Gardens are all about change. Spring brings nature’s most dramatic moments as life seems to erupt anew. This season is one of the reasons visitors flock to see the parade of constant surprises.

And right now, some big changes are taking place, thanks to bond support from the citizens of Denver. Three areas on the south side of our York Street location are being re-envisioned. The Birds and Bees Walk will become a much-improved experience with a stunning boardwalk meandering through a specialized habitat, ending with a platform overlooking the Rock Alpine Garden. Not only will it be beautiful, but it will also make this unique habitat accessible.

The south side of June’s PlantAsia will transform into a Himalayan Garden, with a black stone outcrop and plants from the roof of the world. Again, accessibility is key. New walkways will make it easier to move through this rare collection. A stunning Tai Hu stone, donated by Robert and Lisa Kessler, will stand guard over the experience.

And wait until you see the new willow garden. Replacing what was South African Plaza will be a fitting Colorado transition from the conifer collection on the hillside to the Rock Alpine Garden to the west. Trickling water will intermingle with dozens of willow species. A new walkway will take you around and over a habitat that will attract pollinators of all kinds.

There will also be a new day dawning at Chatfield Farms. In early summer, we will break ground on the first phase of projects in the Master Development Plan. It begins with improved infrastructure, a stunning welcome center and the transformation of the old asphalt parking area into Market Square. On the south side of the site, expect to see a one-megawatt solar array that will incorporate agrivoltaics; our farm team will be growing vegetable rows in between the solar panels. This is a project in partnership with Xcel Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and the City and County of Denver. Twenty percent of the energy generated will be used to fully power Chatfield Farms and the rest will be used to offset energy costs for low-income housing.

Once again, I am awash in gratitude for donors, designers, builders, partners and the whole Gardens’ team for making dreams come true. After all, change, when combined with vision, becomes a spectacular future.

Onward.

Brian Vogt
Denver Botanic Gardens CEO
Denver Botanic Gardens strives to be ever more sustainable and conserve our precious water resources. With the recent passing and approval of House Bill 22-1151, the Turf Replacement Program, new incentives will be available starting this year for Colorado residents, businesses and nonprofits to remove unused turf areas and replace them with more drought-tolerant landscapes that are appropriate for our semi-arid climate. In response to this, the Horticulture Department combined forces with the Gardens’ staff Green Team to reimagine the turf areas along York Street and create a modern and innovative demonstration garden.

In March, we started removal of turf along the east side of York Street, which will be replaced with a stunning and drought-tolerant garden that will showcase the use of native and xeric perennials, ground covers and bulbs. This new feature will not only look incredible as it formally greets visitors but will also reduce water consumption in the area by up to 100,000 gallons per year once it is fully established. In addition to conserving water, this project aims to inspire people to take on similar projects in their home and business landscapes to conserve valuable water resources while simultaneously enhancing aesthetics.

How do we reduce our water needs with a myriad of crops and gardens we grow at Chatfield Farms? We practice regenerative agriculture—a buzzword now—but we focus on managing soil for improved water retention and increased organic content, expanding composting programs, and incorporating cover cropping and pollinator zones.

We also have modified the way we deliver water to our crops by using an array of drip irrigation, high-efficiency sprinkler heads and low-pressure micro-sprays coupled with mulching, companion crops and minimum till practices. We have seen water savings as high as 30% compared to traditional sprinkler irrigation.

Watersheds and wetlands can also be improved through river and stream restoration. Increasing riparian vegetation and sinuosity in the channel will slow flowing water down, allowing it to sink into the surrounding ground for creek recharge after high water flows subside.

Much of the Deer Creek restoration work was funded by the Borgen Family Foundation. They have also generously contributed to the Chatfield Farms Master Development Plan to fund Market Square, a new event space adjacent to Deer Creek. Market Square is replacing a 60-car, asphalt parking lot with native trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers that will allow precipitation to sink in and help recharge the creek. The net result will be more and cleaner water in the creek system.

Through these methods, Chatfield Farms is conserving water for the long run.
A River (Sometimes?) Runs Through It:
RIVER CONNECTIONS

By Jennifer Riley-Chetwynd, Director of Marketing & Social Responsibility, Co-Director of the One World One Water Center

It used to be that, outside the United States, people might know Colorado because of Coors Beer or the TV show “South Park.” Exported entertainment aside, being known for our beer was a good thing: after all, it was “brewed with pure Rocky Mountain spring water.”

