

Welcome to The Gardens at Elm Bank!

Use this guide to explore the gardens with your family.

Trial Garden

The Trial Garden is a place where we test new varieties of annuals, which are plants that grow for just a single season. Annual flowers are often brightly colored or fragrant, which helps to attract pollinators such as bees, butterflies, and birds. Some even have brightly colored leaves. With the help of pollinators, annuals produce seeds that will grow into the next generation.

Can you find a plant with colorful flowers or leaves, or a plant that is fragrant?



Weezie's Children's Garden

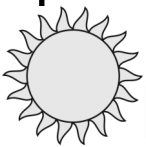
Can you find bumblebees and other pollinators in Weezie's Garden? Bees become covered in pollen as they gather edible nectar from flowers. Pollen brushes against the sticky stigma of each flower that a bee visits--we call the process **pollination**. Then a flower grows into a fruit that contains seeds, and each seed contains a baby plant. As you explore the gardens, look for busy pollinators and fruits and seeds that have already formed.



Bressingham Garden

The plants in this English-style garden come from all around the world, but they thrive here in Massachusetts. In fact, people have brought plants to new places for thousands of years! As long as they have light, water, and soil nutrients, plants can grow in new habitats that are far from their original homes. For instance, settlers arriving in America carried seeds for plants that make food, medicines, fibers, and wood.

Do you know of a plant that they introduced? What favorite plants would you bring on a long trip?



"Seed to Table" Garden

What did you eat today? Can you find its ingredients in this garden? Can you find any seeds? Are they hidden inside fruits? How do you think it helps a plant to hide its seeds in delicious fruits like squash and tomatoes? It's not just people who plant seeds! Animals often eat fruits and then carry the undigested seeds to new places where plants can grow. This is called **dispersal**.

Did You Know?

Botanists are scientists who study plants. Botanists call anything that contains seeds a fruit—including vegetables such as peas, zucchinis, pumpkins and tomatoes!



Italianate Garden & Historic Landscapes

Explore the Italianate Garden, which was designed to be like a room of the house. The trees create walls, and the straight paths are like hallways. Without care, weed seeds could be dispersed into this garden, grow, and change the landscape. Look down the hill from the garden; you will see remnants of a Temple Garden and Asian Garden—a cement platform and an old bridge. Over time, wind and animals carried seeds here, and new plants grew until the gardens were wild!

Soon Mass Hort will restore these gardens.

What do you think they will look like?



THE GARDENS
AT
ELM BANK
MASSACHUSETTS
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Historic Daffodil & Native Plant Garden of the Noanett Garden Club

This garden is full of native plants that have grown in this region for more than 400 years. Native plants provide food and habitats to animals, including insect pollinators and small rodents. In turn, these animals help the plants. For instance, when squirrels hide nuts and seeds, they sometimes **disperse** plants to new habitats where they can grow.

Look for a plant that might be food for an animal.



Goddess Garden

The statues of the goddesses Pomona, Ceres and Flora once stood atop the Mass Hort building in downtown Boston.

Can you figure out how they relate to **horticulture**, the practice of gardening? Look at what the goddesses are holding if you need a hint.



Teaching Herb Garden

Throughout history, people have used herbs many ways--as flavors, preservatives, medicines, and dyes. This garden highlights the many uses of herbs, so take time to explore the different beds. The planters near the benches hold fragrant herbs that visitors may touch and smell.

Can you find a plant that smells good?



Alan Payton Rhododendron Display Garden

Rhododendrons are evergreen shrubs that have green leaves year-round, but they only have their colorful flowers for a short time in late spring. These flowers are a welcome sight to both garden visitors and insect pollinators.

Can you see any flowers here? Flowers in this garden bloom in spring, while flowers in the Trial Garden bloom in the summer.

How do you think that this might help pollinators? Would you want to eat all of your daily meals at one time?



New England Daylily Garden

This garden contains more than 600 varieties of daylilies, one of the first flowers grown in North America just for their beauty. In fact, some of the lilies that you will find in this garden have been grown for more than 100 years.

Have you spotted a daylily near your home? Keep a look out because these are plants that your ancestors may have grown.

Can you find a daylily that you would like to grow because it's beautiful?



Keep Exploring

You have seen plants of various species and habitats, gardens of different designs, and perhaps even pollinators, flowers, fruits, and seeds. You can also find these plants and animals in your own garden, schoolyard, and neighborhood. Explore your backyard, your schoolyard, and neighborhood!

Not ready to leave? Take a walk along the Charles River on the nature trails of the Elm Bank Reservation. There is still plenty to see and explore.