

# Texas Discovery Gardens



butterflies taste with their feet ...  
nature just got really cool



**Park and Recreation Board**  
**Thursday, October 15, 2015**

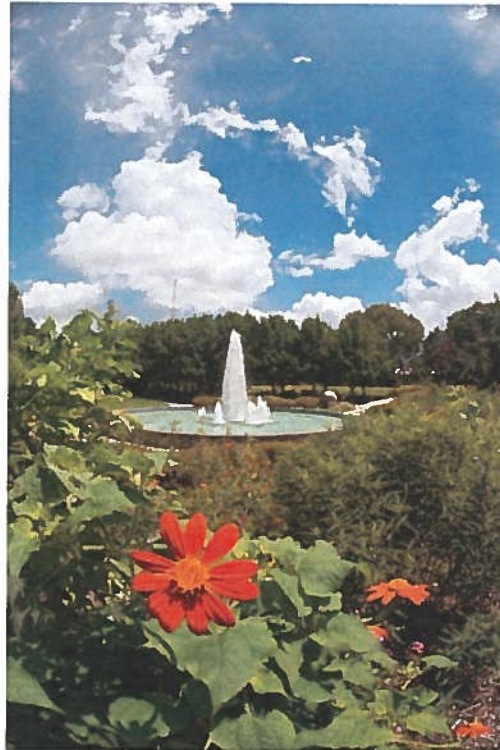
# Texas Discovery Gardens

- Located in Dallas' historic Fair Park, Texas Discovery Gardens is a year-round organically maintained urban oasis filled with natural wonders
- The Gardens are maintained using sustainable methods that conserve water and help to protect the environment
- Texas Discovery Gardens strives to further our mission with every opportunity, from daily butterfly release talks to festivals, classes and programs



# Mission Statement

**Welcome to Texas Discovery Gardens,  
where children and adults discover and  
learn to sustain the natural world**



# History

- Opened in 1936 as the Hall of Horticulture for the Texas Centennial Exposition, the 7.5-acre campus includes the first public conservatory built in the Southwestern United States
- Chartered in 1941 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Texas Discovery Gardens is the second oldest botanical institution in Texas and the first in Dallas to offer botanical education programs for children
- In 2003, Texas Discovery Gardens was certified as the first 100% organic public garden in the state



# Community Impact and Audience

Each year, Texas Discovery Gardens reaches nearly **100,000 people** through educational programming, general admission, special events, rentals and outreach



# People Behind Texas Discovery Gardens

## Staff and Volunteers

- Texas Discovery Gardens employs **16 staff**, 6 of whom are part time
- **1,341 volunteers** donated time in the greenhouse as docents, inside the Butterfly House and at events in FY 14-15

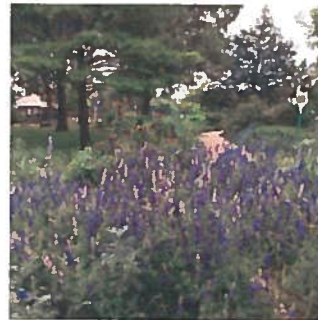


## TDG Board

- The board of Texas Discovery Gardens is a **12-member** volunteer governing and policy-making body, representing a cross-section of the greater Metroplex population
- The board includes professionals and community volunteers, all of whom have genuine and sincere interest in the mission and activities of Texas Discovery Gardens

# The Gardens

- The Gardens include native and adapted plants
- Several gardens have been renovated or added in the past two years
  - Shakespeare Garden wall repaired and improved (\$5,000 grant)
  - Minnie Marcus Garden renovated (\$25,000 in grants and donations)
  - Master Gardeners' Garden (continued funding and volunteer upkeep by Dallas County Master Gardeners Association)



# The Gardens

- Native Butterfly Habitat expansion (\$45,000 from private donor and grant)
- Green Mountain Energy Solar Pavilion (\$50,000 grant to build 410 sq. ft. solar array)
- Wildlife Pond renovation (\$8,000 in donations)





# The Gardens

- Welcome Bed planted and metal butterfly art installed at entrance
- Multiple Seasonal Gardens funded and installed
- Multiple connecting ADA-compliant granite pathways installed to connect between gardens
- Commemorative bench donation program has begun





