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Ornamental Attractions at the Central Experimental Farm

Ornamental Gardens

The Ornamental Gardens feature a representative assortment of the main groups of ornamentals. Among the attractions prominently displayed here are impressive perennial beds, a massive peony collection, beds of lilies and daylilies, over 100 types of irises, as well as several rock garden plants.

A section of the Gardens is used exclusively for the evaluation of annual varieties by researchers, who regularly observe these annuals to determine the period of bloom, size of flower, ease of culture, resistance to pests and diseases, hardiness and uniformity, and purity of each strain. Elsewhere in the Gardens, visitors can view award-winning varieties of annuals. These All-American Selection (AAS) annuals are labelled according to the variety's name and winning year.

Another attraction, the Macoun Garden, features a lily pool that is well bordered by evergreens and beautifully landscaped flower beds. The garden is named for Dr. William T. Macoun, appointed Dominion Horticulturalist and curator of the arboretum and gardens in 1889.

Lilac Collection

Some 125 different hybrids of lilac have been arranged together to form two lilac walks in the Ornamental Gardens. A breeding program begun in 1920 led to the development of a beautiful new race known collectively as the *Syringa X prestoniae* hybrids, named after their breeder Isabella Preston. These well-known hybrids can be seen on the lilac walks along with French and American hybrid groups.

Rose Collection

Visitors can view many selected AAS roses on display in the Rose Garden. They can also make the distinctions between the wild roses and the climbing, multiflora, floribunda and hybrid-tea roses. Located

in the southwest section of the Ornamental Gardens is a display of new and hardy roses developed at the Ottawa Research Station. Visitors can admire and enjoy the beauty of these roses as well as the mock orange and weigela cultivars featured here. The rose nursery, situated west of Morningside Lane, can also be viewed.

Hedge Collection

Plant specimens for hedges have been tested at the Farm since 1894, and some of these can still be found in the Old Hedge Collection along Birch Drive. Labels posted at the end of each hedge indicate the botanical and common English and French names as well as the planting date. The New Hedge Collection, started in 1965, is located south of the Ornamental Gardens. More than 50 different plant species are used as hedge material, making this second collection larger than the old one. An arrangement of climbing plants borders the new hedge collection.

Arboretum

Many of the trees native to the Ottawa area date back to before the 1880s. When the site of the Central Experimental Farm was partially cleared out, some trees were left standing on the site of what was to become the Dominion Arboretum, which was started in 1889. The arboretum is the most northerly one on the continent. It therefore provides an ideal setting for testing plant hardiness. The collection now comprises more than 2000 species and varieties of trees and shrubs from around the world. Situated on about 35 ha of rolling land, the arboretum contains specimens of magnolias, rhododendrons, azaleas, crab apple, junipers, a wisteria, a bald cypress, Dawn Redwood, and several fringe trees, to name a few.

Tropical Plant Show

The Tropical Plant Show provides visitors with the opportunity to "journey" through

the landscape of an equatorial country. The show began modestly in the fall of 1978, when researchers donated plants used in their research. It is now a permanent display featuring more than 500 tropical plants, some of which are very rare. The plants are arranged in the main greenhouse according to light and moisture requirements. Among the many attractions are the Bird of Paradise, Dwarf Banana, Arabian Coffee Tree, hibiscus and bromeliads.

The Tropical Plant Show is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily and is at the main greenhouse on Maple Drive.

Chrysanthemum Show

The Chrysanthemum Show, held every year since 1912, is one of the most important of its kind in North America. Visitors can see some 2000 plants selected from more than 100 varieties of mums. Among the most admired are the oriental-type cascade mums, which reach a height of 1.4 m.

The show is held during the second and third weeks of November at the main greenhouse on Maple Drive. It is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and there is no admission charge.



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