Sadly, our water story has changed. Once the remains of murdered mobsters surfaced in the receding depths of Lake Mead this summer, the Colorado River’s notoriety as North America’s most threatened river made global headlines. Severe and widespread drought last summer saw flows in European and Asian rivers hit record lows. More than 400 million people rely on the Yangtze River in China, which was so stressed it dried up in places. And in Italy, parts of its longest river (the Po) went dry, and the Tiber River that flows through Rome saw record-low flows as well.

Through the One World One Water Center (OWOW), a partnership with Metropolitan State University of Denver, the Gardens has built several water-focused relationships with Italian entities: universities, water utilities, irrigation districts and several United Nations sustainable development entities headquartered in Rome. In November, the Gardens collaborated with these partners to organize a one-day conference in Rome on sharing best practices for water resiliency in the face of drought and climate change.

Larry Vickerman, director of Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms, and I both presented on horticultural and agricultural strategies to reduce strain on the Colorado River. Colorado was further represented by pre-recorded presentations from Denver Water’s CEO Jim Lochhead and Russ Sands from the Colorado Water Conservation Board.

The conference took place on November 24 – Thanksgiving in the U.S. Despite shared acknowledgment that drought is likely to become more severe, frequent and widespread globally, there were a few silver linings to be grateful about. First, Italy was experiencing a very rainy fall. And, closer to home, there was hope that Colorado River users (seven U.S. states, tribes and Mexico) would heed the U.S. Federal Government’s recent mandate to figure out how to reduce withdrawals by 2-4 million acre feet annually (average annual flow in recent years is around 14 million acre feet). As of publication, that has yet to happen.

A wet winter in Colorado is of short-term help for the 40 million people in the Colorado River basin, but long-term challenges still loom. With this in mind, the Gardens is growing our commitment to share and jointly develop water management practices in horticulture and agriculture internationally, regionally and locally. The Colorado River, unlike South Park’s character Kenny (who dies and then magically re-appears in the next episode), may not have the ability to re-spawn.
“What does sustainability mean?”

Hands raise with answers ranging from “conserving water” to “saving the planet.” This is my favorite way to start Chatfield Farms’ newest school program, Sustainability 101. It gives students a focus for the program and educators a sense of where the students are in understanding the subject.

Sustainability is minimizing what we are taking out of a system so there is access to resources in the future. While sustainability looks different in different systems, the goal is always the same—a healthier tomorrow for the very students visiting our farm. At Chatfield Farms, our focus revolves around regenerative agriculture practices. Our farmers are not only trying to conserve the ability to produce beautiful plants and nutritious food, but also to return this land to a healthy ecosystem.

Our biggest challenge is to avoid creating a sense of ecophobia as we teach. Otherwise known as eco-anxiety or eco-depression, ecophobia is a constant worry about environmental decay. Instead, we want to teach students that nature has incredible abilities without scaring them about the state of the Earth. This program allows kids to see firsthand how amazing nature is. From microscopic life in our soils, to the journey of a drop of water, nature is full of wonder if you know how to see it. That is what this program does—it shows students how to notice the complexities of life on the farm, or in their own neighborhoods, and how they can help to sustain it. And, when they are confronted with needing to heal nature, they are equipped with some ideas to make the task seem less daunting.

**Sustainability 101**

_by Lexi Cox, School & Camp Coordinator_

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**Denver Botanic Gardens Celebrates Día del Niño**

_by Melissa Gula, Manager of Family and Children’s Programs_

Día del Niño, or Children’s Day, is celebrated in Mexico on April 30. The day is filled with exciting festivities that expose children to culture, spur creative expression and highlight their importance in society. This April, the Gardens celebrates Día del Niño with stories and planting kits for children in the Helen Fowler Library. No admission ticket required for the following Día del Niño activities.

- **Nature Tales Family Story Time**
  
  Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. throughout April

  **Bilingual Story Time, April 15**
  
  Hosted in partnership with Denver Public Library.

  Bring your budding naturalists to Nature Tales Family Story Time and discover the wonders of nature with your child. Together, we explore books that tell the stories of the natural world, of the garden and of our own backyard. Best for ages infant through 8, but all ages welcome.

- **Spring Planting Kits**
  
  Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

  Spring is the perfect time to start to think about planting seeds. In celebration of Día del Niño, you can take home a free children’s planting kit. Each kit includes the instructions (in both English and Spanish) and supplies you need to start some plants from seeds! Pick up kits at the Helen Fowler Library while supplies last.

**Día del Niño Children’s Book Display**

Our favorite children’s gardening books are displayed throughout the month of April for families to enjoy while visiting the library. Our selection of books includes titles in both English and Spanish. Stop by the library with your family to read some books and pick up your planting kit.

The Helen Fowler Library is located in the Freyer – Newman Center.

_Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m._

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**FAMILY CORNER**

“What does sustainability mean?”

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**Sustainability 101**

_by Lexi Cox, School & Camp Coordinator_

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EARTH DAY
Visit us at York Street or Chatfield Farms for a variety of free programming focused on our planet. A sample of activities and programming at each location is listed below. Admission to both sites is free this day.

York Street
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- City of Denver Stormwater Education and Phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer
- Xcel Tiny House
- One World One Water Center (OWOW) and MSU Denver
- Antiquity Clothing ReUse Booth
- Drop-in herbarium and Sensory Garden tours, docents in the galleries and Science Learning Cart
- Science Chats in English and Spanish
- Film screening in Sturm Family Auditorium
- Staff-led talk on drought-resistant lawns, seed bomb and bug hotel demo, vericomposting, plant mapping station
- Children’s programs: Be a Botanist and Project BudBurst
- Botanicycle, the Helen Fowler Library bike bookmobile
- Tracks & Scat
- Compost talks
- Colorado School of Mines students talk regenerative farming projects
- Water-smart plants station—inspiration for turf replacement

Chatfield Farms
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- What Is Regenerative Farming
- The Life of a Single Water Drop
- Why Is a Wetland Important?
- Building a Bug Hotel
- Enter a drawing to win a prize!

FEATURED ADULT PROGRAMS

How to Grow the Best Dahlias on Your Block
Thursday, April 20, 9:30-11 a.m. | $36, $30 member
Join Horticulturist Jennifer Miller as she explores the wonderful world of dahlias and reveals how to grow dahlias like a pro. Get inside tips for growing and maintaining dahlias and digging and storing tubers.

A New Gardener Boot Camp
Saturday, April 22, 10 a.m. | Online
Content opens Saturday, April 29, 10-11:30 a.m. | Live Q & A
$46, $42 member
Get started on the right foot this year with all our best beginner classes, carefully designed to equip you with all the tools you need to master that garden once and for all!

Spring Plant Sale Pregame Class
May 6, 10 a.m. | $35, $30 member
Discover the best practices for garden planning and choosing the right plant for the right place. Learn to create a cohesive, thoughtful garden that is also resource-conscious and friendly to wildlife and pollinators.

Guided Meditation Series at Chatfield Farms
Wednesdays, May 17 – July 5, 10-11 a.m.
$18, $15 member
Join us each week for a new intention and walk around the property at Chatfield Farms.

Schools and Teachers
Mark your calendars! This year registration for fall school programs opens in May. If you are interested in booking an onsite or outreach program during the months of September through December, check our Schools & Teachers webpage for updates and registration information or sign up for our e-newsletter for to stay looped in.
**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Get details on our [Special Events webpage](#).

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**Spring Plant Sale**

May 12 & 13, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
8-9 a.m., Member-only shopping hour
Admission is free, reservations are required

Join us as the Gardens transforms into a one-of-a-kind plant sale! Find unique offerings, expert advice and a variety of plants across 15 different divisions. Particularly special is our selection of native, steppe and other adapted plants that will thrive in Colorado’s climate and soil. Members save 10% on all purchases. Get details and reservations online.

**Spring Plant Sale Preview Party**

May 11, 4-7:30 p.m. | $55 advance, $60 at the door (if available)

Don’t miss our early access Preview Party! Enjoy first pick of plants and tasty treats & beverages.

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**Summer & Evenings Concert Series**

FEATURING
- Rising Appalachia
  JUNE 26
- Santigold
  JULY 6
- Esperanza Spalding
  JULY 11
- Preservation Hall Jazz Band
  JULY 24
- Ozomatli
  AUGUST 9
AND MORE!

The Summer Concert Series offers a traditional stage show with world-famous musicians performing in the UMB Bank Amphitheater. Enjoy a picnic on the lawn or a leisurely stroll through our gardens as you listen to top recording artists. Get tickets and full lineup at [concerts.botanicgardens.org](http://concerts.botanicgardens.org).

**Evenings al Fresco**

Select Mondays & Wednesdays, June – August, 4:30-8:30 p.m.

Evenings al Fresco offers a serene listening experience with local artists performing throughout the Gardens. Visitors are welcome to explore at their own pace, discovering local talent along the way. [Get tickets online](#).
**PLANT PORTRAIT**

**JAMESBRITTENIA**

By Mike Bone, Associate Director & Curator of Steppe Collection

Jamesbrittenia; it’s really the cat’s meow.

