

PUBLIC AND DEMONSTRATION GARDENS

Several area demonstration gardens offer the latest on new plants, trees, and growing techniques. You'll find sites that focus on fruit growing, organic gardening, and gardens as wildlife habitat, as well as techniques to manage factors such as water usage, soil enhancement and safety.



Delight in bursts of color and species in the Crystal Springs Rhododendron garden. Go north of Vancouver to collect ideas from the themed and demonstration gardens at the [Wildlife Botanical Gardens](#). Or discover smaller, tucked-away gardens such [Bishop's Close Elk Cove](#) or the [Roger Clematis Garden](#) in West Linn. And ask plenty of questions.

Whether you're a beginner, expert, or appreciator, you'll discover endless ways to enjoy gardens in metro Portland.

The following list includes descriptions and links to public and demonstration gardens by county, as well as links to volunteer information:

Clackamas County

- Clackamas Community College Demonstration Garden. [Model garden](#) to teach about issues related to low water use landscapes – soil enhancements, the right plant/right place, selection of low water use plants, mulching, maintenance, and efficient irrigation practices. Oregon City.
- Home Orchard Society Arboretum. A 1.6-acre [demonstration orchard](#) maintained by the society; showcases heirloom fruit varieties, organic orchard practices, cultural techniques, and more. Fruit growing events and information. Welcomes [volunteers](#) of all skill levels. Oregon City.
- [Roger Clematis Garden](#). Over 1600 individual clematis representing over 700 distinct species or cultivated varieties, garden contains the most comprehensive collection of clematis within a public garden in North America. [Join/Volunteer](#). Supported by [Friends of Clematis Collection](#). West Linn.
- Secret Garden Growers. [Garden within a country nursery](#). 8 acres, path to pond and creek, whispering trees. Canby.

Clark County

- Esther Short Rose Garden. [Esther Short Park](#). 5 acres feature Victorian Rose Gardens. [Volunteer for Vancouver Parks](#). Vancouver.
- Fort Vancouver Heritage Garden. [Fort Vancouver](#). Features heirloom vegetables herbs and flowers. National park with a rich cultural past. [Volunteer-In-Parks program](#).
- Wildlife Botanical Garden. [Naturescaping of Southwest Washington](#). A blend of specialty theme gardens spread over three acres. Gardens and gardeners demonstrate and teach gardening concepts that attract birds, butterflies, hummingbirds and other wildlife to residential gardens. [Volunteers](#) work on garden tasks, equipment repair, teaching, coordinating activities. Brush Prairie, WA.

