



## Fact Sheet

### **The Garden**

The University of Alberta Botanic Garden (formerly the Devonian Botanic Garden) is a 97 hectare (240-acre) property, located in Parkland County, 15 minutes southwest of Edmonton, near the town of Devon, Alberta. The largest botanic garden in Alberta, the U of A Botanic Garden is home to a collection of over 8,000 actively managed plants, as well as extensive natural areas. Display areas include annual and perennial borders, water features, extensive herb and alpine gardens, an indigenous garden, peony, lilac, lily and primrose collections, hardy rose collection, desert gardens, fruit and vegetable gardens and more. Three indoor showhouses (including the Tropical Plant and Butterfly House, Arid Plant House and Temperate Showhouse) and the Kurimoto Japanese Garden, a beautiful 5-acre garden, are popular highlights.

Construction of the 4.8 hectare (11.8 acre) Aga Khan Garden, Alberta was completed in June of 2018. The spectacular new feature, made possible by a \$25-million gift from His Highness the Aga Khan, is a modern interpretation of Moghul-inspired gardens in Islamic landscapes, designed for the topography and climate of the Edmonton region.

The U of A Botanic Garden is a unit of the Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences at the University of Alberta.

The garden was named the 2014 Botanical Garden of the Year by Canada's Garden Tourism Council, and won the 2013 Emerald Award for excellence in environmental education.

### **History**

The UABG was established in 1959, with the donation of land to the U of A by the late Colonel Sandy Dyde, a prominent Edmonton lawyer. In ensuing years, the land was developed as a botanic garden and field laboratory. In the 1970s, after the garden was severely damaged by floods, a donation from the Devonian Foundation, along with funds raised by the Friends of the Garden, helped to repair the damages, create a system of canals and ponds, construct a headquarters building and purchase more land. In recognition of the donation, the name was changed to the Devonian Botanic Garden, with an agreement to maintain the name for 25 years. In March, 2017, the garden changed its name to the University of Alberta Botanic Garden, to reaffirm its ties with the University.

With the opening of the Kurimoto Japanese Garden in 1990, the Garden opened its gates to visitors on a daily basis, spring through fall. Today, over 70,000 people visit the Garden annually, from nearby and around the world.

In 2009, His Highness the Aga Khan made a gift of an Islamic Garden to the University of Alberta, to be situated at the U of A Botanic Garden. With the completion of the Aga Khan Garden in 2018, attendance is expected to eventually more than double as the new feature attracts visitors from around the world.

## **Education Programs**

Over 120,000 school children have taken part in the garden's award-winning environmental education programs. In the award-winning Kids-in-the-Garden field trip and Green School programs, children spend anywhere from a day to a week outside with UABG naturalists, engaged in a hands-on study of the natural world. The garden also offers adult continuing education year-round, with courses in horticulture, landscape design, arts, crafts and personal wellness.

## **Special Events**

The garden offers special events throughout the year, attracting visitors with children's events, art exhibits, musical performances, horticultural events and cultural events such as the Japanese Spring Festival. In December, the Garden opens for three evenings for Luminaria, where of candles light the paths of the Japanese Garden in a breathtaking display, an annual event treasured by thousands of visitors.

## **Research**

The UABG is the site of research on topics as diverse as fungal associations, mosses, forest fires, bat, frog and chickadee monitoring, and oilsands and wetland reclamation. The Garden is part of a global network of botanic gardens working to understand and preserve biodiversity, and is a partner in the Millennium Seed Bank at Kew Gardens in England, the largest plant conservation project in the world.

## **Visitor Information**

In 2018, the Garden is open daily to visitors from June 29 through October 8. Services include a gift shop, outdoor patio café, regularly scheduled guided tours, the Bee Line hop-on, hop-off tram service (new) and group discounts. Interactive drop-in programming for families is offered on weekends. Much of the Garden is accessible to wheelchairs and strollers on an extensive brick pathway system. Minimum recommended visit duration is two hours, though a longer visit is suggested in order to enjoy more of the garden's many features.

**For more information, contact:**

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