National Public Gardens Day is an annual celebration of the nation's public gardens to raise awareness of the important role botanical gardens and arboreta play in promoting environmental stewardship, plant and water conservation, green spaces, and education in communities nationwide.

May 6, 2011, National Public Gardens Day is a national day of celebration to raise awareness of America's public gardens and their important role in promoting environmental stewardship and awareness, plant and water conservation, and education in communities nationwide.

The Mission

Presented by the non-profit American Public Garden's Association (APGA) in partnership with Rain Bird, both are committed to celebrating the environmental stewardship of North America's public gardens and their local, regional and national leadership in resourcing the nation's conservation and environmental education needs.

Activities

National Public Gardens Day celebrates all public gardens, botanical gardens, educational gardens, specialty gardens, entertainment gardens, arboreta, farm gardens, historical landscapes, and zoos and each institution participates in their own unique way.

Many of the nation's public gardens will mark the day with special events and activities for schools, families and thousands of visitors to explore and discover their local public garden, while learning about each garden's commitment to education, research and environmental stewardship.

Timing

National Public Gardens Day takes place annually on the Friday before Mother's Day, an unofficial start of spring and a time when the environment is top of mind for most of the public.

Benefit

Public gardens are a fun activity for families, couples, and enthusiasts, providing a low-cost, entertaining, and beautiful community outing while providing important resources, education and research on environmental stewardship and conservation.



Third Annual National Public Gardens Day To Celebrate The Importance Of America's Public Gardens, May 6, 2011

Posted on January 28, 2011 by National Public Gardens Day

American Public Gardens Association Partners With Rain Bird To Pay Tribute To The Important Role of Public Gardens In Promoting Environmental Stewardship, Education, Plant And Water Conservation In Communities Nationwide

AZUSA, CA (February 1, 2011) – Scheduled for May 6th, 2011, the Friday preceding Mother's Day weekend, **National Public Gardens Day** is a national day of awareness in which communities nationwide are invited to visit and learn about the important role their public gardens play in promoting environmental stewardship and awareness, plant and water conservation, and education. Now in its third year celebrating America's public gardens, National Public Gardens Day was created in partnership between the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) and irrigation product and service provider, Rain Bird. The 2011 National Public Gardens Day will showcase the contributions of public gardens with special events at many of the more than 500 North American public gardens.

"National Public Gardens Day is not only a great time for families and enthusiasts to enjoy the gardens, but the public also witnesses the achievements and expertise provided by public gardens, especially in the area of environmental stewardship," said Dan Stark, executive director of the APGA. "Regardless of their size, all public gardens share a common commitment to providing outreach programs aimed at engaging their communities and educating future generations on the irreplaceable value of plants."

National Public Gardens Day will be supported by a local, regional and national awareness and education campaign that includes broadcast public service announcements, media partnerships, local and national spokespeople, online contests, and media tours all focused on communicating the importance of building sustainable environments through improved plant management and water conservation.

"As the event's founding partner, Rain Bird seeks to create awareness of the role that public gardens play in promoting plant and water conservation in their communities," said Dave Johnson, Rain Bird's director of corporate marketing. "Our support of National Public Garden's Day goes hand in hand with our company's Intelligent Use of Water philosophy. We encourage the public to recognize that gardens are not just beautiful places and great sources of inspiration, but they are demonstrations of how green spaces can entertain, educate and inspire us all while positively contributing to the surrounding eco-system."

In celebration of botanical gardens, arboreta, conservatories, educational gardens and historical landscapes, many of the APGA's 500 member institutions will mark the day with special events and activities for schools, families and thousands of visitors. Many of the activities will continue through Mother's Day weekend, offering visitors time to enjoy the beauty of the gardens while learning about each garden's commitment to education, research and environmental stewardship.

For more information on National Public Gardens Day, visit www.NationalPublicGardensDay.org, "LIKE" the National Public Gardens Day **Facebook** page and follow the National Public Gardens Day Twitter feed, **@NPGD**.

ABOUT RAIN BIRD

Based in Azusa, Calif., Rain Bird Corporation is the leading manufacturer and provider of irrigation products and services. Since its beginnings in 1933, Rain Bird has offered the industry's broadest range of irrigation products for farms, **golf** courses, sports arenas, commercial developments and homes in more than 130 countries around the world. Rain Bird has been awarded more than 130 patents, including the first in 1935 for the impact **sprinkler**. Rain Bird and ***The Intelligent Use of Water*** is about using water wisely. Its commitment extends beyond products to education, training and services for the industry and the community. Rain Bird maintains state-of-the-art manufacturing assembly facilities in the United States, France, Sweden and Mexico. www.rainbird.com

ABOUT APGA

Founded in 1940, Pennsylvania-based American Public Gardens Association is an organization devoted to strengthening the public gardens throughout North America. With over 70 years of work increasing cooperation and awareness among the gardens, APGA has built a membership of more than 500 public gardens located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Canada and seven other countries. Their members include public gardens as well as arboreta and zoos. APGA has also built up an international network of individual members in the U.S., Canada and 24 other countries. The APGA is committed to increasing public awareness for public gardens and supplying resources to the industry. Through their leadership and advocacy, public gardens have become vital to public appreciation and understanding of the irreplaceable value of plants. www.publicgardens.org

Senator Durbin on the Senate Floor

Posted on December 21, 2010 by National Public Gardens Day

On Senate Record, May 6, 2010:

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL PUBLIC GARDENS DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this May 7 is National Public Gardens Day, a day for us to celebrate the important role public gardens play in our communities and throughout our Nation. Across this great country, more than 500 public gardens are keeping our Nation connected to our natural world, our history, and our culture. These public gardens include arboreta, botanical gardens, zoos, historic landscapes, college campuses, and children's gardens.

