



To create a place of serenity that celebrates and conserves the plants, trees and birds of the Yampa River Valley and similar ecosystems worldwide.

Friends of the Botanic Park

Volunteer Handbook

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Volunteer Online Sign Up:

<https://signup.zone/yrbp-volunteers>



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Welcome to the YRBP Friends of the Botanic Park Volunteer Program

Thank you for volunteering for the Yampa River Botanic Park. The Botanic Park depends on volunteers to help realize its mission **“to create a place of serenity that celebrates and conserves the plants, trees and birds of the Yampa River Valley and similar ecosystems worldwide.”** Friends of the Botanic Park is a group of volunteers of the Yampa River Botanic Park who collectively help to sustain the gardens and the association by maintaining world class display gardens, improving the visitor experience, and raising the funds needed to support the organization through fun and innovative programs and events.

Without your support and enthusiasm, the Botanic Park would not be as beautiful or as educational as it is today.

As a Friend of the Botanic Park, you are asked to attend an initial orientation program designed to give and more specific training for your volunteer interests whether it is as a gardener, event assistant, event planning, garden greeter or a guided tour guide. We hope this orientation helps us serve you better in your role, especially as you may interact with visitors. We welcome questions anytime so please don't hesitate to stop by the office.

Thank you again for joining the Friends of the Botanic Park. We could not do it without you!

With Gratitude,



Jennifer MacNeil

Executive Director

Volunteer Opportunities

The following are the different volunteer roles you can play to help in the Botanic Park. You can choose more than one!

Gardeners – Under the guidance and supervision of the Lead Horticulturist helps with general gardening tasks including planting, pruning, seeding, fertilizing, top dressing, soil conditioning, watering, pest control, and weed control. Interested volunteers may assist with plant labels and plant inventory.

Event Assistance Volunteers – Assists on the day of special programs and events to support the event and assist participants including: Passport Through the Botanic Park, Music on the Green, Glow in the Park, and the Annual Bulb & Peony Sale. Volunteers may choose one or more events.

Event Planning Volunteers – Serves on a team with Botanic Park staff and board members to plan and execute special programs and events including: Glow in the Park, the Annual Bulb & Peony Sale. Volunteers may choose one or more events.

Garden Greeters – Welcomes visitors at the Botanic Park's main entrance to assist with wayfinding, general information, and dynamic conversation, as well as information about membership to the Botanic Park and donations.

Guided Tour Guides – Tour guides lead visitors on tours throughout the Park highlighting the Park's history, individual gardens, plants of interest, wildlife, sculpture, and general information. Tours are offered Fridays and Sundays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. or by special request.

About the Yampa River Botanic Park

History

It All Started with the Trail

At the time of building the Trail in the early 1990s the City said it would not condemn land and anticipated that the Trail would go around Fish Creek Mobile Home Park, then owned by Bob & Audrey Enever. It would have required two underpasses under the railroad tracks to get back to the River. The Enevers supported the building of the Trail and proposed to the City that it route the Trail along the River through FCMHP to greatly improve the Trail and save the City a lot of money for underpasses. The Enevers proposed to exchange the right-of-way through the mobile home park for some of the land owned by Cookie Lockhart that the City did not yet own but had been trying to buy. The youth soccer people had been pressing the City to buy this land for several years, but it had never been able to come to terms with Cookie. The cost savings from avoiding the underpasses incentivized the City to pay Cookie's price and buy the land that is now Emerald Park and the Botanic Park. This permitted the City to give 6 acres to the Enevers in exchange for the Trail Easement. The Enevers gave this land back to the City for a park, which the City initially named 'Enever Park'.

