

Founding Era Gardens

Longwood Gardens

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Welcome

- Our cover photo is an idealized and sanitized representation provided by artificial intelligence, but there is some truth:
- Picket fences or hedges were used to keep livestock out.
- Flowers, herbs, and vegetables were grown together in square or rectangular beds, usually with dirt or gravel paths, immediately adjacent to the home.
- Bee skeps (hives - on the left).
- Gazebos, scented arbors, and sundials for those who could afford ornamental elements.
- Not pictured: 1) fruit trees, mostly for cider production, 2) enslaved gardeners and tradesmen, and 3) subsistence gardens (most of the population focused on growing necessities).





Introduction to Period Gardens

- A garden design “period” is a lot like an art movement or music genre.
- Periods can overlap, disappear and return to favor, and evolve into new genres (e.g. the Colonial Revival Movement, Cottage Gardens as a precursor to Arts and Crafts planting).
- Periods tend to bounce between formal design and informal design, native and foreign influences, manicured and wild, minimal and maximal density.
- Period gardens are an excellent and immersive teaching tool.



Key Elements of Early American Garden Design – Pleasure Ground (Mount Vernon)

1. Serpentine grass or gravel paths for walking or perhaps horseback, with extensive lawn areas.
2. A perimeter of shade trees, as well as naturalistic groupings of small flowering trees and shrubs.
3. Flowers, frequently fragrant species, sometimes in formal arrangements, resembling a physic garden.
4. Boxwood or herbal edging.
5. Paths may also extend into adjacent woodland.
6. Barriers to livestock.

Key Elements of Early American Garden Design – Kitchen Garden (Mount Vernon)

- Fenced, walled, or hedged-in to keep animals away from produce, a ha-ha was another mechanism to keep livestock out of food and ornamental gardens.
- Mostly row crops in square or rectangular beds.
- Support structures for peas, beans, squash.
- Herbs, flowers, and vegetables in the same garden.
- Dirt or grass paths.
- Fruit trees for cider (apples and pears), berry patches, well-off families might also have asparagus beds and other more premium produce.
- 90+% of the gardens would have been utilitarian.





Early American Orchards (Monticello): a grid on a south facing hillside restored in the 1980s, includes: wine grapes; berry squares of figs, currants, raspberries and gooseberries; apples, plums, pears, peaches, and cherries

Capturing the Spirit of Early American Gardens

- Containers, Borders, and Beds: flowers, herbs, or vegetables.
- Trees and shrubs: species and early cultivars (native and non-native). Fruit trees were especially favored.
- Garden furnishings: reproductions or antiques.
- Paths and fencing: grass, gravel and brick, generally picket fencing.
- Resource - American Home Landscapes: A Design Guide to Creating Period Style Gardens, Adams and Burchfield (2013)



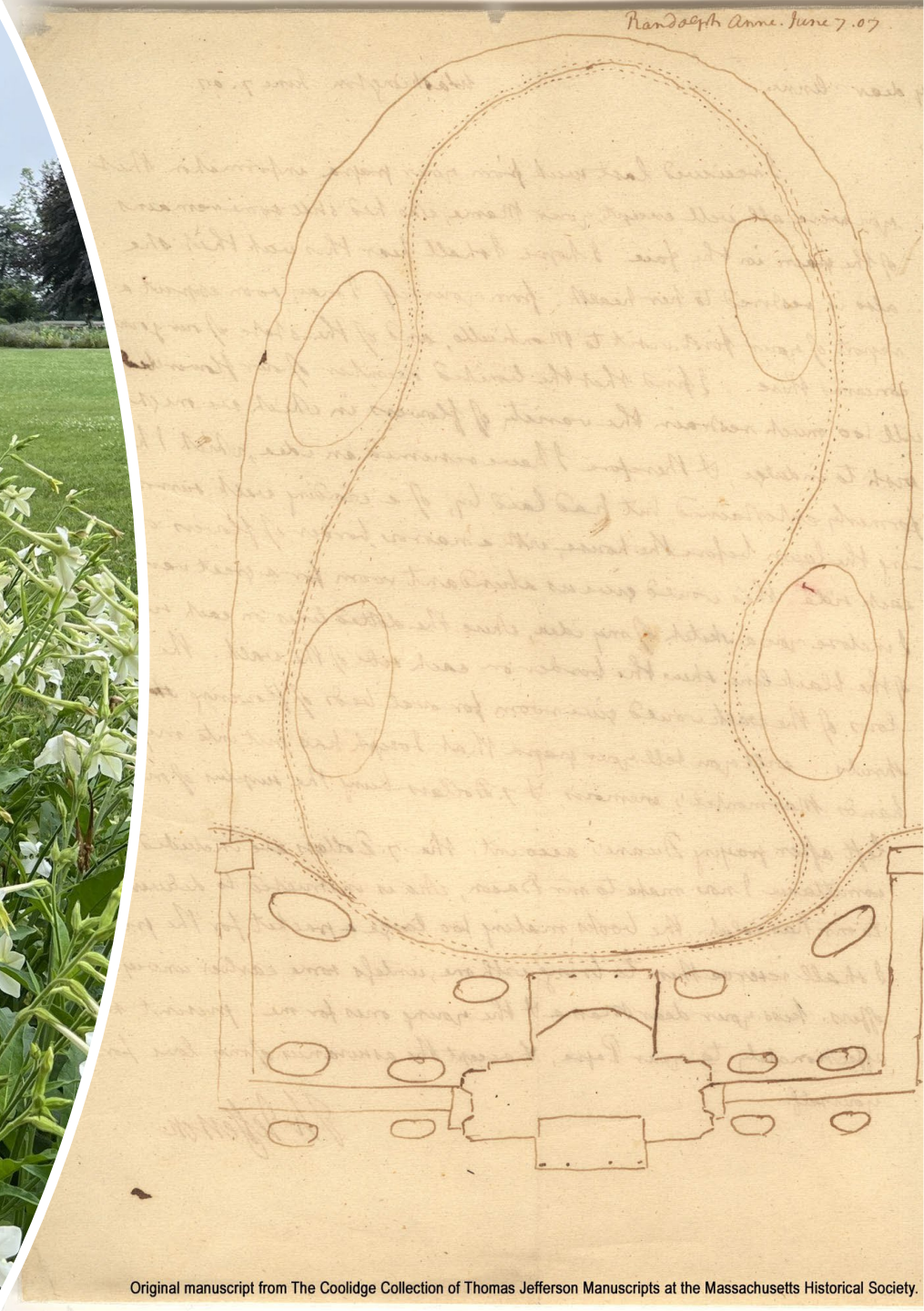
Ornamental Flower Bloom Cycle

Illustrated by the Monticello West
Lawn Winding Flower Walk plant
palette (Zone 7B)



