

U.S. National Arboretum



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The U.S. National Arboretum is a Department of Agriculture research facility and living museum. It is dedicated to serving the public and improving our environment by developing and promoting improved landscape plants and new technologies through scientific research, educational programs, and display gardens.

The National Arboretum is a unique Federal institution linked by partnerships to many governmental agencies, the scientific community, other arboreta and botanical gardens, and private-sector groups. As a national center for public education, the Arboretum welcomes visitors to a stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment.

Fast Facts

Establishment

Established in 1927 by an Act of Congress. Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service.

Mission

To serve the public need for scientific research, education, and gardens that conserve and showcase plants to enhance the environment.

Location

Northeast Washington, DC, with entrances on New York Avenue and R Street. There are research locations in Washington, DC; Beltsville, Maryland; and McMinnville, Tennessee.

Size

446 acres with 9.5 miles of winding roadways.

Annual Visitation

Over 500,000

Budget

Federal Appropriation FY 12: ~\$12,000,000

Support Organizations

American Nursery and Landscape Association, Friends of the National Arboretum, Garden Club of America, Herb Society of America, National Bonsai Foundation, National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc., National Capital Orchid Society, National Garden Clubs, Inc., Society of American Florists, and Woman's National Farm & Garden Association.

Staff

76

Volunteers

Over 140, working in all areas of the Arboretum.

Interns

Internship positions are in horticulture, research, education, facilities management, and public garden administration and are supported by non-profit organizations, and privately donated funds.

Research

Wide-ranging basic and developmental research on trees, shrubs, turf, and floral plants. Development of new technologies for the floral and nursery industries. Development of plants with superior characteristics through a program of testing and genetic improvement. Taxonomy and nomenclature of ornamental plants and their wild relatives. Collection and preservation of plant germplasm with ornamental potential.

Programs

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| Gardens | Single-genus groupings include: azalea, boxwood, daffodil, daylily, dogwood, holly, magnolia, and maple. Major garden features include: aquatic plants, the Asian Collections, the Fern Valley Native Plant Collections, the Flowering Tree Collection, the Flowering Tree Walk, the Friendship Garden, the Gotelli Dwarf and Slow-Growing Conifer Collection, the Introduction Garden, the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, the National Capitol Columns, the National Grove of State Trees, and the National Herb Garden. |
| Education | Public education programs, including symposia, lectures, workshops, and demonstrations; plant, flower, and art exhibitions; interpretive brochures and signs; group tours; public relations. |
| Publications | Over 150 scientific articles in professional and trade journals in the last 3 years. Various program aids for visitors. Eight publications in the National Arboretum Contribution series. |
| Plant Introductions | 678 official plant releases. Eight patents and two EPA biopesticide registrations. |
| Cooperative Programs | Alfred State University, Auburn University, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Cornell University, Danforth Plant Science Center, Iowa State University, Michigan State University, National Turfgrass Federation, North Carolina State University, Oklahoma State University, Oregon State University, Rutgers University, Tennessee State University, University of Arizona, University of California, University of Connecticut, University of Florida, University of Georgia, University of Maryland, University of Minnesota, University of Missouri, University of Tennessee, University of Utah, University of Wisconsin, USDA Forest Service, US Golf Association, Washington State University. |
| International Cooperative Programs | Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, People's Republic of China, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, and Ukraine. |
| Herbarium | Permanent reference collection of over 650,000 specimens of dried pressed plants for scientific studies in agriculture, horticulture, botany, medicine, and other related fields. Contains plants from around the world, with a special emphasis on cultivated plants. Especially well represented groups include azaleas (<i>Rhododendron</i>), cherries (<i>Prunus</i>), daffodils (<i>Narcissus</i>), daylilies (<i>Hemerocallis</i>), hollies (<i>Ilex</i>), oaks (<i>Quercus</i>), viburnums (<i>Viburnum</i>), and willows (<i>Salix</i>). |
| Library | Over 11,000 books and 100 journals emphasizing ornamental horticulture, botany, plant taxonomy, plant exploration and natural history, with special collections on bonsai, penjing, ikebana, viewing stones and related arts. Affiliated with the National Agricultural Library. |

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