A Deal with the City

As late as the early '90s there were very few gardens in Routt County. The cowboy culture of earlier days did not favor digging and planting, except perhaps for wheat and oats. City Council Members were not enthusiastic about the Enevers' plan to build a Park with trees and flower gardens on this land, their concern being that the City might get stuck having to maintain the park. The Enevers assured them that they would build the Park themselves and they put \$1 million dollars into an endowment fund so the City would not have to worry about future costs. The Enevers said they would create and give this Park to the City and maintain it at their expense if the City would service the Park's equipment and handle the administration, so they could concentrate their efforts on the Park itself. That is still the deal today.

1994-2000 the Enevers created the Park with their own money and sweat.

During the winter of 1994/5 Bob Enever worked with Michael Campbell to develop the concepts of the berms, roads, gardens and ponds which became the design for the Park. A key design idea was "no straight lines," which has contributed to the Park's non-institutional appearance. Bob devoted two years of his life to building the Park. He was on the job every day for the summers of 1995-6. Friend and contractor CD Johnson was his daily adviser in 1995 showing him how to turn the flat horse pasture into the shapes shown on the drawings. He imported 10,000 cubic yards of dirt and dug the ponds, which provided the pit-run gravel for the roads. He lined the ponds with a foot of clay. In 1996 he had the irrigation system built, planted the trees, finished the roads and started on the trail system. The Enevers put a second \$1 million into the construction of the Park and early gardens, spread over several years. The City built a combined parking lot for Emerald Park and the Botanic Park, providing the latter with an access corridor at the east end of the ball fields.

Mission

A mission statement was agreed on early: “A place of Serenity celebrating the Trees, Shrubs, Plants and Birds of the Yampa Valley”. Serenity was built into the Park by the construction of the berms and the planting of 500 trees, which deflected and absorbed traffic sounds. In 2002 school children planted another hundred trees along Botanic Walk to further reduce the sound of US40 traffic. Kerry Kaster planted the Park’s first garden in 1997 and the gates were opened so the public could see its newest Park. A Park Supervisor was hired, Gayle Lehman*, who supervises the Park to this day. Most of the gardens were created after the Park was opened.

The Association

The Enevers originally planned on creating a 501c3 corporation to receive the land and maintain the Park, but they wanted the permanence of a City park and did not want the frailty and expense of another corporate entity with its administration costs. So, they instead arranged with the City to create the Association and delegate the management of the Park to the Association. At first the Enevers were the Association but they wanted the public to participate in and manage the future of the Park. Starting in 1997, members of the public have become progressively more involved and now completely run the Board, the Association and the Park. The Association now numbers about 425 paying members. The Association, led by several long-standing Board Members*, has brought enthusiasm, outside money and great ambitions for the Park, far exceeding anything the Enevers had in mind when they started.

Volunteers

The public also participates by volunteering to work at the Park. ‘Social Gardening’ was started in the late ‘90s and continues today and crowds come to the spring planting of the Annuals Garden. Some people work on their own Sponsored Gardens while others come to work in the Park at times convenient to them.

No Tax Money

What started as a plan for the financial independence of the Park has become a part of the ethic of the Association. The City, as the Park’s partner, helps the Park with in-kind services but gives no money. The Park receives no tax money.

Award

In 2012 the City of Steamboat Springs awarded the Enevers its Heritage Award, which is awarded every two years to people who have contributed to the Community.

A Short History of Trillium House

Trillium House is designed for the public to use as a resource center and for the public and various organizations to use for meetings and events. It also houses the Park's office and public restrooms. The following notes respond to questions about the building.

For the first twelve years of its life the Yampa River Botanic Park had no public space, only a portable toilet for its restroom and an office that was rented offsite. In the Spring of '07 Audrey and Bob Enever donated the land for a new building and the Board of the Yampa River Botanic Park Association took on the challenge of designing and financing its building. Board member John Duffey urged the Board to create a stylish building in a mountain-contemporary idiom.

Bob McHugh, an architect and engineer, who previously lived in Steamboat Springs, was asked to draw a concept design for the building: Trillium House essentially follows his design, done without fee. Local architect Ed Becker created the working drawings and supervised construction. The footprint of the building was so confined* that it could never be extended, so the second floor was added for future growth and to create the 'volume-effect' in the main room.