Jefferson's Flower Walk(s)

- This 1807 map shows four large beds adjacent to the winding oval walk, and eight smaller beds adjacent to the service wings, which also functioned as boardwalks (lower left and lower right).
- Two medium beds are shared by the walk and the “boardwalk” and two are near the west lawn entrance to the house (lower center).
- In Bloom at Monticello: www.monticello.org/in-bloom (whole property or 13 cultivated spaces)



January and February

- Narcissus - Daffodils and Jonquils (Europe and North Africa)
- **Crocus tommasinianus – Snow Crocus (Bulgaria, Hungary and Former Yugoslavia)**



March

- *Paeonia officinalis* – European Peony (southern Europe)
- *Pulmonaria officinalis* – Lungwort (central Europe, western Asia)
- ***Magnolia x soulangeana* – Saucer Magnolia (French hybrid of Asian species)**
- *Acer saccharum* – Sugar Maple (eastern North America)
- Tulips (central Asia)
- Tulipa 'Keizerskroon' (red and yellow striped) (Netherlands hybrid)





April

- *Centaurea cyanus* – Bachelor Buttons (Eastern Mediterranean and Europe)
- *Melia azedarach* – Chinaberry (India, China, Himalayas and northern Australia)
- ***Fritillaria imperialis* – Crown Imperial (Western Asia and Middle East)**
- *Chionanthus virginicus* – Fringetree (Southeastern and South-Central United States)
- *Rhododendron periclymenoides* – Honeysuckle azalea (Massachusetts to Georgia)
- *Halesia carolina* – Silverbell (Southeastern US – Appalachians and Piedmont)
- *Cheiranthus cheiri* – wallflower (Greece and Aegean Islands)

May

- **Gaillardia aristata – Blanket Flower (Rocky Mountains, collected by Lewis and Clark)**
- *Iberis umbellata* – Candytuft (Southern Europe)
- *Rosa noisettiana* ‘Champney’s Pink Cluster Rose’ (Charleston, SC hybrid of Asian and Middle Eastern species)
- *Nicotiana alata* – Flowering Tobacco (South America – Brazil to Argentina)
- *Amaranthus tricolor* – Joseph’s Coat (tropical Asia – China, India, Japan)
- *Reseda odorata* – Mignonette (North Africa and Egypt)
- *Tradescantia virginiana* – Spiderwort (Eastern Canada to Cuba)



June

- Rudbeckia hirta – Black-eyed Susan (central North America)
- **Baptisia australis – Blue False Indigo (central and eastern North America)**
- Celosia cristata – Cockscomb (Africa, India and Americas)
- Nigella damascena – Love in a Mist (Mediterranean region)
- Argemone mexicana – Prickly Poppy (Mexico and Southwestern US)
- Lychnis coronaria – Rose Campion (Mediterranean region)



July

- *Iris domestica* – Blackberry Lily (eastern Asia, Himalayas to Japan)
- *Lobelia cardinalis* – Cardinal Flower (Canada to Columbia)
- *Mirabilis jalapa* – Four O’Clock, Marvel of Peru (Mexico to Chile)
- *Lantana camara* – Lantana (Central America, South America, Caribbean)
- ***Hibiscus moscheutos* – Rose Mallow (Ontario to Florida to New Mexico)**
- *Helichrysum bracteatum* – Strawflower (Australia)
- *Glaucium flavum* – Yellow-horned Poppy (Mediterranean)



August

- *Momordica balsamina* – Balsam Apple (tropical and sub-tropical Africa)
- ***Lobelia siphilitica* – Blue Lobelia (eastern and central North America)**
- *Callistephus chinensis* – China Aster (China, Korea, East Asia)
- *Amaranthus caudatus* – Love-Lies-Bleeding (Andean region of South America)
- *Mimosa pudica* – Sensitive Plant (tropical regions of Central and South America)
- *Polyanthus tuberosa* – Tuberose (western and northwestern Mexican mountain valleys)



September

- *Colchicum autumnale* – Autumn Crocus (Ireland to Ukraine to Mediterranean)
- *Thunbergia alata* – Black-eyed Susan Vine (eastern Africa, Kenya and Uganda)
- *Malva sylvestris* – French Mallow Europe, North Africa, southwestern Asia)
- *Echinacea angustifolia* – Narrow-leaved Coneflower (central North America – Texas to Alberta)
- ***Symphyotrichum nova-angliae* – New England Aster (central and eastern North America)**
- *Pentapetes phoenicia* – Scarlet Pentapetes (India to Philippines to Northern Australia)



October and November

- *Ipomoea quamoclit* – Cypress Vine (Mexico to northern South America)
- *Lavandula angustifolia* – English Lavender (Mediterranean)
- *Ageratum houstonianum* – Floss Flower (Mexico and Central America)
- ***Zinnia peruviana* – Peruvian Zinnia (Andes Jewel – Modern Cultivar) (Southwestern US to Argentina)**
- *Persicaria orientalis* – Prince's Feather (Asia from Japan to Uzbekistan)
- *Cleome hasslerana* - Spider Flower (tropical and sub-tropical South America)



Some 18th Century Herbs

- ***Tropaeolum majus* 'Alaska'** modern cultivar (**Nasturtium**)
- *Sanguisorba minor* (Salad Burnet) (fragrant)
- *Lavender angustifolia* (fragrant)
- *Satureja hortensis* (Summer Savory)
- *Borago officinalis* (Borage)
- *Melissa officinalis* (Lemon Balm)



Our 18th Century Plants

- *Borago officinalis* (Borage)
- *Hedera helix* 'Glacier' (English Ivy)
- *Lobelia cardinalis* (Cardinal Flower)
- *Lobelia siphilitica* (Blue Cardinal Flower)
- *Melissa officinalis* (Lemon Balm)
- *Rudbeckia laciniata* 'Autumn Sun' (Cutleaf Coneflower)
- Drawn from Plants of Colonial Williamsburg, bullet points from Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder





Borago officinalis (Borage), 1600s

- Type: Annual
- Family: Boraginaceae
- Native Range: Europe
- Zone: 2 to 11
- Height: 1.00 to 3.00 feet
- Spread: 0.75 to 1.50 feet
- Bloom Time: June to August
- Bloom Description: Blue
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Dry to medium
- Maintenance: Low
- Suggested Use: Annual, Herb
- Flower: Showy
- Tolerate: Deer, Drought



Hedera helix 'Glacier' (English Ivy) early 1700s

- Type: Vine
 - Family: Araliaceae
 - Zone: 4 to 9
 - Height: 20.00 to 80.00 feet
 - Spread: 3.00 to 50.00 feet
 - Bloom Time: September to October
 - Bloom Description: Greenish-white
 - Sun: Part shade to full shade
 - Water: Medium
 - Maintenance: Low
 - Suggested Use: Ground Cover, Naturalize
 - Flower: Insignificant
 - Leaf: Colorful, Evergreen
 - Other: Winter Interest
 - Tolerate: Drought, Heavy Shade
 - Potentially Invasive
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Lobelia cardinalis (Cardinal Flower) 1783, Bartram



- Type: Herbaceous perennial
- Family: Campanulaceae
- Native Range: Americas
- Zone: 3 to 9
- Height: 2.00 to 4.00 feet
- Spread: 1.00 to 2.00 feet
- Bloom Time: July to September
- Bloom Description: Scarlet red, white or rose
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Medium to wet
- Maintenance: Low
- Suggested Use: Naturalize, Rain Garden
- Flower: Showy
- Attracts: Hummingbirds, Butterflies
- Tolerate: Rabbit, Deer, Wet Soil

Lobelia
siphilitica
(Blue Cardinal
Flower)
1783,
Bartram

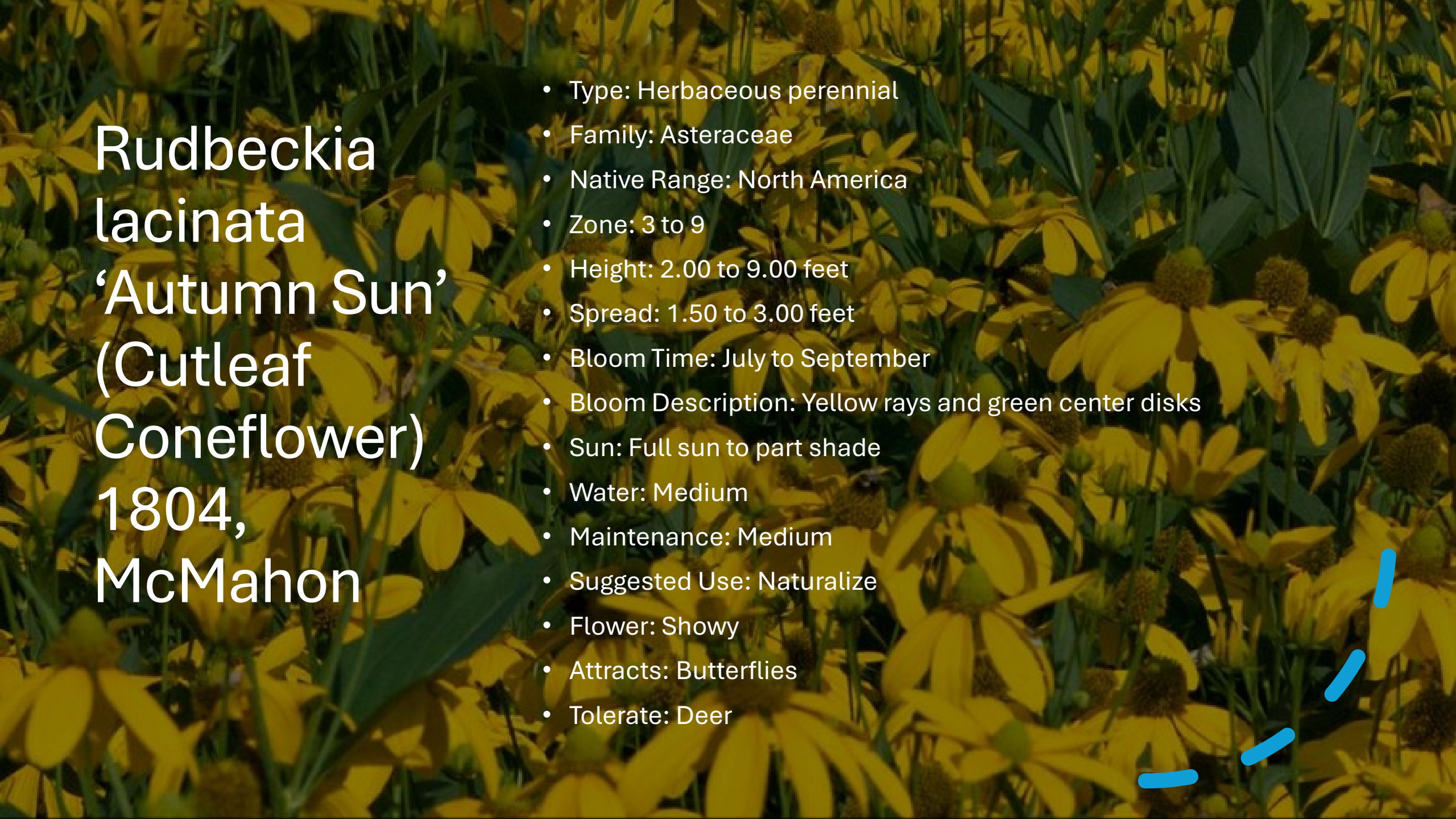


- Type: Herbaceous perennial
- Family: Campanulaceae
- Native Range: Eastern North America
- Zone: 4 to 9
- Height: 2.00 to 3.00 feet
- Spread: 1.00 to 1.50 feet
- Bloom Time: July to September
- Bloom Description: Blue
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Medium to wet
- Maintenance: Low
- Suggested Use: Naturalize, Rain Garden
- Flower: Showy
- Tolerate: Deer, Heavy Shade, Wet Soil

