



Master Gardener Update

December 2020

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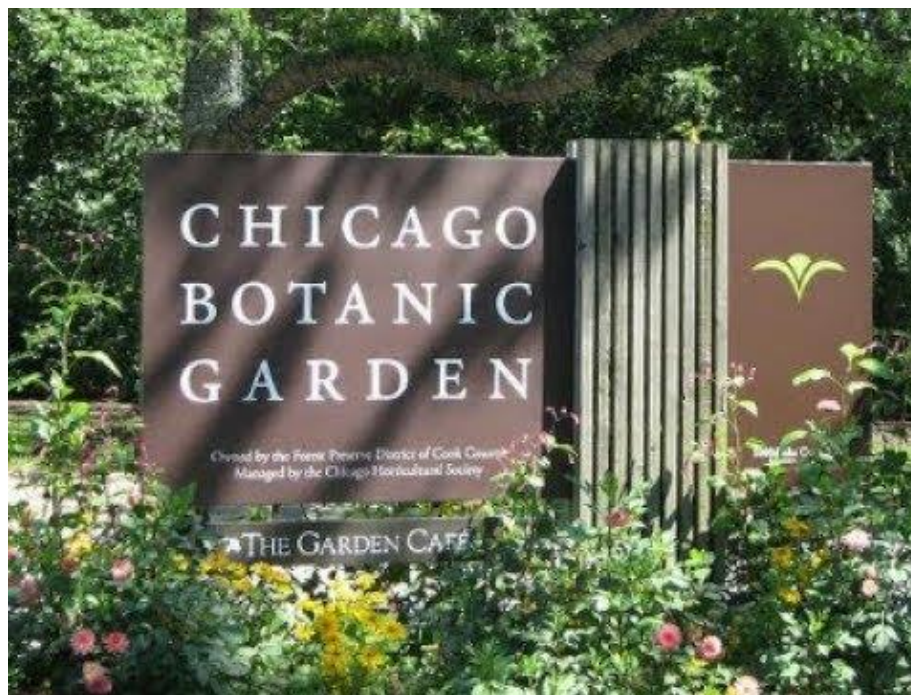
Virtual Visit

An Intro to the Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe IL

This garden isn't in Wisconsin, but it's only 100 miles from Janesville, which is closer than some gardens we've featured. It's also one of the country's major public gardens.

Located close to Lake Michigan about 20 miles north of the city, any attempt to take in the Chicago Botanic Garden in a single visit is doomed to failure. With 345 acres, the walking alone is more than a day's work. And who can do justice to more than 90 garden and natural areas without getting that glazed "I can't take any more" look?

So rather than exhaust you by trying, we're featuring only a selection of CBG's gardens in this issue of the newsletter. (FYI, CBG offers



Websites

For Rock County

MGV info:

rock.extension.wisc.edu/
upcoming-events-and-
volunteer-opportunities/
OR

fyi.extension.wisc.edu/
mgvrockco/

MGV Hours Reporting:

wimastergardener.org/
report-your-hours/

RPMGA Blog:

rpmga.blogspot.com

RPMGA on Facebook:

Hit control/click on this
link:

[RPMGA on Facebook](#)

Rotary Gardens:

rotarybotanicalgardens.
org

Wisconsin Master Gardener Program:

wimastergardener.org

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA): wimga.org

tram tours in the warmer months, which is a good way to get an overview and decide which gardens you want to explore in more depth.)

The Lenhardt Library

Let's start with a part of the gardens that isn't a garden at all, it's the research library. One of the great treasures of the Chicago Botanic Garden is the Lenhardt Library. Open to the public 7-days a week, its 150,000-volume collection encompasses resources on gardening, botany, plant conservation, and landscape design, in formats from rare books to e-books. Library initiatives focus on public engagement, collections, and collaborations. The library has its own blog, and librarians (and MGVs) help research garden questions for the public. It's fun to poke around the library's page on the website, located under the Education tab at chicagobotanic.org.