Jack White was the fee-based contractor, Bob Enever was the project manager and Emily Seaver and other members of the Board made finish material selections and color choices. Trillium House was built in 2008 and opened to the public in Spring 2009.

The local chapter of the Sierra Club (Trapper's Lake Group: President Rich Levy) donated a solar installation as part of its educational effort, using funds from the settlement of an air emissions lawsuit at the Hayden Power Plant. The photo-voltaic panels provide 100% of the power for Trillium House: it feeds into the grid in summer and withdraws from it in winter.

The heating is by water, heated by natural gas and pumped through piping set into the concrete floor. The building is heavily insulated and very inexpensive to run. Jeff Morehead built the road joining Trillium House to the rest of the Park and Bob Enever designed the fence.

The name, Trillium House, celebrates the three-petaled flower, *Trillium ovatum*, that is native to the mountains of Routt County. Its symmetrical form inspired the Park's logo.



The limits are a gas-line easement to the North, a sewer-line easement to the East, a property set-back to the South and a river easement to the West. All these lines are within inches of the building. The patio sits on the gas-line easement.

General Information

The Yampa River Botanic Park is an innovative, perhaps unique, experiment in the private/public development and maintenance of a public botanical facility. The six-acre park sits on land donated to the City of Steamboat Springs for that purpose. The Park is managed by an Association, a volunteer organization that was set up by City Ordinance. The Association is authorized to manage the Park, raise funds, hire staff and design and create gardens and infrastructure.

The Mission:

To create and maintain a place of serenity celebrating the trees, shrubs, plants and birds of the Yampa River Basin and to encourage the conservation of plants native to northwest Colorado.

About the Association:

- The Association's membership consists of local citizens and many people who live far away but maintain Steamboat connections. There are currently approximately 600 members.
- The Association's Directors are elected to the Board by its members.
- The Board manages the Park and is active in building financial support.
- The Park's annual budget is about \$450,000. A combination of a hard-working board, an Executive Director and staff, volunteer help and in-kind help from the City make this possible.
- The Park receives financial support from the public and the business community that is truly incredible for a small town of 15,000.

About the Park:

- A map and description of the Park and gardens is available in the brochure, which is on the Park's website: www.yrbp.org/visit.
- In 2008 the Association built "Trillium House," a stylish building with public bathrooms, an office and a resource center. Funding was by public subscription with an assist from the Endowment (see later).
- For the past 20 years the Park has hosted free, "Music on the Green" lunchtime concerts, in collaboration with Strings Music Festival and paid for by local sponsors. These are classical and contemporary music concerts where people sit on the grass and eat lunch. Each season these concerts are attended by over 4,500 people, at least 50% of whom are visitors to Steamboat. "Shakespeare on the Green" is popular on summer evenings presented by Piknik Theatre and there have been several "Opera on the Green" events.
- The Park is a popular venue for weddings and public events. Schools conduct classes here and summer camps regularly visit. In a corner of the Park is the Children's' Garden with gardens, bird nesting boxes, a playhouse, a fairy garden and a shaded amphitheater. Stepping-stones over streams, interesting trails and sculptures attract children's interest throughout the Park.

- The Park is free and open to the public from dawn to dusk, May 1 through October 31. Free entry encourages people to visit often, to feel ownership in the Park and to donate.
- The Park is high on the Chamber's list of tourist attractions. It is estimated that the Park gets over 35,000 visits a year.

About the Climate:

- The Park sits at an altitude of 6,740 ft in a cool valley in the Park Range at the foot of Mt Werner, the Steamboat Ski Area.
- In winter, cold air flows down the surrounding mountains so that temperatures can reach as low as minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit and Celsius.
- The Park gets an average of only 60 days a year without a killing frost: non-predictable days.
- These low temperatures, together with very dry summers and high levels of ultra-violet make this a challenging environment for plants.
- Only a few non-native trees survive these conditions, but many cultivated strains of lower-altitude plants thrive here.