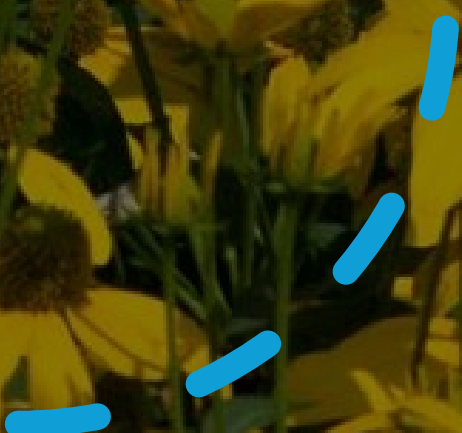


Melissa officinalis (Lemon Balm) in UK before 1590s, grown by Jefferson

- Type: Herbaceous perennial
- Family: Lamiaceae
- Native Range: Southern Europe
- Zone: 3 to 7
- Height: 1.50 to 2.00 feet
- Spread: 1.50 to 3.00 feet
- Bloom Time: June to August
- Bloom Description: White to pale yellow
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Dry to medium
- Maintenance: Low
- Suggested Use: Ground Cover, Herb, Naturalize
- Flower: Showy
- Leaf: Fragrant
- Tolerate: Deer

The background of the slide is a dense field of Rudbeckia lacinata 'Autumn Sun' flowers. The flowers have bright yellow petals and dark green centers. The leaves are dark green and lance-shaped. The overall image is slightly blurred, giving it a natural, garden-like feel.

Rudbeckia lacinata 'Autumn Sun' (Cutleaf Coneflower) 1804, McMahon

- Type: Herbaceous perennial
 - Family: Asteraceae
 - Native Range: North America
 - Zone: 3 to 9
 - Height: 2.00 to 9.00 feet
 - Spread: 1.50 to 3.00 feet
 - Bloom Time: July to September
 - Bloom Description: Yellow rays and green center disks
 - Sun: Full sun to part shade
 - Water: Medium
 - Maintenance: Medium
 - Suggested Use: Naturalize
 - Flower: Showy
 - Attracts: Butterflies
 - Tolerate: Deer
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- A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of several short, thick, blue dashed lines arranged in a curved, zig-zag pattern.



Early American Gardens in the Philadelphia Region

Mock Orange at Wyck

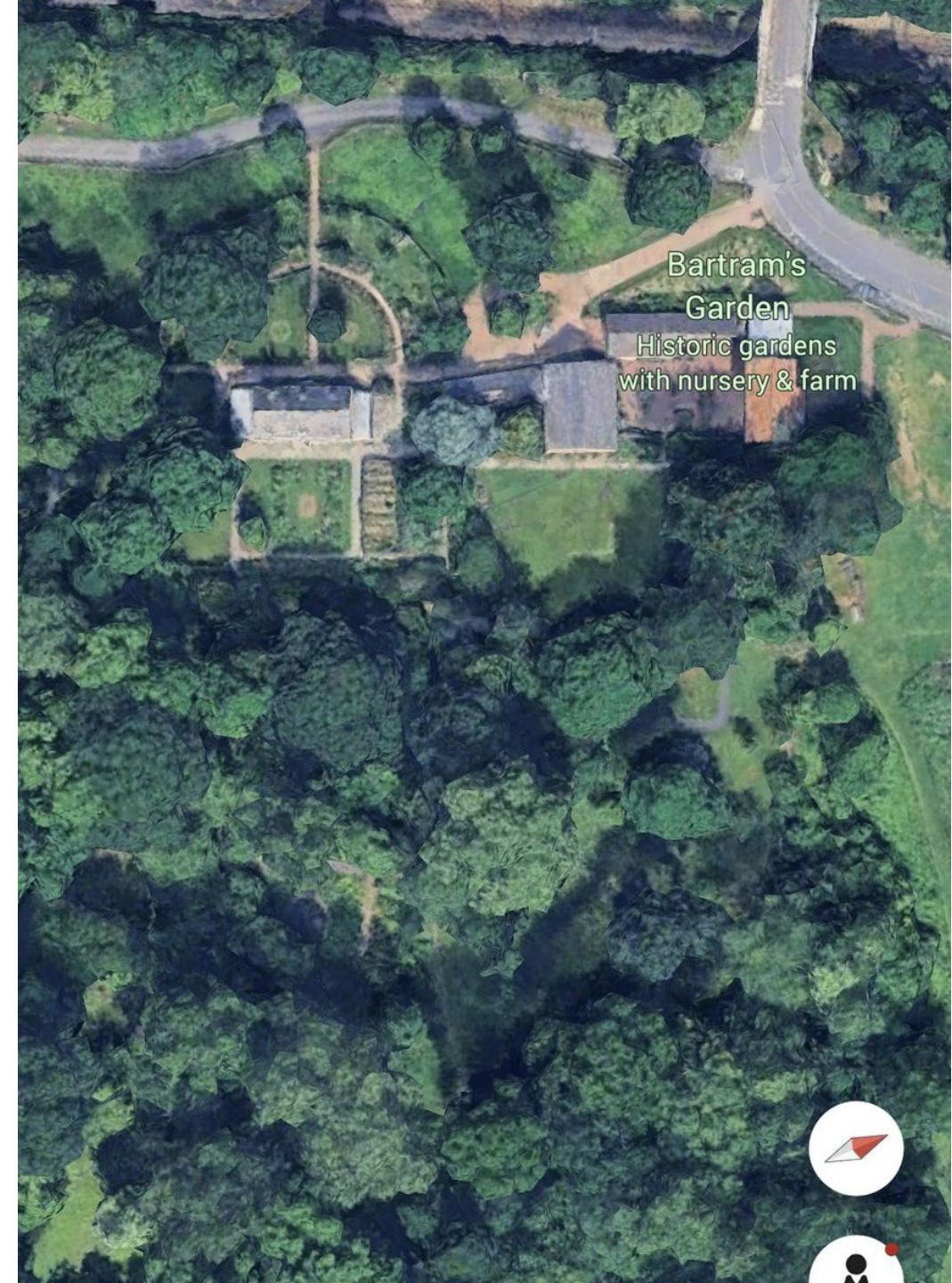
Andalusia Historic House, Garden and Arboretum, Bucks County

- Cared for by same family since 1795.
- Rare northern riverfront estate from the 18th Century.
- Only RHS partner garden in the United States.
- Walled garden with a 100-yard wisteria wall.
- Hosted first meeting of the Garden Club of Philadelphia in 1904.
- Green Walk added in 1960s.
- White Garden added in 1990s.
- Arabella Lennox-Boyd redesign of some spaces in 2017-2018.
- www.andalusapa.org



Bartram's Garden, Southwest Philadelphia

- John Bartram was the most significant American botanist in the 18th Century.
- The botanic garden was developed and cared for by generations of the Bartram family from 1728-1850.
- The current gardens include:
 - The Ann Bartram Carr Garden (a fragrant pleasure garden for all seasons).
 - The Harvey Memorial Garden (commemorating the known and unknown Black lives, legacies, and contributions to this land).
 - The Upper Garden (gardens for healing, household use and study).
 - The Lower Garden (wilderness style gardens leading to the river). There are also extensive areas managed as natural lands (most of the 50 acres).
- There are several historic and noteworthy trees listed on the website, including *Franklinia alatamaha*, discovered by the Bartram's in the 1760s.
- The Sankofa Community Farm, in partnership with the Philadelphia Orchard Project, has a contemporary orchard with over 130 trees.
- www.bartramsgarden.org



Bartram's Farm/Nursery

The house on 5 acres was built by self-taught, but internationally respected botanist John Bartram (1699-1777).