The Lenhardt Library is also part of a consortium with other major horticultural libraries, which means that many of those libraries' holdings are available in e-book format. Members of the Chicago Botanic Garden may now borrow any of those books online at no charge. They just type **CBG** followed by their **unique member number**, and click "**Sign In.**"

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Have safe and joyful Holidays!

MG Notes:

Deadline to Record MG Hours: December 31: Remember, all master gardener volunteer and education hours for 2020 must be recorded by the end of this month. To recertify for 2021, only the minimum of 10 education hours are required because of Covid restrictions. The usual 24 hours of volunteer time are not *required* this time around, but if you do have volunteer hours, please record them as well. (Note: the Online Reporting System and annual enrollment requirements are found at wimastergardener.org/report-your-hours/)

RPMGA Reminder: No Dues Required for 2021: In case you missed it: the Rock Prairie Master Gardener Association will automatically renew your membership if you recertify as a Master Gardener Volunteer for 2021. And to keep things simple, the group will also cover the cost of WI Master Gardener Association membership renewal if you are also a member of that group.

WIMGA Annual Meeting Online, Thursday, December 3, 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held via Zoom, and you must register in advance to attend: <https://uwmadison.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwkduysqTwuG9zxm3s2A4WH6ZfS1yJtvSzL> After registering, you will receive a confirmation email about joining the meeting. After the WIMGA business meeting which includes voting on bylaw changes, we will take a short break and then reconvene to join Amy Freidig, MGP Coordinator, for a deeper dive into a topic that's been on many MGV minds: using online webinar and virtual meeting platforms to continue learning and teaching.

You're Invited—2 Events

Walworth County MGV Association Virtual Holiday Recipe Swap, Wednesday, December 9 at 6:00 p.m. Our neighbors to the east have sent us an invitation to their year-end event. Instead of the usual potluck, they're having an online holiday recipe swap. If you'd like to share one of your favorite holiday recipes, email it to suzannemarkus2@gmail.com by December 4th (earlier is better!). It can be for any type of dish, and if you have a photo to include, that's great. Suzanne will create a "cookbook" to share. But you can join the festivities even if you don't share a recipe. A Zoom link for the meeting will be sent out soon. There will be a short business meeting, time to chat and a show and tell of the compiled recipes. WCMGVA will email the recipes out after the meeting.

End of the Year Virtual Coffee/Tea Chat on Wednesday, December 16 at 9am. Horticulture Outreach Specialist Julie Hill will host a virtual meeting for all Rock and Walworth MGVs to get together, update each other and share thoughts, observations and ideas. Watch for a Zoom link shortly.



Rotary Gardens: Holiday Light Show Continues

The familiar becomes magical during Rotary Gardens annual Holiday Light Show. This year's event continues throughout December, from 4:30 to 9:00 p.m. Dates vary slightly each week, so check at rbgholidaylightshow.com. Volunteers are needed. If you are comfortable volunteering at an in-person event, you can sign up at this link: <https://signup.com/go/EKWkwHK>.

Online Training Coming Up in December and Beyond

Intro to Beekeeping, Chicago Botanic Garden, December 6

Learn all the basics needed to start keeping bees. This includes what to expect, how to put together equipment, how to get bees in your hive, finding the queen, feeding, what to look for after the bees are installed, and seasonal chores. Led by Wil Pilipauskas, head beekeeper of Willie's Honey Company. This class will be taught online via Zoom. All registrations must be submitted online two days before your class starts. Registered students will receive login instructions one day in advance. Sunday, December 6, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fee: \$64 for members, \$80 for non-members.



Intro to Fruit Tree Pruning, From "Old and Neglected" to "Just Planted" Univ. of Illinois Extension, December 17

This year's fruit tree pruning classes will be held virtual, using the zoom platform. "While you might think that you cannot learn to prune using a virtual format, I've developed a color-coded system for teaching people how to prune that works really well to help you understand what to prune and what to leave behind. Participants will be able to submit photos of their trees and may have them utilized in the presentation" states Grant McCarty, UIEX Local Foods and Small Farms Educator. Apple, pear, cherry, and others will be covered with a focus on the central leader and open center styles. Thursday, December 17, Noon to 1:30 p.m. Fee: \$5. Registration link: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=22800> Note: program will be presented again on January 20th and 26th.