About the Gardens:

- Each garden is in a unique setting with its own slope, sun exposure, soil chemistry, trees, shrubs and irrigation pattern determining what will, and will not, grow well. Every garden is an experiment.
- There are 63 gardens, many of which are sponsored by individuals and organizations. Some Garden Sponsors work their own gardens, others support them financially and five have endowed their gardens in perpetuity.
- The gardens contain mostly perennial plants with annuals in only a few gardens.
- Volunteers attend Wednesday morning "Social Gardening" sessions to weed and help. At other times volunteers come in groups or individually.
- Most plants in the Park are labeled with common and scientific names.
- Plants native to Northwest Colorado are identified on their plant signs: of those, a few plants originating only in Northwest Colorado (endemics) are to be found.

The City of Steamboat Springs is the Association's partner and supporter:

- The City does not contribute cash operating funds, but it helps in many other ways.
- The Finance Department does the Association's payroll and pays expenditures other than fundraising expenses from funds donated by the Yampa River Botanic Park Society.
- The Parks & Recreation Department maintains equipment and helps the Park in a hundred ways. Every department of the City helps in some way.

How the Park Came to Be:

- The Park originated from a gift of 6 acres of land from Bob and Audrey Enever to the City in 1992. The land was then a flat horse pasture.
- The idea of a Botanic Park was very foreign to Steamboat's ranching, mining and tourism community of 1992 so originally there was little public support for the Park.
- In 1994 the Enevers and Michael Campbell, a landscape architect, designed the Park.
- The City passed a resolution in 1994, later confirmed by Ordinance, which created the Association and gave it the authority to build and manage the Park.
- In the spring of 1995, the Enevers' son Peter died at age 31, which prompted them to fund the construction of the Park and create an Endowment for future maintenance that is entrusted to the Yampa Valley Community Foundation.
- Bob Enever worked on the ground all summer of 1995 building the three-dimensional landscape that creates the visual separations and the micro-climates. He also built the ponds and roads and acquired the legal water rights in Fish Creek and in the ditch that brings the surface water to the Park, all in the name of the City.
- In 1996 Bob installed an irrigation system, bought and planted 500 trees and started work on the paths and trails. The first gardens were built that year and the Park was opened to the public in 1997.

Management of the Park

- The Board of Directors has become increasingly active as the Community has become more engaged in the Park. The Board now manages the Park. Board members devote substantial amounts of time to the Park and all have committee assignments: Horticulture, Development, Facilities, Finance, and Marketing & Communications.
- Kathy Connell is the current President, preceded by Sonia Franzel 2018 – 2020. Kerry Kaster served as the President from 2015-2016. He was preceded by Emily Seaver for 2008-2015. She was preceded by David Howell for 2006-7 and by Bob Enever for the eleven years 1995-2005.
- Jennifer MacNeil is the Park's first Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer as of late 2019. She has education and a professional background in public gardens administration.
- Emma Friedland is currently the Lead Horticulturist.

Programs & Events

Due to the generosity of our donors and community partners, most programs and events in the Park are free.

EVENTS & PERFORMANCES

Passport Through the Botanic Park. A gala fundraising event, attendees enjoy stations throughout the garden featuring gardens and plants paired with wine and hors d'oeuvres. The event is ticketed and also features an online and live auction.

Music on the Green. Since 1999, in concert with Strings Music Festival, live music is enjoyed every Wednesdays. Free.

