

TEACHING HERB GARDEN

The NEU's Teaching Herb Garden was designed by Marie Stella Byrnes, noted landscape historian. As of the end of June 2004, the construction phase of the garden was complete. A beautiful circular bench surrounds the Ginkgo tree, the focal point of our garden. The garden is divided into theme beds, which radiate from the center and include: fragrance, dye, culinary, salvia, Native American, medicinal, edible plants and flowers, and a colonial theme garden. Along one side, a rectangular bed is planted with sweet violets and groundcover plants. On the opposite side of the garden, we feature the Herb of the Year. In 2007, Lemon Balm is the 'Herb of the Year.' We have included other lemon scented herbs and ornamental varieties. Another bed features an Ecumenical Garden planted with herbs associated with different religions throughout the world.

We welcome you to visit our garden. It is maintained by members of the New England Unit of The Herb Society of America at Elm Bank in Wellesley, MA. We are a 501(c)(3) educational organization whose members are dedicated to the "*use and delight*" of herbs.

Our Purpose

The Herb Society of America was founded for the purpose of furthering the knowledge and use of herbs, and for contributing the results of the experience and research of its members to the records of horticulture, science, literature, history, the arts and economics.

Visit Us

The New England Unit
cultivates a Teaching Herb Garden
at Elm Bank in
Wellesley, Massachusetts

Contact Us

The New England Unit, Inc. of
The Herb Society of America, Inc.
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Hanson, MA 02341

Please log on to the New England
Unit's website: www.neuhsa.org
for more information about
the herbs in this garden.

The New England Unit of The Herb Society of America

Guide to the Teaching Herb Garden



HERBS...

"FOR USE AND FOR DELIGHT"

JOHN PARKINSON

The Teaching Herb Garden

Please visit our website at www.neuhsa.org for more information about the herbs listed.

1. Fragrance

Scented Geraniums
Lemon Verbena
Southernwood
Rosemary
Lavender

2. Colonial

Calendula
Borage
Skirret
Tansy

3. Edibles

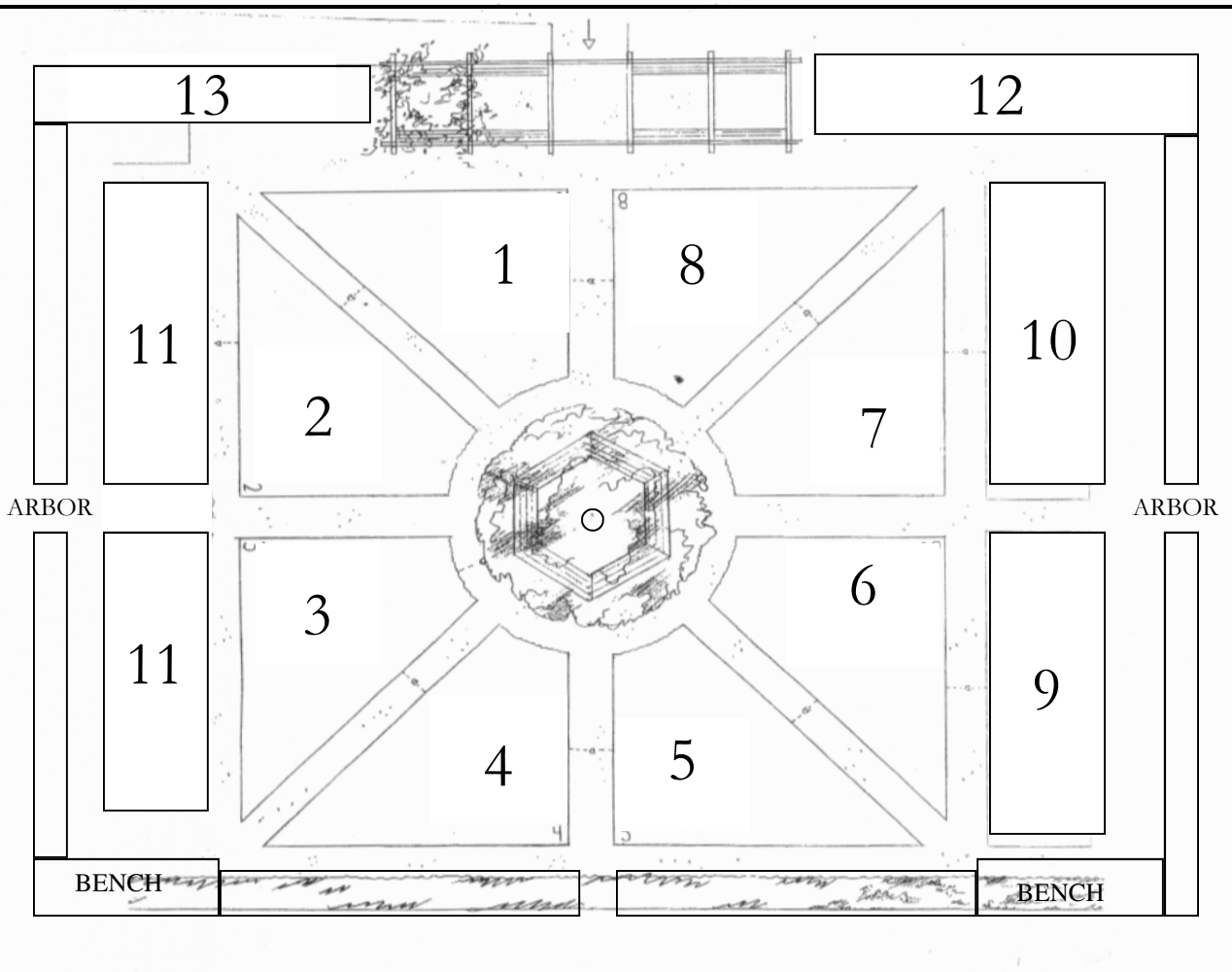
Signet Gem Marigolds
Evening Primrose
Nasturtiums
Dandelions
Violets