Starting Seeds Indoors, North Central Wisconsin MG Assn., Jan 4

This is another Zoom webinar from upstate. This program will cover everything you will need to start vegetable and flower seeds indoors. We'll discuss things to consider when purchasing seed, containers, and growing media. We will learn how to apply important techniques in the sowing and growing seedlings, and how to successfully plant the seedlings outdoors. Presenter: Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator Extension Marathon County. Monday, January 4, 6-7 p.m. Sign-up link: [Register Here!](#)

House- and Holiday Plant Care at Aram Public Library, Jan. 5

In this program, local master gardeners will cover the basics of what it takes to keep your houseplants smiling--which will make you happy too! A 45 minute presentation plus time for your questions. We'll also touch on how to care for those Holiday beauties. The link to register for this free Zoom program is on Aram's website: www.aramlibrary.org/calendar. Flip to January and click on the 5th. Program takes place on Tuesday, January 5 from 6:00 -7:00 p.m.



Green Thumb Gardening Classes, Dane County UW Extension

Horticulture Educator Lisa Johnson and other experts from the Dane County UW Extension are offering 2-hour sessions on Monday evenings beginning again in January. Classes run from 6 to 8 p.m., and the fee is \$12/session or \$40 for all four topics. The link to the sign-up page on Eventbrite is <https://2021greenthumbgardeningwinter.eventbrite.com/>

January 11: Vegetable Garden Planning and Techniques
January 25: Seed Starting

Workshops with Mark Dwyer

This winter, the UW-Whitewater will again be hosting some online workshops featuring Mark Dwyer. Classes will use the Webex platform, which is free to download and use. February topics will be **Elements of Beautiful and Functional Landscape Design** (2/13/21, 9-10:30 a.m.) and **Sensational Shrubberies and Small Trees** (2/27/21, 9-10:30 a.m.). A third workshop, **Container Gardening Basics and Beyond** takes place March 20, 2021, also from 9-10:30 a.m. Fees are \$25/workshop or \$60 for all three. Sign up at www.uww.edu/ce/personal-enrichment/gardenlandscape/gardeningworkshops

Links to Programs You May Have Missed

Even if you aren't in need of hours, you might find topics that interest you and valuable resources for the future. It's worth a look!

Let's Grow Stuff This past year, Allen Centennial Garden hosted this series for PBS Wisconsin. Designed for beginning vegetable and herb gardeners, each video runs only 3-4 minutes. Find episodes at <https://pbswisconsin.org/watch/lets-grow-stuff/>. Also, check for other virtual education possibilities at <https://allencentennialgarden.wisc.edu/>, click the "Visit" tab and go to the last menu item, "Virtual Events".

Plants Plus MGV Training Twenty or more topics under the "Learn" tab at wimastergardener.org. Watch the videos, read any extra materials, take a short quiz and get two hours of continuing education.

Master Gardener Program You Tube Channel Access videos on all kinds of gardening topics, presented by and for master gardener volunteers. From wimastergardener.org page, access the "Learn" tab and select "You Tube" from the menu.

Programs from this past year: On October 27, Julie Hill sent us all an email ("Continuing Education—Links to Videos") with a set of links to more than 16 different recorded videos you can watch online at your convenience. Some feature familiar speakers like Mark Dwyer. Some are UW experts like P.J. Liesch from the Insect Diagnostic Lab, Brian Hudelson from the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic, and Mike Maddox from the Master Gardener Program Office. Others may be sources completely new to you, like The Wild Ones, the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network or Urban Forestry Today.



Chicago Botanic Garden, *continued*

For a larger version of the map to the right, go to www.chicagobotanic.org/visit/map.

If You Go...

The Chicago Botanic Garden is open 365 days/year. Hours vary by season, so be sure to check in advance.

While Covid restrictions are in effect, you must register in advance for both an entry time and parking. See the website or call.

Entry to the garden is free, but parking is \$25 unless you're a member.

