonwood Trees
Box Elder & Cottonwood Trees
Evergreen Trees
East Perimeter Trail
Native Medicinal Herbs
Culinary Herb Garden
Sensory Garden
Lavender Garden
Deciduous Trees & Shrubs
Sub-alpine Garden
Yin Yang Garden
Nancy's Favorites
Green Neighborhood
Wings
West Side Plantings
Wetlands
Storage Bins
Gebhardt
Sundial
Shrub Garden
Yellow Garden
Tranquility Garden
Orange Garden
Rainbow Neighborhood
Red Garden
Purple Garden
Lily Garden
Arbor
Corner Garden
Doris' Arbor Garden
Sundial Neighborhood
North Side Plantings
Loop Walk
Shed
Osprey Viewing
Blue Garden
Maddy's Garden of Light
Botanic Walk
Crevice Garden
Members Neighborhood
Fledged
Members Rock Garden
Members Rock Garden
Oak Trees
Juniper Trees
Dorothy's Garden
North Ridge Trail
Hummingbird Garden
Hummingbird Neighborhood
Butterfly Garden
Douglas Fir & Sub-Alpine Fir Trees
North Neighborhood
Amphitheatre
Donation Box
START TOUR HERE
Map
North Perimeter Trail
Arch
Stumpyland
Children's Garden
Arch Fairy Garden
Junior Master Gardeners
Community Cultivation Gardens
Vegetable Gardens
Tipi
Lilac Queen
Unity
Fence
Main Entrance
Bike Racks
3' Gate
Service Area
Compost
Botanic Walk Gardens
Botanic Walk to Parking Lot

Self-Guided Garden Tour

Neighborhoods are groups of gardens, each with its own story (over).

Plant label key

Common Name
Genus & Species
Family N

Label colors

Black/White - Perennials
Rose - Annuals
Blue - Shrubs
Green - Trees

'N' = Native to Northwest Colorado

Legend

= Bench
= Steps
= Footpath
= Sculpture
Scale 20' 15' 10' 5' 0 20'
= Osprey Viewing