The Botanic Garden of Smith College

Lyman Plant House
16 College Lane
Northampton, MA 01063

(413) 585-2742
garden@smith.edu
https://garden.smith.edu

Educators’ Guide
Visit & Tour Information

General Hours and Fees
- Lyman Conservatory—open weekdays, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM.
- Conservatory hours change during our spring and fall flower shows.
- Campus arboretum and gardens: Open daily year-round
- Admission is free, but donations are always appreciated.

Self-Guided Visits and Guided Tour Reservations
- Reservations are required for all groups of ten or more.
- **Self-Guided Visits** require **at least two weeks advance booking**.
- **Guided Tours** require **at least four weeks advance booking**.
- Please use our online form: [https://go.oncehub.com/BGGroupVisits](https://go.oncehub.com/BGGroupVisits), email: garden@smith.edu or call (413) 585-2742, M–F between 8:30 am and 3:30 pm.

*All requests are processed during regular business hours and are handled on a first come first served basis.*

Tour /Visit Times
- Conservatory tours/visits last about an hour, start at 9:30 am and end at 3:30 pm.
- April to June, September and October are the busiest times for tours. Book early!

We do NOT offer guided tours during the following events:
- Smith College commencement and reunion in mid-May
- Fall Chrysanthemum Show — beginning of November*
- Spring Bulb Show — beginning of March*

*Groups of ten or more must call two weeks ahead to visit (no tour) during the Bulb and Chrysanthemum shows.*

Group Size
- Groups larger than 40 must plan on splitting the group and sending half to another location, and then switching.
- The Smith College Museum of Art also offers tours for school groups. **PLEASE NOTE:** you must us the Museum’s booking form: [https://go.oncehub.com/SCMATourGroups](https://go.oncehub.com/SCMATourGroups)
Chaperones
In accordance with child safety guidelines, minors must be supervised at all times. Please have adequate staff and chaperones.

For K-12 age groups, we require:
• At least, 1 adult for every 10 students

The Botanic Garden is a living museum for plants. We hope your group enjoys its visit and learns something new about the plant world.

Botanic Garden Safety Info
• Do not touch the plants in the conservatory or outside gardens unless invited to do so by a tour guide or staff member.
• Do not run in the greenhouses. Floors may be wet and slippery and there may be hoses or other materials across walkways.
• There may be bees in the greenhouses.
• Stay on paths/walkways in greenhouses and outside gardens
• Climbing trees on campus is prohibited
• Anyone with respiratory or heart problems should know that some greenhouses can be very warm and humid.

*We cannot supply any medications or first aid.*

Bus Subsidies
• Provided by The Friends of the Botanic Garden to groups scheduling guided tours.
• We will cover costs up to $200 per bus, per trip.
• Funds are limited and granted on a first come, first served basis.
• It is up to you to arrange transportation for your group.
• Payment is issued after the tour occurs and we receive all paperwork including an official invoice.
• Bus subsidy instructions and forms are online at: https://garden.smith.edu/visit/group-visits-and-guided-tours/k-12-groups

Confirmation
Once your tour or self-guided visit is approved, you will receive an email confirmation. Please review this for any errors or omissions and email garden@smith.edu
If you must cancel, please notify us as soon as possible.

Accessibility
• There is a handicapped parking space in front of the building and two accessible entrances.
• The restrooms and all but one of the greenhouses are wheelchair accessible.
Lunch
- Bringing lunch? Let us know so we can reserve an indoor space in the event of bad weather. Otherwise groups may eat on the campus lawns, please take your trash with you.
- Planning to eat at the Café? Contact the Campus Center at 413-585-2323 at least a week ahead to be sure they can accommodate your group.

Parking
- Allow 15-20 minutes for parking.
- There is no parking on College Lane.
- Buses or large vans may park temporarily in front of Lyman Plant House to discharge passengers.
- **Long term parking for buses** is at the stables parking lot
- There are two visitor parking spots in front of the Lyman Plant House, plus one handicapped parking space. Other parking is available on Elm Street, the Smith parking garage on West Street visitor spaces and the metered municipal lot behind the Forbes Library.
- **Campus parking**
  - Campus lots are only available for public use on weekends and weekdays after 5 pm.

Church Exhibition Gallery
To learn about the current exhibit, call ahead or visit our website — [https://garden.smith.edu](https://garden.smith.edu) — Don’t miss our permanent exhibits, *Woods of the World*, on the walls and ceiling of the north hallway and the *Plant Evolution Mural* in the Palm House corridor.