Chicago Botanic Garden
1000 Lake Cook Road
Glencoe, IL 60022
Customer Service: (847) 835-6801
Main: (847) 835-5440
Member: (847) 835-8215
Website: www.chicagobotanic.org

“National” Membership

If you're tempted to become a member of CBG, consider the “national” category. It's for people who live more than 75 miles from the garden, and includes full benefits at a reduced price.



The Aquatic Garden



Visitors can stroll down a winding boardwalk to view scores of magnificent waterlilies and lotuses in various stages of bud and bloom. The shady hill of the nearby Bulb Garden is a favorite spot of artists eager to capture the emerging flowers in the sparkle of early morning light.

Among the Aquatic Garden's featured plants is the sacred lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*), immortalized in literature, religion, and history for its purity of bloom. Depictions of the 2-foot-wide leaves and 8-inch pale pink flowers arising above the water from the muddy depths are legendary.



The Bonsai Collection

See what happens when you drop by the Bonsai Collection—among the best of its kind in the world—at different times of day. One morning, you might note the cinnamon scent of the Asian star jasmine (*Trachelospermum asiaticum*)—and then return after sunset when its fragrance intensifies. And you might consider the essence of the cascade (*kengai*) bonsai, backlit against the evening sky. Is it arching over the rim of its container toward the ground, or is it growing toward the disappearing sun?

The Chicago Botanic Garden's collection of nearly 200 bonsai includes gifts from the Midwest Bonsai Society and from Japanese bonsai master Susumu Nakamura. Among the trees donated by Nakamura was a Japanese white pine that has been trained for at least 100 years. On rotating display, each bonsai takes the stage at the peak of its beauty. The select bonsai are on display in the Regenstein Center's two courtyards from roughly April 1 to October 1, depending on the weather.



English Walled Garden

One of the Chicago Botanic Garden's most enchanting and popular places is the Helen and Richard Thomas English Walled Garden, which was designed by renowned English landscape architect John Brookes, Member of the British Empire (MBE). Step past the sleepy stone lion, breathe in the cowslip primrose, and listen to the water trickle into an eighteenth-century lead cistern—the feeling is as timeless as the tiny thyme plants growing between the hand-pressed bricks.

Each of the six unique garden rooms evokes a different mood, featuring elements of English garden design through the centuries. Try the Cottage Garden—overflowing with fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers—for a sense of playfulness (Beatrix Potter, anyone?); or the wisteria-covered Pergola Garden—with flowers and foliage in cool blues, purples, and silver—for a sense of romance (Jane Austen, anyone?).

Through generous funding from the Woman's Board of the Chicago Horticultural Society, the English Walled Garden has been updated periodically. Enhancements are made in consultation with Brookes, who most recently toured in the garden in 2012. As a result, a restoration project is underway that includes a plan to rethink the plantings and overhaul the perennial borders.

In designing the English Walled Garden, Brookes said his intent was to present a typical period-style English country garden that would evoke as many of the senses as possible. The garden “should be visual, of course, with color, but also scent and texture in the planting, and a feeling of it all not being too immaculate,” Brookes said. “Plantings should be full and almost overflowing their borders. It should be a joyous and restful place above all else.”