The house is on an elevation which descends to the Schuylkill River and offers a range of microclimates that allowed Bartram and his sons to grow an extraordinary range of plants relative to the size of the property.

Working with Peter Collinson in London, the Bartrams were a major source of trees and shrubs England and the Continent.

Recommended Reading: The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire & the Birth of an Obsession, Wulf (2008)





Benjamin Rush Medicinal Plant Garden, at The College of Physicians of Philadelphia

- The Physic Garden was planted in 1937 and has more than 60 herbs.
- The garden was originally proposed in the late 18th century, by Dr. Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a founder of the College of Physicians.
- A multicultural medicinal plant bed was planted by the Junior Fellows in 2011 and was honored by PHS.
- An ornamental “White Garden” was planted in 2019, modeled on Sissinghurst and a plant list appears on the website.
- www.collegeofphysicians.org/our-work/benjamin-rush-medicinal-plant-garden/

Goodstay Gardens at University of Delaware, Wilmington

- A collections of Tudor-style gardens, including a formal knot garden.
 - Wilmington's "Secret Garden."
 - Stroll gardens, formal allée, English landscape style spaces.
 - www.goodstaygardens.org
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Grumblethorpe, Germantown

1744, home to the Wister family, five generations of prominent horticulturists. Whether the plant was named in honor of Caspar Wistar or Charles Wister is debated, but it does have the Grumblethorpe branch spelling. www.philalandmarks.org/grumblethorpe



Morven Museum and Garden (Princeton, NJ)

- The home and gardens of Declaration of Independence signer Richard Stockton, and five New Jersey Governors.
- 250 years of American horticulture, including a Colonial Revival Garden.
- www.morven.org



Pennsbury Manor, Bucks County

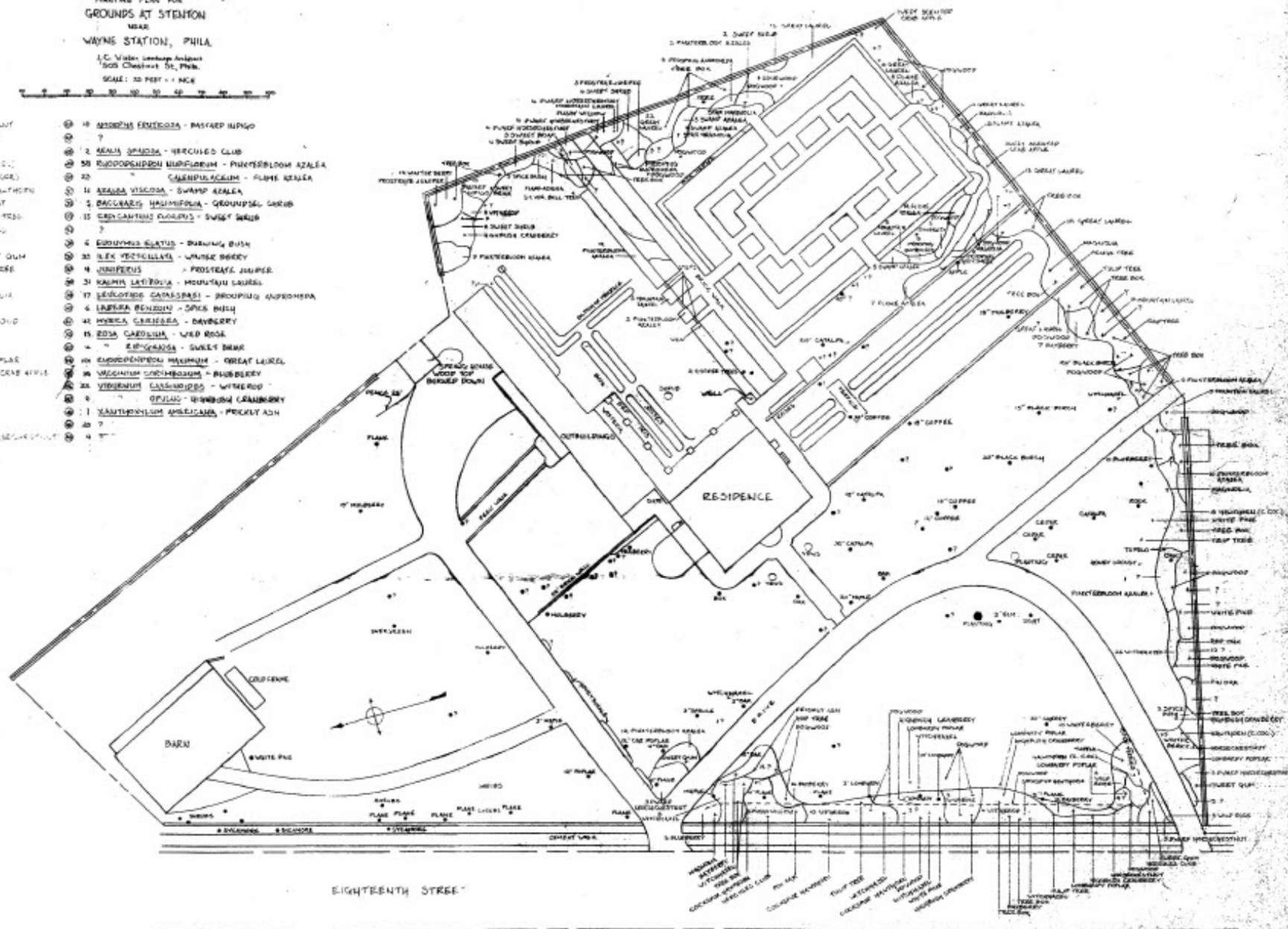
- William Penn's 1683 estate, with 43 picturesque riverfront acres.
- Featuring a 18th Century Kitchen Garden and other historic spaces.
- Offers a wide range of school-age programming.
- www.pennsburymanor.org