4. Medicinal

St. John's Wort
Feverfew
Foxglove
Valerian
Yarrow

5. Native American

Common Sweet Shrub
Joe Pye Weed
Sweet Fern
Bloodroot
Horsetail



Bench Planters

Chamomile
Marigolds
Verbena
Salvia

13. Rose Border

Blanc Double de Coubert
Therese Bugnet
Bella Donna
Kazanlik
Hansa

12. Perennial Border

Plume Poppy
Beauty Berry
Curly Onion
Catmint
Rue

11. Ground Covers

Viola 'Sweet Elegance'
Golden Creeping Jenny
Red Creeping Thyme
Birds-eye Speedwell
Pink Sweet Violet

10. Herb of the Year

2005 - Oregano
2006 - Pelargonium
2007 - Lemon Balm
2008 - Calendula
2009 - Bay Laurel
2010 - Dill

6. Salvia

Rose Queen Meadow Sage
Turkestan Clary Sage
Fruit-scented Sage
Broad-leaf Sage
Purple Sage

7. Culinary

Oregano
Parsley
Thyme
Basil
Sage

8. Dye

Golden Marguerite
Lady's Bedstraw
Dyer's Broom
Dyer's Woad
Agrimony

9. Ecumenical

Grape
Date
Lotus
Basil
Fig

#1 FRAGRANCE GARDEN



There is a long history of herbs being used for their fragrance. In past centuries fragrance was considered invaluable in maintaining good health. It was felt that bad odors were the cause of sickness and, of course, bathing was rare. Fragrant herbs when processed chased away or masked bad smells, and therefore disease. They were also used to repel moths and other insects. Frequently herbs such as basil, lemon balm, and lavender were used. Today fragrant herbs are still valued for their pungent and varied scents. They are used often for creative crafts and are an important addition to any herb garden.

#2 COLONIAL GARDEN

This garden contains many herbs brought to the New World by the colonists who brought plants they would need for their survival; herbs used for food, medicine, and house-keeping. Some are familiar and still popular, such as chamomile, sage, and calendula. Others, such as mullein, are considered to be weeds. Over time many of the colonial heirloom herbs lost their general usefulness and today are found only in the wild.



#3 EDIBLES

Edible plants have an illustrious history, paralleling the development of the human species. Today we have highly bred and specialized food plants, but many of their forebears and relatives are very much present in our yards, gardens, and fields. Many herbs have one or more edible parts, and many plants that are considered “weeds” are actually escaped food plants or were always sought in their wild state for food. It is fun and useful to know that many common plants can be eaten, either to pep up a salad, inspire an interesting dish, or to nibble on a walk. Dandelions, nasturtiums, and lamb’s quarters all have good nutrition and good taste.



#4 MEDICINAL BED

The medicinal bed showcases many medicinal herbs, some with a long history of traditional use and some currently in the news. Through centuries of trial and error, humankind discovered which plants reduce fever, slow bleeding, regulate the heart, improve liver function, relieve pain, and more. Our medicine is still very dependent on plant sources as is shown by the fact that even today more than forty percent of prescription drugs are plant-based. Plants such as peppermint, foxglove, and St. John’s wort still yield valuable medicinal compounds in today’s pharmaceutical industry. This bed shows how medicinal plants grow, as well as highlighting the importance of genetic diversity as a continuing source of new drugs and medicines. As is true with many common garden plants, some of these herbs are poisonous if eaten. The NEU-HSA does not endorse the home use of these plants, they are here for educational purposes only.

#5 NATIVE AMERICAN GARDEN

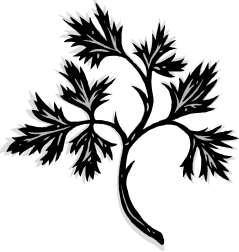


This garden is comprised of plants native to North and South America. Many of these plants were used by Native Americans for food, medicine, household maintenance, and other purposes. Several interesting plants to note: bloodroot rhizomes were used as face paint and to dye fibers. The leaves of sweet fern were used to cure stomach cramps, and horsetail stems were used for scouring pots. Many more plants featured here were introduced into western medicine and horticulture.