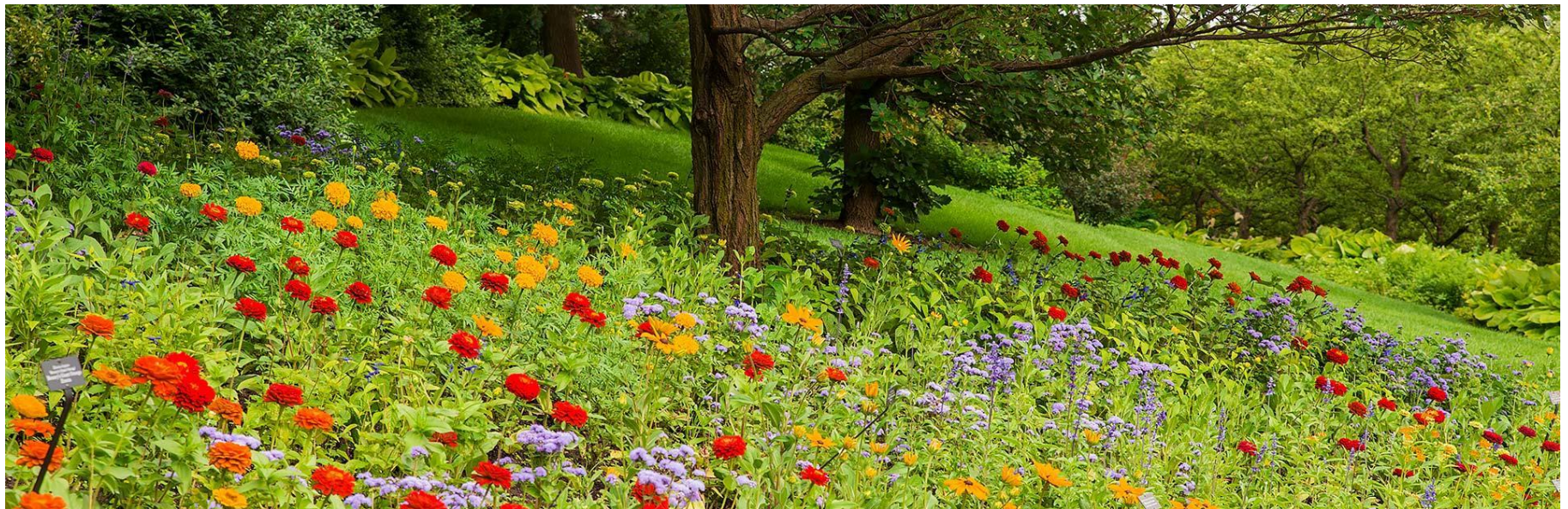
English Oak Meadow

To the east of the English Walled Garden is a gently rolling tapestry of blooming bulbs, vibrant flowers, and shrubs set amid several varieties of oak trees. This hillside meadow is awash with color from spring through fall.

Arcs of flowers on both sides of the pathway create a succession of blooming, right up until frost, with seasonal delights perfectly orchestrated so there is always a show, no matter what the month.

This floral carpet is found between the English Walled Garden and the Dwarf Conifer Garden and is home to many resident and migrating birds. A variety of butterflies can always be seen dancing from one nectar- and pollen-rich plant to another.

Enjoy the show from benches or from the paths that turn down to the Great Basin. A short climb up the stone steps to the hilltop Dwarf Conifer Garden will reward visitors with a spectacular view.



Dwarf Conifer Garden

Even in the darkest days of winter, dwarf conifers hold fast to colors including blues and silvers and to thick, fragrant branches. On a gentle slope, tucked among boulders and nestled into the corners and cutaways of sandstone steps, the Dwarf Conifer Garden features mostly evergreens. This four-season garden includes trees that are fragrant year-round, as well as conifers with eye-catching shapes (the globe-shaped center of Little Gem arborvitae, for example) and textures (such as the weeping branches on Miss Grace dawn redwood).



The Dwarf Conifer Garden features trees that are smaller and slower growing than other conifers. Conifers are plants that bear cones. Mostly native to the earth's northern hemisphere, conifers have thin needle-like or scale-like leaves that help reduce moisture loss and allow snow to be shed easily. Climb to the top of the steps to see the smallest dwarf conifers, along with a hilltop view of the Elizabeth Hubert Malott Japanese Garden and the Great Basin.

The renovation of the Dwarf Conifer Garden was made possible by a generous gift from Georgiana Taylor, with support from the Woman's Board of the Chicago Horticultural Society.



The Crescent Garden

Bold planting ideas are front and center in the Crescent's annual beds, while hundreds of evergreen boxwood give shape to their curves. The evergreens create a mass of green "steps" flanking the eight concentric tiers, which increase in size as they slope gently down to the water's edge. Brick walkways lace through the beds, encouraging visitors to step close to the plants.