Piknik Theatre Festival. Since 2010 local theater group, Piknik Theater performs live theatre in the gardens. The local theater group, Piknik Theater, under the direction of Stuart Handloff, joins forces with a group of graduates and acting students from New Zealand's dramatic conservatories. Piknik Theater continues the tradition of the Great American Laughing Stock Company, which has brought live theater to the Valley for over 40 years. Its shows have ranged from the family to the fantastical. Free

Annual Meeting and Celebration. A Members Only event, the Board of Directors conducts the annual business of the Association and celebrates its members, donors, and volunteers. A catered buffet is served and a speaker provides educational entertainment.

Fall Bulb & Peony Benefit. Features a selection of unique and remarkable bulbs that thrive in the Yampa River Valley including tulips, species tulips, daffodils, muscari, snowdrops, daylilies, and peonies. Hard to find varieties chosen for form, color, and fragrance.

Spring Plant Benefit. Features perennials appropriate for mountain regions including pollinator-friendly plants, natives, specialty alpines, and other garden favorites.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Guided Walking Tours of the Botanic Park. June through September. Fridays and Sundays from 10 to 11:30. Board members and volunteers tour visitors through the Park showcasing gardens, plants, birds, and the history of the Park. Free

Yoga on the Green. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 9 – 10 am. Weather permitting. Practicing on the Park Green is unlike any class you've ever taken. Surrounded by the beauty of nature, delicate gardens and serene pond, you'll find the peace and stillness is unmatched in the Botanic Park. A \$10 donation is requested and all donations support the Botanic park and provide for instructors.

Social Gardening. Meet old and new friends and help beautify the gardens. Weather permitting.

Meditation in the Garden. An unique opportunity to experience meditation amongst the flowers and trees. Selected Tuesdays. 5:30. Donations appreciated.

Qigong on the Green. An ancient practice described as moving meditation, encompassing slow-flowing movement, deep rhythmic breathing, and calm meditative state of mind. Selected Monday, 8 am. Donations appreciated.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Fairy Garden House Contest. Children create fairy garden houses and enter them into the contest for a chance to win fun prizes. The houses are on display in the Fairy Garden throughout the summer. Free

Children's Storytime. The Bud Werner Memorial Library brings stories and activities to the Park in the Children's Amphitheatre. Fridays. Free.

Lulie's Watercolors and Wildflowers Kid's Program. Join in adventure with Tread of Pioneers Museum. As a tribute to local pioneer artist Lulie Crawford, the Tread of Pioneers Museum shares the story of Lulie and her pioneering family, followed by watercolor instruction with a professional artist. Then the program participants paint their own wildflower watercolor masterpieces, just like Lulie! Free.

2024 Calendar of Events

May

May 1:		Botanic Park Opens
May 16, 5:30 pm		Volunteer Orientation
May 21, 5:30	5:30 PM	Meditation in the Garden
May 25 – September 2	9 AM	Yoga (Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays)

June

June 10-July 15	8 AM Mondays	Qigong on the Green
June 11 & 25	5:30 PM	Meditation in the Garden
June 13	4 – 7 PM	Spring Plant Sale Evening Reception
June 14	10 AM – 4 PM	Spring Plant Sale
June 14 – August 23:	10:30 AM	Storytime
June 14:	11:30 AM	Fairy Garden House Contest
June 19:	5-6:30 PM	Summer Business Showcase
June 26 – August 14:	10 AM	Music on the Green

July

July 2 & 16		Meditation in the Garden
July 20:	4:30 PM	Passport
July 28 – August 1	5:30 PM	Piknik Theatre

August

August 4 – 8:	5:30 PM	Piknik Theatre
August 13 & 27	5:30 PM	Meditation in the Garden
August 21:	5 PM	Music on the Green

September

September 8:	4 PM	Annual Meeting
September 24:		SAM Plein Air Festival in the Park

October

October 3-5		Bulb & Peony Benefit
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Botanic Park Membership

Membership levels:

INDIVIDUAL * \$40 / FAMILY * \$60 / BUSINESS * \$100

Yampa River Botanic Park members receive the following benefits:

- Personalized membership card
- Park sticker
- Discounts on special events
- Subscription to and recognition in the newsletter
- Tour offering to see the native Trillium bloom
- Annual Meeting/Report Celebration with catered buffet
- Member's Only hours at the Fall Bulb & Peony Benefit & Spring Plant Benefit
- Reserve facilities
- Enjoy benefits of The American Horticultural Society's Reciprocal Admissions Program such as free admission and/or additional benefits at over 345 gardens throughout North America and the Caribbean.
- The American Public Gardens Association offers our new members to select a complimentary one-year subscription to either Better Homes and Gardens or Martha Stewart Living Magazine

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Become a Member Today

There is a level for everyone. All gifts are tax deductible within the limits of the law.

Volunteer

From administrative help and fundraising, greeting, and giving tours to being a weed warrior - get involved.

Sponsor A Garden

Choose among available gardens with a sign including your name.

Business Sponsor

Your business will be included in our newsletter

LEADERSHIP GIVING

Donations at a Leadership Level offer the opportunity for a Memorial, Honorarium, or Tribute.

Columbine - \$100+

Trillium - \$250+

Sunflower - \$500+

Shooting Star - \$1,000+

Sego Lily - \$2,000+

Forget-Me-Not - \$5,000+

Penstemon \$10,000+

Garden Information

About the Gardens

Each garden is in a unique setting with its own slope, sun exposure, soil chemistry, trees, shrubs and irrigation pattern determining what will, and will not, grow well. Every garden is an experiment.

- There are more than 60 gardens, many of which are sponsored by individuals and organizations. Some Garden Sponsors work their own gardens, others support them financially and five have endowed their gardens in perpetuity.
- The gardens contain mostly perennial plants with annuals in only a few gardens.
- Volunteers attend Monday and Wednesday morning “Social Gardening” sessions to weed and help. At other times volunteers come in groups or individually.
- Most plants in the Park are labeled with common and scientific names.
- Plants native to Northwest Colorado are identified on their plant signs: of those, a few plants originating only in Northwest Colorado (endemics) are to be found.

Garden Highlights

Members Rock Garden

Planted in 1997 with help from the Denver Botanic Garden, this is 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.



Penstemon Garden

The most newly renovated garden, the Penstemon Garden features the largest genus of flowering plants native to North America, organized in zones. There are 273 species of Penstemon, of which 60 are native to Colorado. This may be the world's only garden devoted exclusively to penstemons.



Fairy Garden

The Fairy Garden is home to individual fairy houses created by local children in the annual Fairy Garden House Contest. Miniature plants and fun artifacts delight both the young and old.



Children's Garden

Features a covered amphitheater, a play table called Stumpyland, a playhouse, and a tipi covered in hops. Here children to use their imaginations to explore nature.



High Country Native's Garden

This garden is thickets of native shrubs and plants from the surrounding mountains and is left to grow fairly wild.



Pioneer Garden

Features plants that the early settlers brought across the prairies. Look for Hollyhocks, Foxgloves, Lilies, and Lupine.



Windigo Garden

The Windigo Garden was established in 2000 in memory of Nathan Robert Hertzog by his family and friends. The garden was designed by Nathan's aunt and includes native perennials, shrubs and Aspen trees. Originally the garden was in full sun, but now with the growth of the Aspens, it has become more of a shade garden. *Lupinus perennis*, Wild Lupine, *Perideridia gairdneri*,

Yampa, and *Eryngium amethystinum*, and Amethyst Sea Holly are just a few of the plants in this garden.



Jeff's Garden

Jeff's Garden was built by Jeff Morehead next to his home, adjacent to the Park. Jeff hardscaped the area with lichen covered volcanic rock brought in from his family's ranch in western Colorado. Many of the plants in Jeff's Garden were given to him by the Denver Botanic Gardens, friends, and visitors to the Park. Jeff's Garden has grown over the years with two new crevice gardens, tufa rock, and vegetable beds. The garden is a visitor favorite with its lush plantings of native and specialty plants from around the world. Some highlights include a *Taraxacum kok-saghyz*, Russian pink dandelion, *Eremurus*, Foxtail Lilies, and *Paeonia mlokosewitschil*, Molly the Witch Peony.