Jamesbrittenia is a genus of plants with a wide native distribution, occurring from Zambia all the way down to the cape of Southern Africa. Some species can be found in Sudan, Egypt and even parts of India. This beautiful group of plants is part of the Scrophulariaceae (figwort or snapdragon) family. The species range from small, flat ground covers to shrubs over a meter tall and can be found in a variety of habitats, including steppe environments similar to Colorado.

Several species of Jamesbrittenia can be found growing in the Steppe Garden, while in the greenhouses staff are actively working on hybridizing this genus to create new and exciting cultivars for introduction to the horticultural community.

The name comes from English botanist James Britten. James was a junior assistant in the herbarium at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, but spent most of his career in the botany department at the British Museum during the late 19th/early 20th centuries. He was known for being an excellent editor of botanical scripts, if not cantankerous at times.

Recently, the Gardens partnered with Denver Cat Company to adopt a working cat for the production greenhouses at Chatfield Farms. Denver Cat Company had the perfect feline to help our team, one who showed excellent promise but was a little cantankerous with the other residents. This newest member of the Chatfield Farms greenhouse crew has been named Jamesbrittenia (or James, for short) both for his sassy attitude but also, like the plant, his many other wonderful attributes. We welcome Jamesbrittenia to our team.
Shaping Water Conservation Through GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

By Christina Alba, Ph.D., Assistant Research Scientist

The ecological processes that shape plant communities are often viewed as being “top down” or “bottom up.” For example, herbivores can influence plant size by exerting pressure from the top down. In contrast, soils regulate plants from the bottom up by providing resources plants need to grow. As we grapple with societal challenges like increasing water scarcity, we must also act from all directions, including top down (national and world governments) and bottom up (individuals and local groups). The levers of top-down progress may often feel out of reach—so it can be exciting and inspiring to witness meaningful, local change.

One such example is the nascent green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) project happening along the High Line Canal near Denver. As less water enters the canal from its headgate in Waterton Canyon, new infrastructure will capitalize on rain events by directing stormwater into the canal. This stormwater will be held in place for up to 72 hours, allowing time for it to “slow, spread and sink” into the canal bed and banks. The planned GSI will support the canal’s unique ecological function, as over the past 140 years, water-loving shrubs and trees have established a shady, urban forest in what would otherwise be semi-arid grassland.

How the new GSI functions will literally be shaped from the bottom up, as the plants and soils that characterize the canal will impact water infiltration rates and which pollutants might be scrubbed from incoming stormwater. Research by Gardens scientists has shown that soils where GSI has been implemented is healthy—for example, it has ample pore space for water infiltration and plenty of soil organic matter for maintaining soil structure and retaining plant nutrients. There are also lush pockets of wetland species dotting the canal bed, including the native sedge, Carex emoryi. Sedges are often planted in GSI settings to aid in pollutant removal and stabilize soil, making this naturally occurring sedge not only a verdant beauty, but a likely workhorse in supporting the GSI’s ecological function.

Given that the canal meanders through 11 jurisdictions, it would be remiss to ignore the critical bottom-up element that is the people who care for this ecological gem. With guidance from the High Line Canal Conservancy, multiple stakeholders have been working to create a management plan for the canal’s evolving future—one that keeps more than 350,000 people connected to the soil, plants and animals that depend on this unique urban waterway.

Ongoing Volunteers Needed

The Volunteer Services Department is gearing up for a busy spring season—a perfect time to join us as an ongoing volunteer! There are a great number of ways you can help support various departments and the operations of the Gardens working alongside our staff.

If you are interested in joining our ongoing volunteer program, please submit a New Volunteer Interest Form and our team will be in touch to guide you through the onboarding step requirements. You can also get more info at botanicgardens.org/volunteer. Have questions? Contact the Volunteer Services Department at vol@botanicgardens.org or 720-865-3609.
ART & EXHIBITIONS

Melanie Yazzie:
Peace Walking
Through May 29
Encounter wonder and healing with Melanie Yazzie’s colorful prints, paintings and sculptures. Yazzie layers nature and narrative to tell a story both personal and communal, drawing partly from her Diné (Navajo) heritage.

Melanie Yazzie, Two Sisters, acrylic and mixed media, 2022.

Renewal: Sculptures by Tamara Kostianovsky
Through June 18
Repurposing fabrics to build textile sculptures of tree stumps and tropical birds with flora, Tamara Kostianovsky’s works weave together a narrative about loss and the power of hope.

Tamara Kostianovsky, Becoming Native, discarded textiles on wood, 2022.

Ansel Adams:
Early Works
June 11 – Oct. 1
Discover the early work of renowned landscape photographer Ansel Adams in this exhibition of intimate yet majestic photos of the American West. Featuring many of Adams’ finest photographs of Yosemite National Park and other Western landscapes.