Both the Crescent and the Heritage Garden, which sits to the south, share a similar design scheme of crescent-shaped beds filled with seasonal plants. When frost claims the last of the autumn annuals, the solid trees and shrubs command attention, giving the garden a sense of permanence and form. This is when the signature weeping willows, green pillows of cloud-pruned boxwoods, and the fastigate beech trees that stand so straight are particularly evident.

Springtime in the Crescent blooms with color blocks of thousands of tulips, and fall features chrysanthemums in warm harvest tones. But for a real treat, don't miss summer in the Crescent. As the plants fill in, tumble against each other, weave throughout the beds, or send up surprising seedpods, they create a changing kaleidoscope of pattern, color, and amazement — a very special gift to Chicago Botanic Garden visitors and gardeners everywhere.

The Circle Garden

Trees, shrubs, and perennials are also part of the garden, providing an attractive backdrop to the changing display of showy annuals, and extending the beauty of the garden through winter.

A living kaleidoscope of seasonal color begins with the earliest and brightest of spring bulbs coupled with their cool-season companions and ends in a spectacular October finale, with towers of mums enhancing the hot-season annual plants.

Named for its circular boundary, this garden features a central dancing fountain with two intimate secret gardens off to each side. A central promenade invites strolling and close-up views of the cutting-edge plant combinations.



The Children's Growing Garden

It's the perfect place for children to engage with nature, with raised garden beds at just the right level for little arms to reach toward the soil.

Budding gardeners and future scientists learn by doing in the Grunsfeld Children's Growing Garden as they water, weed, and harvest plants, guided by expert instructors in the sort of hands-on learning that makes a lasting impression. On weekends during the summer, families can enjoy drop-in activities here, growing closer together as they get closer to nature.

A rain-barrel-based watering system helps keep the plants growing, and solar panels on the roof of the Tool & Potting Shed offset electrical needs. The garden is surrounded by an open-weave fence covered with different varieties of climbing plants, creating a safe, enclosed space for space for children. Leading into the garden on either side of the stone walkway are two welcoming living walls covered in different species of sedum.



The Children's Growing Garden is divided into two outdoor garden classrooms, with a combined total of six raised beds, six in-ground demonstration beds, and five display beds. Wheelchair-accessible trays in the raised beds enable students of all abilities to join in the activities. While the growing plants in the raised beds are watered and weeded, the demonstration beds (maintained by horticulturists) show young participants what their plants will look like when they are grown.

The Grunsfeld Children's Growing Garden is made possible through the generosity of Esther Grunsfeld Klatz and Ernest A. Grunsfeld III; the Robert R. McCormick Foundation; the Guild of the Chicago Botanic Garden; and the support of the Public Museum Capital Grants Program, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois State Museum; Lorraine Ipsen-Stotler; Barbara and Richard Metzler; and the Colonel Stanley R. McNeil Foundation.

The Graham Bulb Garden

The Graham Bulb Garden is the place to go anytime in spring to see thousands of tulips blooming in succession with vibrant color. Dramatic drifts of new cultivars of narcissus, tulips, ornamental onions, fritillaries, and lilies are planted to ensure a constant color show from early spring well into fall.

Gardeners will find inspiration at every turn. The container collection demonstrates how to use bulbs in new and unusual ways. Look for specimen connoisseur bulbs artfully combined with other flowering plants; diminutive bulbs planted in raised areas for easy viewing; and perennial bulbs forced indoors for early blooming.

Bulbs are underplanted with more bulbs. Flowering ground cover complements clusters of unique bulbs. An innovative double-planting technique creates the appearance of bulbs blooming over a longer period. By mixing forced bulbs with bulbs planted directly into the ground, the flower show extends weeks longer.



The Buehler Enabling Garden



This is a hands-on teaching garden that encourages gardening for people of all ages and abilities.

Colorful raised beds, dramatic container gardens, adaptive tool displays, and model exhibits illustrate gardening techniques that can be used to make gardening accessible to everyone. Many of these same ideas can be adapted in home gardens to create enabling gardens for a lifetime of easy, enjoyable gardening.

Water is used throughout the garden, in shooting fountains, cascading sheets, and cooling pools. Vertical gardens, sensory plants, and smooth brick pathways are all elements in accessible gardens.

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