Together they form a web that preserves the beauty and complexity of plants and animals and humanity's interaction with them. There is a great thirst for the knowledge and experiences public gardens can provide. Gardening is the most popular hobby in the United States, and more than 70 million people visit public gardens annually. People from all backgrounds, age groups, and geographic regions regularly share in the beauty and serenity of natural spaces such as our public gardens.

Here in Washington, DC, just across the street from the Capitol, is the U.S. Botanic Garden. Called "America's Garden," it is a gateway for people to enjoy the beauty of plants while learning about the role plants play in commerce, culture, and kinship. The United States Botanic Garden is also responsible for helping to preserve and maintain the Capitol Grounds, which are enjoyed by over 3 million people who visit the Capitol every year.

In my own home State of Illinois, our 32 public gardens include wonderful and varied institutions, such as the Morton Arboretum and the Quad City Botanical Center, places such as the Cantigny Foundation and the Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park. Among Illinois' valued public gardens is the Chicago Botanic Garden, which serves nearly 1 million visitors annually.

Its classes are attended by 57,000 visitors, well over half of them schoolage children. Millions of schoolchildren have been educated by public gardens about the wonders of nature and the important role of plants in our everyday lives, from the food we eat, to the clothes we wear, to the homes we live in. The Chicago Botanic Garden has hosted 22,000 children on field trips in the past year, providing opportunities for them to interact with nature—a special opportunity for some who may never otherwise get to see a real meadow or visit a lake.

Public gardens are not only committed to growing plants; they are committed to growing minds. As a result, public gardens everywhere are partnering extensively with local schools, colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations, and civic associations.

Together they have worked on projects ranging from habitat restoration to landscape beautification, as well as on school-based education programs, public health education programs, and community and school gardens.

The Chicago Botanic Garden is a wonderful example of the partnerships occurring between our public gardens and our colleges. Its Windy City Harvest program partners with City Colleges of Chicago to provide summer jobs and hands-on training for teenagers at sustainable agriculture sites within Chicago. Through this partnership, participants

are trained in producing high-value organic produce, which is sold at retail outlets and is made available to local residents. Program participants not only gain important entrepreneurial skills, they learn where their food comes from and the value in nurturing plant life.

We can rely on public gardens to deliver timely and critical resources for plant and water conservation, ecosystem management, green space preservation, and environmental stewardship.

Visitors to public gardens have the opportunity to view regionally appropriate landscapes that preserve our precious natural resources—and give them ideas for creating their own. Public gardens also serve as repositories for rare and endangered plant species. The research conducted by public gardens on these endangered plant species can be crucial to their survival.

Through their conservation and propagation efforts, many plants that would have been lost to us forever through extinction have been saved.

Therefore, this May 7 we should celebrate our public gardens and the many contributions they make to our communities.

What Can I Learn From A Public Garden?



Denver Botanic Gardens

Water Conservation

Public gardens utilize efficient watering practices and have industry insight on responsible irrigation systems. Homeowners can learn how to irrigate their own gardens by exploring and consulting with their local public garden.

Native and Adaptable Plants

Choosing native plants or plants that have adapted to a local environment can ensure a garden will be healthy and require less water. Public gardens have huge collections of native and adaptable plants that homeowners can be assured will work in their own gardens.

Landscape Design

Homeowners can find sources of inspiration in botanic gardens from the design of gardens, the types of plants used in particular environments, the selection of plants that do well in particular geographical locations, and the way gardens are displayed, coordinated, and arranged. Landscaping at public gardens can demonstrate what plants bloom at similar times, what arrangements look well together, and how gardens can be beautifully displayed.

Geographical Considerations

Different plants are healthier in different geographical regions and it is difficult to know before purchasing at a nursery, what plants will do well in a homeowner's garden. Public gardens put on display a broad selection of plants that succeed in a homeowner's region. Knowing that a plant, tree, or flower grows well in a public garden can assist consumers on knowing what will grow well in their own gardens.

Seasonal Considerations

Public gardens have a selection of plants that are perfect for a variety of seasons. Many plants can still thrive in colder and drier seasons. Additionally, blooms can happen year round if the appropriate types of plants or trees are selected. Keeping a homeowner's garden beautiful all year can be accomplished by seeing how public gardens arrange their own collection.

Gardening Methods



Descanso Gardens

Public gardens have staff dedicated to botany and are also home to specialists that understand a particular geographical region very well. Homeowners can access these industry experts at their local public garden and receive advise on gardening techniques for plants they have in their own gardens.

Publications

Public gardens have publications available to visitors and members that provide ample resources on gardening and botany. The average consumer can find a wealth of knowledge in member publications and, in addition, often have access to libraries and bookstores within the public gardens as well.

Plants and Supplies

Public gardens will often sell plants, flowers and trees to garden members during annual festivals, providing top quality additions to homeowner's gardens. With the sale comes professional experience and advice of the sort that cannot be found in nurseries or hardware stores.