Stenton, Germantown

- Features a Colonial Revival Garden originally laid out in 1911 and restored in recent years with the support of multiple area Garden Clubs.
- This Garden was designed (next page) by John Caspar Wister, who was known as the “Dean of American Horticulture.”
- Wister was the first Director of the American Iris Society, the Scott Arboretum, and later the Tyler Arboretum, and also President of the John Bartram Association. He wrote several books and received many honors.
- www.stenton.org







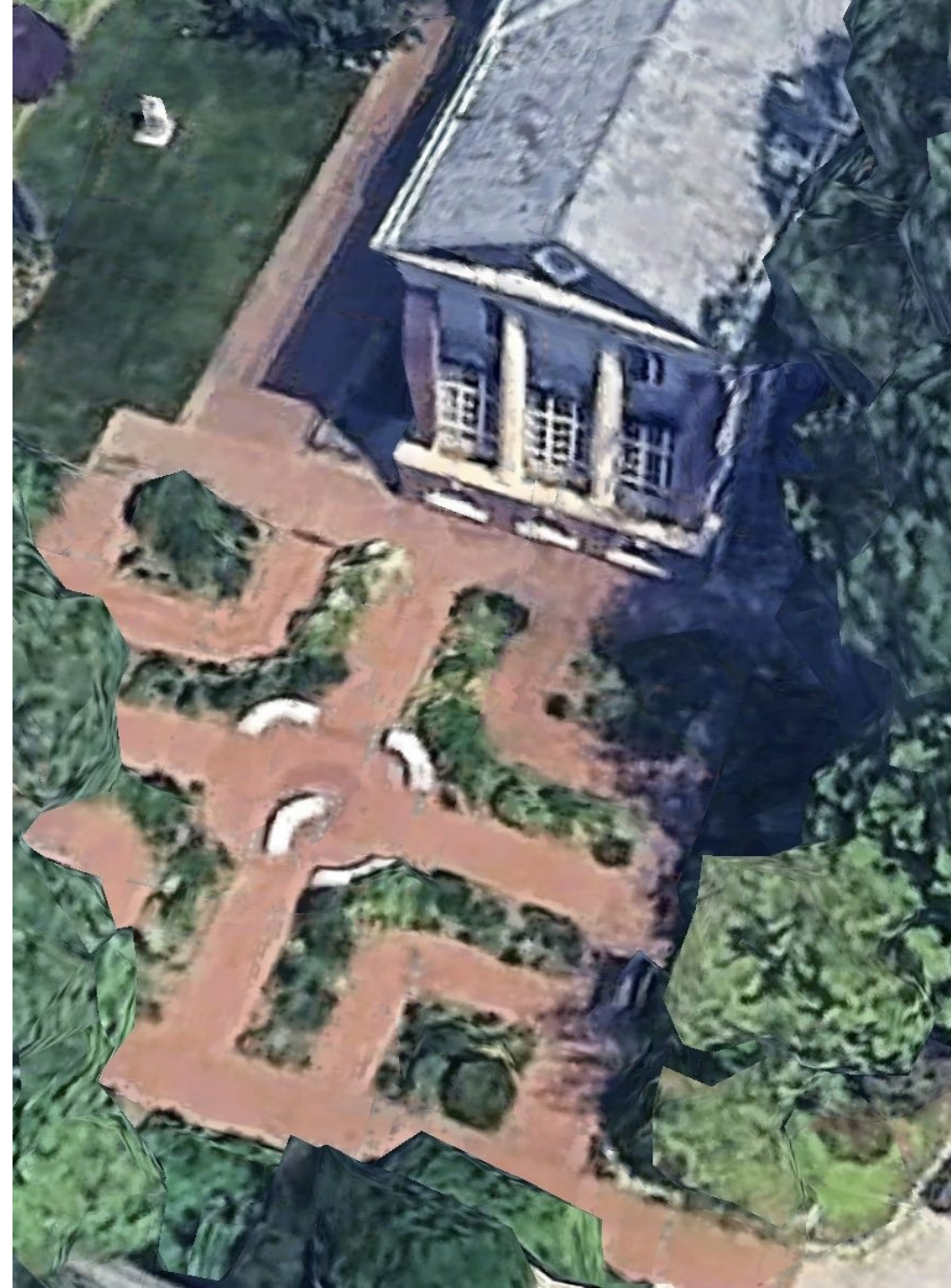
The 18th Century Garden at Independence National
Historic Park (dedicated by Lady Bird Johnson in 1966)
www.nps.gov/inde/planyourvisit/18thcenturygarden.htm



The Benjamin Rush Garden
Independence National Historic Park
(on the site of Dr. Rush's home, 18th century plant palette)
www.nps.gov/places/benjamin-rush-garden.htm

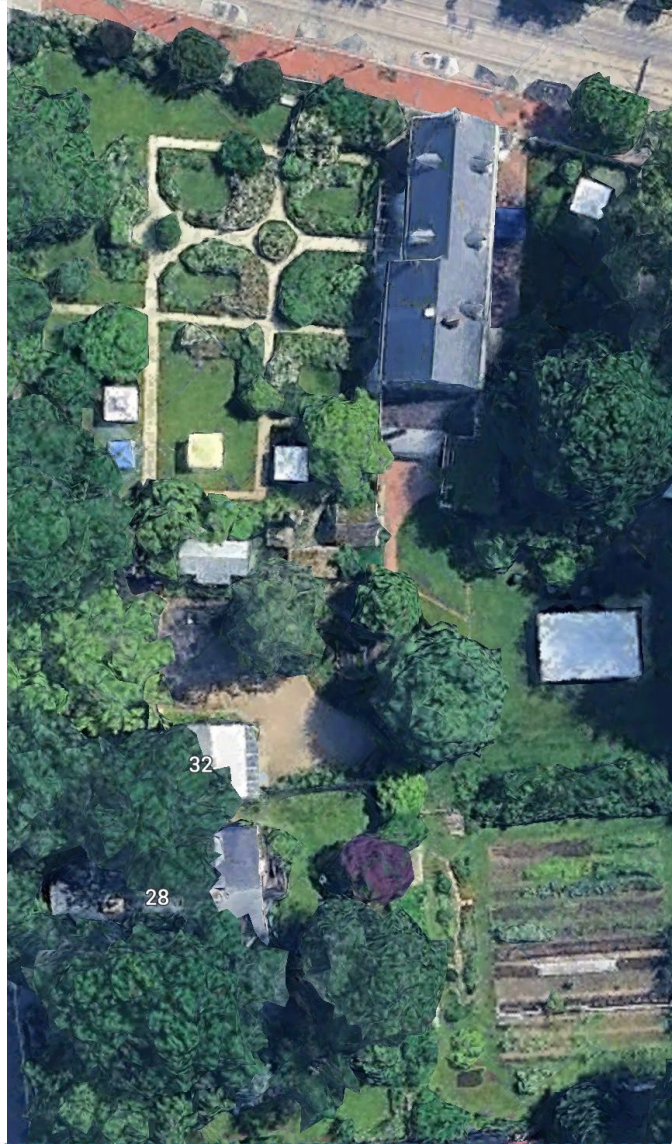
The Physic Garden at Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia

- A Bicentennial project of the Philadelphia Committee of the Garden Club of America.
- Originally proposed in 1774, but not pursued due to lack of funds.
- The plant palette is focused on 18th century medicinal plants.
- Symmetrical, formal, brick paths (free draining and heat retaining), linear beds that can be harvested from either side), lecture seating?
- www.uphs.upenn.edu/paharc/timeline/1751/timeline9.html



Wyck Historic House, Garden and Farm, Germantown

- Occupied by one Quaker family from 1690-1973, when it transitioned to a historic site (National Historic Landmark).
- 2.5 acres in the heart of Germantown.
- An heirloom rose garden dating to the 1820, widely recognized as the oldest rose garden in America.
- Wyck features “features perennial gardens, a woodlot, fruit trees, extensive vegetable and herb gardens, as well as a collection of outbuildings from the late 18th century through the early 20th century (a carriage house, greenhouse, ice-house, and smoke house).”
- www.wyck.org



A photograph of a garden with a gravel path, red tulips, and a white picket fence. The garden is filled with green bushes and red tulips. A white picket fence runs along the background, and a white house is visible behind it. A gravel path leads through the garden, and a brick path is visible in the bottom right corner.

Early American Gardens: Destinations Colonial Williamsburg

Colonial Williamsburg (Virginia)

- A range of 17th and 18th Century Gardens, from the Governor's Palace to working class gardens.
- Restoration began in 1924 with the Rockefellers and is ongoing.
- The Williamsburg Garden Symposium is held every April (in-person and virtual).
- www.colonialwilliamsburg.org





Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest (Lynchburg, VA)

- Thomas Jefferson's retreat.
- Jefferson designed the home and garden from scratch.
- In 1984, the property is acquired by a preservation nonprofit and archeological and restoration efforts commence and are ongoing.
- www.poplarforest.org
- While in Lynchburg, also visit the Home and Garden of Harlem Renaissance poet Anne Spencer (www.annespencermuseum.org)

George Washington's Mount Vernon, Northern Virginia

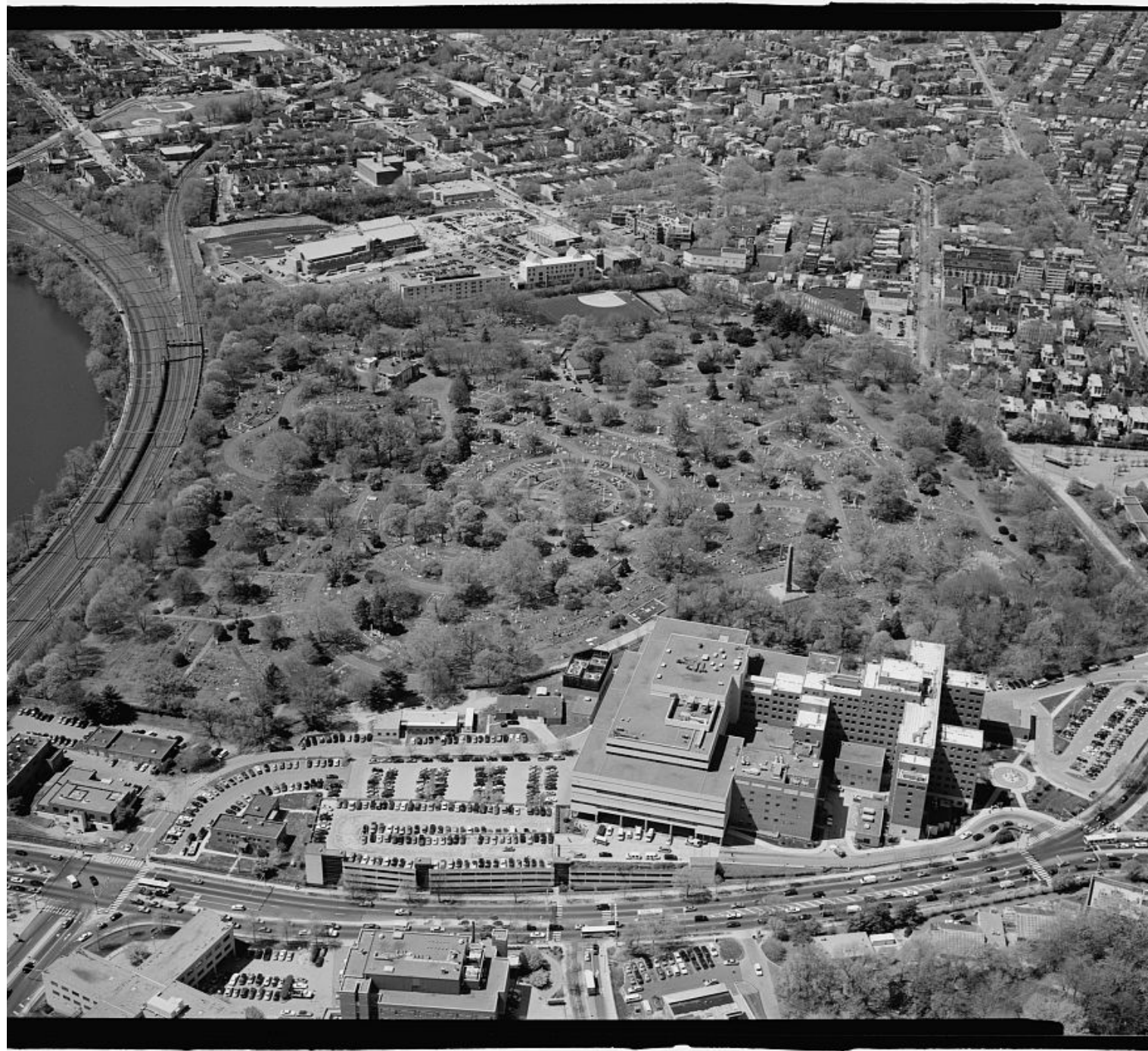
Mount Vernon features:

- 1) the first ornamental native garden in the country
- 2) two large walled produce gardens
- 3) a magnificent greenhouse.
- 4) a small botanical garden.
- 5) a fruit garden and nursery.
- 6) extensive pleasure grounds.
- 7) www.mountvernon.org



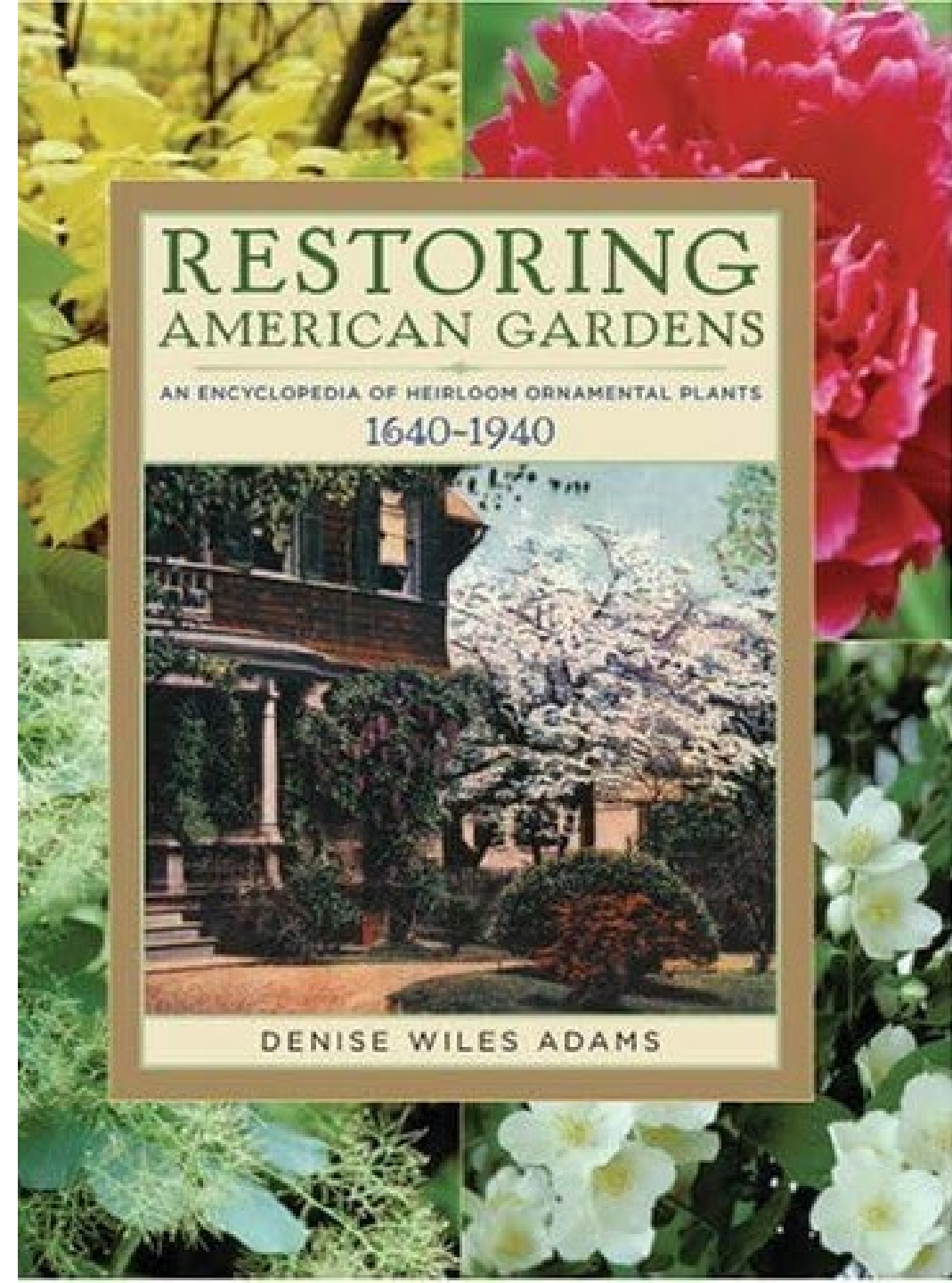
Additional Philadelphia Landscapes with 18th and Early 19th Century Significance

- The Woodlands (this was William Hamilton's renown 18th Century estate and botanic garden before becoming a historic Victorian Cemetery (www.woodlandsphila.org) (vintage photo from the Library of Congress))
- Charms of Fairmount Park: Cedar Grove, Lemon Hill, Mount Pleasant, Laurel Hill, Woodford and Strawberry Mansion. (www.parkcharms.org)



Recommended Reading

- The Brother Gardeners, Wulf (2008)
- Founding Gardeners, Wulf (2011)
- Flowers and Herbs of Early America, Griffith (2008)
- Plants of Colonial Williamsburg: How to Identify 200 of America's Flowers, Herbs and Trees (1979, 1994)
- The Fruits and Fruit Trees of Monticello, Hatch (1998)
- The Pleasure Gardens of Virginia: From Jamestown to Jefferson, Martin (2017)
- The Philadelphia Country House: Architecture and Landscape in Colonial America, Reinberger and McLean (2015)
- American Home Landscapes: A Design Guide to Creating Period Style Gardens, Adams and Birchfield (2013)
- American Gardens in the Eighteenth Century, Leighton (1976)
- McMahon's American Gardener, M'Mahon (1806, 1976)



Recommended Seed and Plant Sources

- Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants (sold through www.monticelloshop.org)
- Burpee (offering four seed bundles specifically created for the 250th) www.burpee.com
- The Roughwood Center for Heritage Seedways (Dr. William Woys Weaver, 5000 heirloom seed varieties) www.seedways.org
- Brent and Becky's, (100 years in the bulb business) brentandbeckysbulbs.com