#6 SALVIA COLLECTION

Salvias are members of the mint family and have been grown for centuries for their culinary, medicinal, aromatic and ornamental properties. There are over 900 known species of salvia found world wide with half of them originating in the Americas. The most commonly grown salvia is the garden sage, *Salvia officinalis*, imported from the Dalmatian coast of Croatia. *Salvia sclarea*, once used as medicinal plant to treat eye disorders, is used in the making of perfumes. The fruit salvias are used as culinary herbs and potpourri. Pineapple sage, *Salvia elegans*, and fruit-scented sage, *Salvia dorisiana*, are both annuals in our zone. Painted sage, also known as annual clary sage, *Salvia viridis*, is a decorative annual that attracts hummingbirds and butterflies.

#7 CULINARY GARDEN



Culinary herbs are used for flavoring and preserving food all over the world. Basil, parsley, rosemary, and thyme are just four herbs featured in this bed. As with many traditional herbs, they originated in Europe and Asia and were brought to the New World by the European settlers and other immigrants. There are different varieties of the same herbs in the garden, which represent cultural and climatic differences that necessitated the development of new cultivars. For example, there are four different varieties of basil in the garden: 'African Blue,' 'Spicy Globe,' 'Lemon,' and 'Genovese.' Each has a slightly different flavor and somewhat different appearance, as well as originating in different areas.

#8 DYE GARDEN

The plants in the dye garden produce a rainbow of colors on wool, cotton, silk, and other fibers. In general, vegetable dyes give soft subtle colors, though some can be very strong. The actual dye color given by a plant can vary according to the particular growing season, fertility of the soil, part of plant used, and time of harvest. Some plants of interest: Dyer's chamomile yields a yellow dye from its flowers. The leaves of dyer's woad yield a blue dye. Madder roots yield a red dye. Some other plants are included in this garden because they are or were used for preparing fiber or fabric at various stages of production.

#9 ECUMENICAL GARDEN

The plants included in this garden have religious or symbolic importance in the five major religions, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. The date, *Phoenix dactylifera*, the fig, *Ficus carica*, the grape, *Vitis* species are common plants in the Bible and Koran, while the lotus, *Nelumbo* species is familiar to Buddhism, and basil, *Ocimum sanctum*, to Hindu. Each plant will be identified by common name, botanic name and a reference. For example: Date, *Phoenix dactylifera*, Psalms: 92: 12-14, refers to the passage: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree..." Some of the plants are not hardy and will be wintered over in greenhouses, others are annuals, and some hardy species of plants have been substituted for the subtropical species.

#10 HERB OF THE YEAR

This garden is devoted to the current 'Herb of the Year.' There is a different one each year designated by the International Herb Association. In 2004 it was Alliums; 2005 oregano; 2006 Pelargonium; the 2007 'Herb of the Year' is Lemon Balm; in 2008 it will be Calendula; 2009 Bay Laurel; 2010 Dill. Sometimes this garden includes previews of next year's 'Herb of the Year' or leftover plants from previous years.

#11 GROUND COVERS

The Violet collection and herbal ground covers are found in this garden. Thyme and sweet violets are featured. Both require sun and sweet, slightly alkaline soil, but then they differ. The thyme is planted in a fast-draining soil while the sweet violets are in a moisture-retentive soil. Other ground covers in this garden further demonstrate the versatile uses of herbs.

#12 PERENNIAL BORDER

The perennial garden demonstrates the limitless design possibilities using herbs in combination with garden perennials. Interestingly, many of our commonly used herbs are also very ornamental and therefore can contribute to a beautiful garden design. This garden will change over the years as we explore new plants and design possibilities. The blending of color, texture, leaf, and flower shapes are what one notices in this garden. For instance, the hollyhock 'Nigra,' with its nearly black blossoms, is a beautiful surprise, and golden feverfew with its bright chartreuse foliage is fabulous against rich purples, blues, deep pinks, burgundies, and blue-gray leaved plants.

#13 ROSE BORDER

The harsh winter of 2004 caused the majority of our roses to be lost. The rose garden has recently been replanted with old, fragrant, long-blooming roses. One of the remaining roses is a *rugosa*, 'Therese Bugnet.' Roses have long been valued for their aromatic qualities, for use in perfume, and in skin preparations. The flowers, made into rose-water, are used as a food flavoring. The under planting is of lavender, 'Hidcote' and 'Munstead.'

BENCH PLANTERS

The herbs in the bench planters create a blooming 'gateway' into the herb garden. A long-blooming annual sage, *Salvia officinalis* 'Alba,' forms the main theme. German chamomile and feverfew, traditional household herbs, provide a pleasing contrast with their white blossoms. Bright, ground-hugging verbenas add zest. The plants have been chosen for their tolerance for part shade and adaptability to container gardening.