
SUNNYSIDE THYMES

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“Helping Others Grow”

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Botanical Gardens to Love

By Colleen Craven-Becker, SMG Member

This year, the Education Committee and your fellow Master Gardeners will be providing monthly articles on botanical gardens and conservatories. Each month we will feature at least one, maybe two gardens that are well-known, and some not-so-well known but certainly deserve a visit, and some that are local or regional and others far away

KROHN CONSERVATORY

Eden Park*, located in Cincinnati, is a mere 1 -1/2 hours from Louisville. It is home to the Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and the jewel of the park - Krohn Conservatory.

Open year-round with ever-changing special exhibits and programs, the conservatory is the perfect place to visit during any season to soak up some nature and observe an incredibly diverse selection of plants. However, for me, Krohn Conservatory is best visited in the winter. When everything is cold and gray after the holidays and you don't think the sun will ever shine again, the Conservatory is lush, green, warm and humid. The colors, textures and warmth are a welcome relief.

Art Deco architecture, soothing sounds of a waterfall, the scent of rare orchids, and more than 3,500 plant species from around the world greet visitors at this nationally-recognized conservatory.

The conservatory changes throughout the year with special exhibits and programs, including the ever-popular “Butterfly Show” where thousands of butterflies are free to fly throughout the Krohn Conservatory showroom in a specially-themed garden. Another popular changeable exhibit is their annual Christmas exhibit. Today, the Conservatory is home to six unique collections:

- **Bonsai Collection** – a collection of bonsai trees from the Conservatory itself, the Bonsai Society of Greater Cincinnati, and private individuals.
- **Desert Collection** – a variety of cacti and succulents that are all endemic to the desert.
- **Floral Collection** – home to six seasonal floral shows.
- **Orchid Display** – a collection of approximately 75 blooming orchids at any time.
- **Palm Collection** – a 45-foot high central house with rubber trees, palm trees, shrubby plants, a waterfall, and a goldfish stream.
- **Tropical Collection** – a large variety of ferns.

You can purchase tickets online or at the front door. For more information, including hours, exhibits, etc., visit www.cincinnatiiparks.com/Krohn/.

* *Eden Park was designed by noted landscape architect Adolph Strauch, who was also responsible for Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum. Spring Grove, the original model of the landscape-lawn cemetery design concept, is home to over 1,300 different specimen trees and shrubs planted throughout 400 acres, 30 of which are State Champion Trees. Many Centenarians can also be found, including the 400 year old Quercus alba (white oak) in section 101. Worthy of a visit anytime of the year, but spring and summer are best. Visit www.springgrove.org for more information.*
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Photos: Colleen Craven-Becker, SMG. Below: Desert Collection



FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

A little further down the road but still a relatively short drive from home is the Franklin Park Conservatory in Columbus, Ohio.

Situated in an 88-acre public park two miles east of downtown Columbus, this historic, botanical landmark offers beautiful indoor and outdoor gardens, dynamic exhibitions, and world-renowned artwork. A signature collection of Dale Chihuly glass artwork is on view, with an accompanying working glass Hot Shop. Light Raiment II, a light installation by world-renown artist James Turrell, illuminates the John F.

Wolfe Palm House every evening at dusk. Seasonal and new art and horticulture-based exhibitions are offered throughout the year. The Garden Cafe serves fresh, made-from-scratch fare. Botanica, the Conservatory's gift shop, features home decor, gardening accessories, plants, books, artwork, and more. The Conservatory is open daily, 10am to 5pm, with select evening hours throughout the year. Visit www.fpconservatory.org for more information or visit their Facebook page www.facebook.com/FPConservatory.

