Leave plenty of time to stroll through our many outdoor gardens. The three-acre gated outdoor gardens (formerly “National Garden”) draw inspiration from the environments of the Mid-Atlantic region. Conceived as an outdoor laboratory for gardening in harmony with natural ecosystems, the Garden opened in the fall of 2006.

The major features of the gated outdoor gardens are:

- The **Regional Garden** features Mid-Atlantic native plants that highlight the beauty of the region’s flora.
- The **Rose Garden** is an ongoing experiment, showcasing roses that thrive in the Mid-Atlantic when grown using organic methods.
- The **Pollinator Garden** demonstrates how gardens provide vital resources for pollinators.
- The **First Ladies Water Garden** honors the contribution of our nation’s First Ladies.
- The **Lawn Terrace** functions as a welcoming area for outdoor tours, festivals, and summer classes.
- The **Amphitheater** is an outdoor gathering place for educational programs. It also provides a spectacular view of the U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory and the U.S. Capitol dome.

The outdoor gardens are designed to satisfy the gardener and the garden lover. As with any garden, over time it will evolve as plants mature, compete for space and succumb or thrive in changing conditions. From this urban oasis, experience the beauty and power of nature, while enjoying the inspiring vistas of Capitol Hill.
Other outdoor garden areas include the Terrace Gardens on the north and east side of the Conservatory and Bartholdi Fountain and Gardens.

**EXPLORE THESE RELATED PAGES:**

- Bartholdi Fountain and Gardens
- Explore the National Garden’s history as we celebrate its 10th Anniversary in 2016!
- See our recommendations of native plants you can grow *(wildflowers, wetland plants, plants for critters, shrubs, trees, and more!)*

---

**Explore the birds of the Garden!**

The native plants in the Regional Garden give birds food and shelter, as naturally occurring urban habitat recedes. These birds are an important part of the garden, and are great indicators of its health and vitality. [See the list >](#)
Northern mockingbird (Mimus polyglottos) eating winterberry (Ilex verticillata) in the outdoor gardens.

More history of the gated outdoor gardens:

The Garden Takes Root
In 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed legislation creating the rose as the national floral emblem for the United States. Plans then got underway to find a site to showcase roses in the nation's capital.

The U.S. Botanic Garden (USBG) was selected, and the gated outdoor gardens ("National Garden") were dedicated in 1995 to commemorate the 175th anniversary of legislation creating the USBG. But it would take more than 10 years for it to be created.

The new garden areas opened on October 1, 2006, and stewardship was turned over to the USBG. The garden educates visitors about the diversity of American plants and their importance to the environment; helps connect people to nature; and demonstrates the relationships between plants, water, and humans.

The National Garden was made possible by a successful collaboration between the U.S. Congress, the Joint Committee on the Library, the National Fund for the U.S. Botanic Garden, the U.S. Botanic Garden, and the Architect of the Capitol.

The National Fund for the United States Botanic Garden (now called the Friends of the U.S. Botanic Garden) was established as a 501(c)3 in 1991 to fund the National Garden using non-federal funds. The Friends now support the educational activities of the USBG. To learn more about the Friends of the U.S. Botanic Garden, visit www.usbgfriends.org

Source URL: https://www.usbg.gov/outdoor-gardens