Left: John Watts tags monarchs during the State Fair, a twice-a-day free program



Right: a bride in the Butterfly House

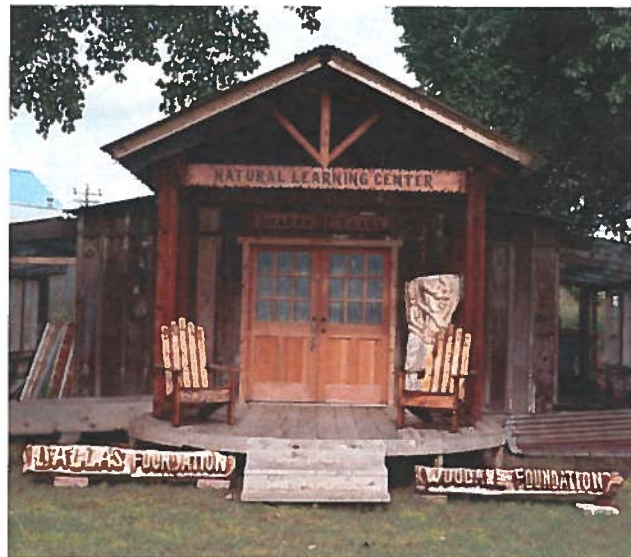


We propagate milkweed, both native and adapted, as well as many other pollinator friendly plants

# Natural Learning Center

## *Featuring the Native Snakes of Texas Exhibit*

- Built by hand in 2014-2015 using sustainable and reclaimed materials
- Constructed with help from \$30,000 in grants from the Dallas Foundation and the Woodall Foundation
- Will serve as additional classroom, greenhouse and exhibit space
- Will be powered by Green Mountain Energy Solar Pavilion



# Rosine Smith Sammons Butterfly House and Insectarium

- The Rosine Smith Sammons Butterfly House and Insectarium is a year-round tropical butterfly immersion exhibit
- Visitors realize the importance of habitat conservation around the globe and how the local environment relates with tropical environments far away
- New: Honeybee exhibit that connects to the outside gardens allowing visitors to see a working beehive up close (behind glass)
- New: Live, free-range quail that act as pest control and entertain guests



# Life in the Garden Exhibit, Woodall Foundation Discovery Passage

- The hallway transitioning from the Butterfly House to our Gardens features 2D and 3D ecosystems from around the world
- Guests can see tropical insects and animals before moving onto murals of our local ecosystems
- “Life in the Garden” Exhibit features native arthropods and small wildlife that you’ll find here in Dallas



# EarthKeepers® Children's Programming

- Texas Discovery Gardens provides many under-served urban youth with their first natural outdoor learning experiences (in FY 14-15, more than 70% of students were considered “economically disadvantaged”)
- There are outdoor learning opportunities for students Pre-K, 8th grade, Scouts, science clubs, after school groups and summer day schools



# EarthKeepers® Children's Programming

- Science-based classes allow students to work directly with nature, observing and measuring their environment
- About 10,000 students explore the Butterfly House and engage in programming per year; scholarships bring in low-income schools and nonprofits who couldn't otherwise attend (\$4,000 in 14-15 year; \$10,000 pledged for 15-16 year through North Texas Giving Day)



# Partnership with the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department

- Texas Discovery Gardens is a nonprofit educational organization funded, in part, by the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department
- City support is integral to our day-to-day operations and allows us to rely on steady funding while searching for grants and other income opportunities to further our mission
- As we celebrate our 75<sup>th</sup> year in 2016, we are grateful for City support
- Annual funding goes into general operating expenses, supporting everything from Butterfly House maintenance to staffing and education
  - In FY 14-15, the City provided \$95,682
  - In FY 15-16, the City will provide \$145,862
- The City also covers partial utilities and EBS assists with building maintenance



Thank you to the Park and Recreation Board for supporting our mission of teaching children and adults about the natural world!



# Discover More

## Garden Resources

- ***Butterfly Habitat Information and Certification*** – Learn how to create a garden that attracts pollinators in your own space
- ***Organic Garden Resources*** – See tips and tricks on Texas Discovery Gardens social media, website and e-newsletter
- ***Butterfly and Fall Plant Sales*** - Feature rare native and adapted drought tolerant plants

## Visit Texas Discovery Gardens

- Open daily from 10 am to 5 pm
- Admission: \$8/adults; \$6/age 60+; \$4/age 3-11; free under 3
- Each Tuesday, the Gardens are open for free
  - Butterfly House admission is regular price
- Social media
  - Twitter: @TxDiscoveryGard
  - Facebook.com/TexasDiscoveryGardens
  - Instagram.com/TexasDiscoveryGardens



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