



Fashioned after the world's oldest botanic garden, the Heritage Garden pays tribute to botanic gardens of the past.

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## HERITAGE GARDEN

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Dedicated in 1984, the Gertrude B. Nielsen Heritage Garden pays tribute to the scientific and historical development of botanic gardens over hundreds of years. Its design was patterned after the world's oldest botanic garden, which was established in Padua, Italy, in 1545.

### A Garden of Living History

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The Heritage Garden demonstrates historical methods of organizing plants. Seven beds encircling the garden are dedicated to displaying plants according to geographic origins, while 14 beds display plants according to scientific classification. In the center of the garden, you'll find a physic garden, where plants with historic medicinal uses are displayed.

### The Father of Taxonomy

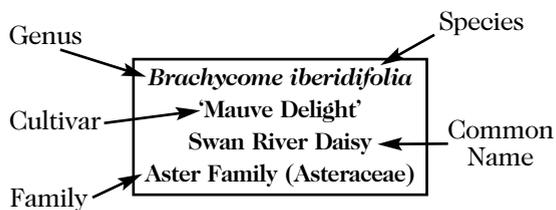
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A sculpture of Carolus Linnaeus, the "Father of Taxonomy," overlooks the garden from its southeast corner. Linnaeus was the 18th-century Swedish botanist who perfected binomial nomenclature, the universal system for naming plants (and other living things) that is still used today.

### What's in a Name?

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In Linnaeus's system for naming plants, each plant is given a two-part scientific name, a binomial. The first name represents the genus to which the plant belongs. The second name is its species name, which identifies plants within a genus. A cultivar refers to a variety of plant that does not grow naturally in the wild but was selected and developed for particular characteristics. Each plant also has a common name, which can vary from region to region. The common name is something like a nickname.



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## PLANT HIGHLIGHTS

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Look for these hardy favorites among a wide variety of plants in the Heritage Garden.

### **Bald cypress** (*Taxodium distichum*)

Bald cypress is pruned to create a tall hedge around the Heritage Garden. A conifer that is deciduous (loses its leaves each year), bald cypress grows rapidly and has a natural pyramidal shape.

### **Cornelian cherry dogwood** (*Cornus mas*)

Found at the ends of the Heritage Garden's perimeter beds, this small tree has yellow flowers in early spring and bright red oblong fruits in late summer and fall.

### **Fountain grass** (*Pennisetum alopecuroides*)

This mounding ornamental grass has wispy, bottlebrush-like flowers that emerge in late summer. Stalks sway in the slightest breeze, creating movement in the landscape. Look for fountain grass in front of the Linnaeus sculpture.

### **Nearly Wild rose** (*Rosa* 'Nearly Wild')

Found in front of the Linnaeus sculpture, 'Nearly Wild' is a floribunda rose with a shrub-like shape and mildly fragrant, pink single blooms that continue from May until frost.

### **Russian sage** (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*)

This perennial herb has aromatic gray-green foliage and displays spire-like, light purple flowers in mid- to late summer. Find it in front of the Linnaeus sculpture.

### **Scouring rush horsetail** (*Equisetum hyemale*)

The horsetail genus is more than 300 million years old. It has ridged, erect, evergreen stems and reproduces by single-celled spores. Look for it in the ferns and fern allies bed.

### **Spreading common juniper** (*Juniperus communis*)

Juniper comes in a variety of colors and is very tolerant of urban growing conditions. Its aromatic foliage has a fine texture and fills in densely. You can find it in the physic garden at the center of the Heritage Garden.

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## TO LEARN MORE

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CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN

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*The Chicago Botanic Garden is owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.*

## HERITAGE GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

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### **A** The Physic Garden

The physic garden, located in the center of the Heritage Garden, displays plants that have been used as medicine at some point in history. Some of these plants are still used to make medicine while others have been proven ineffective—or even dangerous—by modern science.

Botanic gardens, created by universities in the mid-16th century, were designed for the collection and scientific study of medicinal plants. At that time, botany was an integral part of the study of medicine because most available treatments for disease, infection and injury were made from plants.

### **B** Plant Family Beds

The plants in these beds are arranged according to the scientific families to which they belong. Because plant family classifications are largely based on plants' reproductive parts—usually flowers—most of the plant families displayed here are ones that display their flowers prominently. These 14 beds represent a small selection of the hundreds of plant families recognized by botanists today.

### **C** Geographic Beds

Seven beds in the Heritage Garden represent seven regions of the world. Each regional bed displays a sampling of the plants that originated in that part of the world. Look for jade and daisies in the Africa bed, tulips in the Asia bed and bamboo in the Japan bed.

Many of the plants in these beds are from warmer climates, so they must spend the winter months inside greenhouses.

### **D** Linnaeus Sculpture and Bed

In the southeast corner of the Heritage Garden, you will find a bronze sculpture of Carolus Linnaeus, created by sculptor Robert Berks and dedicated in 1983.

Here Linnaeus is portrayed kneeling down to examine a rose. The disorderly mix of plants surrounding the sculpture represents the lack of organization that Linnaeus faced when he began to develop a universal system for naming plants.

### **E** Bald Cypress Hedge

A circle of formally pruned bald cypress trees encloses the Heritage Garden. These architecturally styled trees create an oversized hedge to recall the circular brick wall that enclosed the original botanic garden of Padua, Italy.

### **F** Seasonal Containers

Containers arranged around the center of the Heritage Garden are filled with plants that are changed seasonally. In spring, look for rustic troughs filled with bright bulbs and annuals. In fall and summer, you'll find different sizes of containers used together to display plants with a variety of colors and textures.

### **G** Water Features

Water is a repeated feature in the Heritage Garden. A fountain spouts from the center of the physic garden, and its water spills down in channels over the side of the planter.

During warmer months, water cascades down shallow steps into each pool where waterlilies, papyrus, arrowhead and other aquatic plants are displayed.