Multnomah County

- Elk Rock Gardens at the [Bishop's Close](#). A hillside estate overlooking Willamette River. Magnolias and other native and non-native trees, shrubs, and plants. Gardens supported by [Friends of Elk Rock Gardens](#). Portland SW.
- Blue Lake Natural Discovery Garden. [Blue Lake Park](#). Smell the flowers, touch the leaves and feel inspired by this peaceful, playful demonstration garden. [Volunteer](#) through Metro.
- [Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden](#). An outdoor Rhododendron garden. [Volunteers](#) from [American Rhododendron Society](#), Friends of Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden, and Master Gardeners program. Care for the grounds, and work on garden education and events. Portland SE.
- [Hoyt Arboretum](#). 189 ridge-top acres in Washington Park accessible by trails. Includes 6,000 specimens from around the world, including over 2,000 species, 63 of which are vulnerable or endangered. [Friends group](#); corporate or work group [volunteers](#) work on garden crews, trail and tree maintenance, guide tours, perform research and more. Portland SW.
- International Rose Test Garden. [Washington Park Rose Garden](#) with over 7,000 rose plants of approximately 550 varieties. [Volunteer](#) for garden and non-garden tasks. Portland SW.
- [Ladd Circle Rose Gardens](#). Neighborhood rose garden. Cared for by [Friends of Ladd's Addition Gardens](#). Portland SE.
- [Lan Sue Chinese Garden](#). Tranquil botanical garden featuring rare plants native to China. Portland NW.
- [Leach Botanical Garden](#). Contains several discrete collections with a focus on the flora of Oregon. [Volunteers](#) welcome visitors, provide tours, care for plants and trails, stage events and fundraisers. Portland SE.
- [Legacy Healing Gardens](#). Stenzel Healing Garden, Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center, Legacy Emanuel Medical Center, Oregon Burn Center Garden. Guided tours and open garden events. [Volunteers](#) help with garden maintenance, clerical work and assist with events. Portland.
- Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center [Healing Garden](#). Guided tours and open garden events. [Volunteers](#) help with garden maintenance, clerical work and assisting with events. Gresham.
- [Peninsula Park Rose Garden](#). Neighborhood rose garden. Cared for by [Friends of Peninsula Park Rose Garden](#). Portland N.
- [Portland Japanese Garden](#). A 5.5-acre haven of tranquil beauty nestled in the scenic west hills. [Volunteers](#) assist with gallery exhibitions and cultural festivals. Portland SW.
- [Portland Memory Garden](#). Designed to meet the special needs of those with memory disorders and to provide respite for their caregivers. Open to public. [Friends of the Portland Memory](#) group cares for gardens. Portland SE.
- [Sauvie Island Center](#). Educates kids about food, farming and the land. [Volunteers](#): Lead small groups of school children through interactive lessons on pollination, healthy soil, planting, etc.
- [Sauvie Island Lavender Farm](#). Working farm on Sauvie Island with 800 plants of 14 varieties.
- [The Grotto](#). A place of solitude, peace and prayer. National Catholic Shrine. Botanical garden, rock cave carved into base of 110-ft cliff. [Volunteers](#) maintain pathways, shrubs, flower bed, and paved areas, help set up special events such as Festival of Lights, sell merchandise. Portland NE.
- [Tryon Life Community Farm](#). Demonstration garden focused on food production using standard organic and permaculture techniques; primarily annuals, small perennials. [Volunteer](#) work parties. Portland SE.

Washington County

- Cooper Mountain [Demonstration Garden](#). Colorful, low-maintenance, wildlife-friendly plants. [Volunteer](#) through Metro. Beaverton
- [Jenkins Estate](#). Wooded, wild natural growth areas, cultivated plants and a tamed landscape of ornamental trees, shrubs, flowers and winding gravel pathways. Rhododendron garden, perennial garden, rock gardens, primrose path, herb garden and rose pergola.
- Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center, Lewis & Floetta Ide [Healing Garden](#). [Volunteers](#) help with garden maintenance, clerical work and assisting with events. Tualatin.
- Lloyd Baron Rhododendron Garden at [Rood Bridge Park](#). Hundreds of species, hybrid rhododendrons, trees, and companion plants. Celebrates the gardener, horticulturist and the art of landscape design. [Volunteer for Hillsboro parks](#). Hillsboro.
- [Portland Community College-Rock Creek Learning Garden](#). Provides experiential education and life-long learning opportunities for PCC students, faculty, staff and community members.
- [Tualatin Hills Parks & Recreation](#). Gardening work parties at Historic Jenkins Estate and Tualatin Hills Nature Center. Pruning, weeding, propagating native plants.

Other

- [Oregon Gardens](#). Lush 80-acre botanical garden with an amphitheater, tours and a Frank Lloyd Wright house. South of Portland. [Individual and group volunteers](#) for garden work and special events.

FRIEND A PUBLIC GARDEN

Take volunteering a step further and join a group that adopts and maintains their favorite public garden. Some require that you become a member.

Gardens with friends groups include:

- [Bishop's Close Elk Rock Gardens](#)
- [Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden](#)
- [Ladd's Addition Gardens](#)
- [Peninsula Park Rose Garden](#)
- [Roger Clematis Collection](#)

Garden volunteers interested in community service may volunteer at organizations such as [Growing Gardens](#). This organization helps people grow their own food. Volunteers help build organic, raised bed vegetable gardens in back yards, front yards, side yards and balconies.

Help Us Stay Current

Please contact BOTLPORTLAND@gmail.com whenever you spot something we need to change, add or delete.