Directions From I-91
**From the south**, take the first Northampton exit (#25). At the end of the exit ramp turn left onto Route 5 and follow into Northampton to Route 9 (Main Street). Turn left and follow to College Lane (across from Helen Hills Hills Chapel), left onto College Lane and the Botanic Garden’s Lyman Plant House will be on your left across from Paradise Pond. NOTE: there is no parking along College Lane.
**From the north**, take Exit 26 and go straight on King Street to Route 9 (Main Street — the Hotel Northampton will be on your right). Take a right onto Main Street and follow directions above.
MISSION
The Botanic Garden of Smith College fosters environmental and social justice through teaching and learning about plants, people, and place.

WE DO THIS BY
Curating plant collections that help us tell stories about plant and human diversity

Training students to be informed and impactful change agents

Preparing educators to develop effective, interdisciplinary, learner-centered experiences

Welcoming visitors to explore, learn, and contribute their knowledge

Cultivating spaces and landscapes that stimulate thought, foster well-being, and facilitate collaboration

Visit Our Website

https://garden.smith.edu/

Find out more about the Botanic Garden of Smith College and our current exhibitions.

We guarantee you will learn something new!
Lyman Conservatory Highlights

Conservatory Collection
Dating from 1895 there are 12,000 square feet under glass with approximately 3200 different plants. Two special shows are featured annually: The Spring Bulb Show, begins the first Saturday in March and the Fall Chrysanthemum Show, begins the first Saturday in November. Both shows run for two weeks including the third weekend.

Succulent House
The plant collection here represents flora from deserts and other arid regions of the world. Here students can examine the adaptations that these plants have made to survive in their harsh environments. Don’t miss the living stones!

Palm House
Step into this room and you’ll feel like you’re in the jungle! Tropical plants fill this room with life. Look for the large cone-bearing cycad. Be sure to notice the plants whose products students may be familiar with, such as bamboo, coffee, cacao, banana, cinnamon, and rubber.

Cool Temperate House
Plants here can’t survive outside in freezing weather but they don’t need a tropical climate either. This greenhouse is divided into four sections: Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Australia. Economic plants include coffee, tea, olives, eucalyptus, and the rice paper plant.

Warm Temperate House
The plants in this greenhouse mostly come from tropical and subtropical climates where winters don’t exist or are very mild. Look for the sensitive plant, which will fold its leaves when it is touched gently. You can also see insectivorous plants, such as the pitcher plant, as well as many common houseplants.

Stove House
The Stove House is home to our collection of orchids, bromeliads, and aquatic plants. Notice the vanilla orchid, where we get vanilla beans, and the pineapple bromeliad. You may even see a frog hopping through the pool!

Don’t miss the Fern House and the fragrant plants in Show House!
Campus Gardens & Arboretum

Campus Arboretum:
Features over 1100 woody trees and shrubs spread throughout the campus. Look for the 100+ year old ginkgo tree near the Conservatory.

Systematics Garden:
The garden was originally laid out in 1894. Redesigned in 2014, it contains angiosperms (flowering plants) laid out in a visual representation of a phylogenetic tree. Twelve families are represented.

Rock Garden:
Established in 1897, it contains over 1600 alpine taxa, including some threatened and endangered plants. Modeled on the Rock Garden at Kew in London, it exhibits outcrop, moraine, and scree rock formations of alpine habitats.

Ruth Brown Richardson 1913, Perennial Border:
Planted in 1984 for purely ornamental purposes, along the fence bordering College Lane. Colorful annuals are planted along the road.

“Happy” Chace ’28 Garden:
Surrounds the 1920s president’s residence and offers views of Paradise Pond and Mount Tom.

Wildflower and Woodland Garden:
Situated along the ravine behind the President’s House.

Japanese Garden for Reflection and Contemplation:
This garden incorporates elements of traditional Japanese design in the context of a New England setting. It is designed for harmony with nature, to serve as a retreat from a busy life. Locally collected rocks are arranged in seven formations representing events in the Buddha’s life. Stone features include a rustic bench, lanterns, and a statue of Jizo, protector of children and lost travelers. A stepping stone path provides views of the garden, Paradise Pond, and Mt. Tom.

Capen Garden:
Across Elm Street on other side of campus, used as an outdoor laboratory for horticulture students and as a quiet garden space. It is designed as a series of outdoor garden rooms and includes formal knot garden, bulb displays, a rose arbor, gazebo garden, and more.
The Botanic Garden of Smith College was founded over one hundred years ago by L. Clark Seelye, the College’s first president, who expressed his hope that the whole campus could be developed as a botanic garden so that it might be of scientific as well as aesthetic value. The landscape architecture firm of Frederick Law Olmsted, of Central Park fame, was enlisted to create that plan.

The spirit of this concept has persisted at Smith College since that time and remains basic to our purpose of education, research, display, and conservation. Today the Botanic Garden serves as a living museum of plants native to New England and areas all around the globe. The Garden encompasses the Lyman Plant House & Conservatory and the 125 contiguous acre college campus with a variety of specialty gardens, which contain over 7000 labeled and mapped plants.