Ansel Adams, Clearing Winter Storm, Yosemite National Park, California, gelatin silver print, 1940. Center for Creative Photography, Ansel Adams Archive © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

2023 Land Line Resident Artists
Meet the 2023 Land Line residents, artists working in a variety of media to explore humanity’s unique connections to nature.

Kiki Gaffney, Vestige, acrylic, graphite, colored pencil and gold leaf, 2022.

Justin Favela:
Vistas in Color
June 11 – Oct. 1
Vibrant and immersive, Vistas in Color honors the sweeping desert landscapes of the U.S. and Mexico and the role that they’ve played in Latinx identity. Favela’s floor-to-ceiling piñata-paper murals are tribute to the landscapes that make us who we are.

Justin Favela, Popocatépetl e Iztaccíhuatl vistos desde Atlixco, after José María Velasco, paper, glue and cardboard, 2015. Photo: Mikayla Whitmore.

Melanie Yazzie:
2023 Land Line Resident Artists
- Melanie Yazzie
- Ansel Adams
- Justin Favela
- Tamara Kostianovsky
- Melanie Yazzie
- Renewal: Sculptures by Tamara Kostianovsky
- Ansel Adams: Early Works
- 2023 Land Line Resident Artists

Kiki Gaffney, Vestige, acrylic, graphite, colored pencil and gold leaf, 2022.
INTERSECTIONS: CONVERSATIONS ON ART & SCIENCE

Creative Convenings
April 20 and June 23, 5 p.m.
Free; advanced registration required

Artists, scientists, dancers, cooks, gardeners—all are welcome! Bring your gently used tools and supplies to contribute to a supply swap during this free informal gathering, meet with fellow creatives and celebrate the fusion of science and art.

TOURS
Explore our gardens or galleries with a knowledgeable guide any time of year to gain fresh insight and inspiration! For more information or to register, visit the tours page on our website or contact tours@botanicgardens.org.

York Street
DROP-IN TOURS
Included with admission

Garden Highlights Tours
Select Fridays – Sundays (and Monday holidays) at 11 a.m. & noon

Herbaria Tours
Select Fridays, 10 a.m. & 11 a.m.

Guided Introduction to the Gardens in Spanish
Visita guiada de introducción a los Jardines en español
Select Fridays, 10 a.m. & 11 a.m.

Tyrianoroses Rex
Tyler Thrasher, photo provided by artist.

STAFF-LED TOURS
$10 member | $20 non-member | $5 student

Curator Conversations
April 20 at 10 a.m.
May 18 at 10 a.m.

Expert Explorations
April 15 at 2 p.m.
Learning engagement coordinator and Nerdly Naturalist Vanessa Callahan examines early budding trees, grasses and flowers throughout the gardens.

DOCENT-LED TOURS
$8 member | $16 non-member | $5 student

Seasonal Discoveries
April 16 at 10 a.m.
May 14, 27 at 2 p.m. & May 28 at 10 a.m.
June 3 at 10 a.m. & June 10, 25 at 2 p.m.

Exploring Exhibitions
April 23 at 2 p.m.
At Home with Your Houseplant
April 18 at 10 a.m.
May 20 at 10 a.m.
June 24 at 10 a.m.

Nature Inspired Design
May 21 at 10 a.m.
June 4 at 10 a.m.

A Walk Through Thyme
June 4 at 6 p.m. & June 11 at 10 a.m.

Connect & Learn!
Join us on Earth Day, Saturday April 22, for free drop-in tours of the gardens, galleries and herbaria every hour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. plus tours en Espanol at 11 a.m. & noon. Meet in Boettcher Memorial Center lobby. No registration required. See page 9 for more information.

Chaffield Farms
DROP-IN TOURS
Included with admission

Garden Highlights Tours
Select Saturdays & Sundays at 10 a.m.

DOCENT-LED TOURS
$6 member | $12 non-member | $5 student

Seasonal Discoveries
April 15 at 10 a.m.
May 14 at 2 p.m.
June 3 at 2 p.m. & June 18 at 10 a.m.

STAFF-LED TOURS
$8 member | $16 non-member | $5 student

Expert Explorations
June 18 at 11 a.m.
Engage your sense of smell as we visit many of the cultivated gardens at Chaffield Farms with Emily McAuley, horticulturist of greenhouse production.

Private Tours at York Street or Chaffield Farms
Looking for a customized experience for your group of six or more? Schedule a private guided tour. For more information, contact tours@botanicgardens.org or complete our form.
Stay connected to the Gardens!

Use #MyDBG

botanicgardens.org