Dorothy's Garden

Dorothy's Garden was built to honor Carol and Rick Dowden's Aunt Dorothy who was an avid gardener. Dorothy's Garden covers the entire peninsula of the northwest corner of the Park near the Core Trail. The garden consists largely of native plants and trees including *Ipomopsis aggregata*, Scarlet Gilia, *Quercus Gambelii*, Gambels Oak, and *Anthriscus Sylvestris*, Cow Parsley. In the spring the slope leading up to the Arbor and bench is a sea of purple *Lupinus polyphyllus*, Lupine. *Machaeranthera bigloveii*, Santa Fe Aster, aggressive Showy goldeneye and *Rosa woodsii*, Western Wild Rose have naturalized on the peninsula and take over in the summer. *Penstemon strictus* or Rocky Mountain Beardtongue also makes a showy appearance in late spring to early summer. *Quercus gambelii*, Scrub Oak and *Picea pungens*, Colorado Blue Spruce shelter the entire peninsula but if you look closely, you'll see a special yellow *Rosa harrisonii*, Harison's Rose, growing near the Blue Spruce. The roof of the Arbor is removed in the winter to keep it from breaking under the heavy snow. In the spring the small logs used for the covering are weaved back together with twine and returned to the top of the Arbor. This garden is currently under a 3-year phased renovation.



Sascha's Rock Garden

Sascha's Rock Garden was the first garden established in the Park. It was designed and built by Bob Enever and Kerry Kaster who brought the rocks and placed them overlooking the Yampa River and the Core Trail. This garden features plants from Siberia to Patagonia, Mongolia to Japan and all the way to the Himalayas.

The garden is shaded by choke cherries and crabapple trees that bloom in white and pink during the spring. Their late summer fruit is considered a delicacy by local bears.

Sascha's Rock Garden has two benches. The upper bench offers views of the river and the softness of moss grass. The lower bench overlooks Peter's Pond, the Rose Garden and the Green. Because of its location, these benches have been the site of many marriage proposals and much reflection. Behind the lower bench, fire weeds grow tall and bloom in late July with large pink flowers.

There are two hidden paths that take you to the upper part of Sascha's Rock Garden. The steps are lined by Armenian Speedwell whose small purple flowers bloom in the Spring under the trees. Fujiyama phlox with white bouquet-like white flowers together with balloon flowers and echinacea on the top of Sascha's Rock Garden offer an explosion of color during the month of August.

On the river side of SRG we find whorl flowers. A Himalayan native with sharp spines as leaves. It is very rare on our continent. It flowers in dense whorls and has medicinal uses. A dwarf almond tree from Siberia delivers a few almonds at the end of the summer.

Rose campion with magenta flowers comes from the carnation family. A native of Eurasia, this lamp flower attracts hummingbirds. The silky rock jasmine also comes from the Himalayas. It is a charming little plant with gorgeous crown like flowers and a green rosette, ideal for rock gardens and hardy at altitude.

Pin cushions are also a butterfly magnet. They wave in the breeze and require very little maintenance. The autumn joy sedum likes full sun and dry soil. It ignites with copper colors in the fall and it is a dependable plant. Anemones bloom in September. They are also called windflowers (anemones mean “wind” in Greek) and they are native to the Mediterranean region.

By the bridge, the rose bush will delight you with its fragrance. Look for lavender and daisies on the rose side of the garden. The latest addition is a Japanese dwarf spruce by the kiosk. A must see adorable tree. The Denver Botanic Gardens provides many plants to experiment their growth at altitude in Sascha’s Rock Garden.

