

Please follow the black number and arrow signs for this tour.

"A late summer garden has a tranquility found no other time of the year." - William Longgood

This tour of the garden is designed to showcase plants, plantings and design elements in an area of the garden where the Zimsculpt sculptures are displayed. As you walk through the Garden, remember that it is a botanical garden - a museum of plants. Plants are displayed in several ways: theme plantings; regional plantings; and collections of a single plant family. The tour begins at the stone bridge at Livingstone Lake. Take the ramp leading off the deck on your right and walk to the lake.

1 - Livingstone Lake was named in honour of the late William "Bill" Livingstone, Deputy Superintendent of Parks during the early years of the building of VanDusen, who created the picturesque landscapes of the garden. All the lakes are man-made and are interconnected. Water courses through the garden from the highest point to the lowest (Cypress Pond) and then re-circulates. This is just one of the water conservation measures undertaken by the garden.

Turn left at the path between the ginkgos. On your right are the **2 - autumn crocuses (*Colchicum autumnal*)**, which look very much like spring crocuses but are in the Lily family, (unlike crocuses, which belong to the Iris family). Another name for them is meadow saffron, however, they are not related to saffron either. In fact, they are quite poisonous, though the medicine colchicine, a treatment for gout since the 1820's, is extracted from the plants.

On your left, at the edge of the lake, is **3 - the goldenrain tree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*)**, a native of East Asia. This tree has something of interest most of the year. The seed pods, shaped like little paper lanterns are a beautiful shade of green now and will turn golden brown in the later Fall. Thomas Jefferson, who received the seeds from a French correspondent, introduced the tree to North America. If it is a sunny day, look at the rocks in the lake...do you see the turtles? They are descendants of "store bought" turtles that someone liberated long ago.

Now continue straight ahead on the path into the Southern Hemisphere Garden. Another plant with interesting seed pods is the **4 - swan plant or balloon plant (*Gomphocarpus physocarpus*)**. But look at the tiny flowers too. It is amazing that such a small flower produces such a giant seedpod! *Gomphocarpus* are South African plants. South Africa has a rich bio-diversity: coastal, jungle, alpine and plains. This area of our Garden recreates that alpine bulbous meadow eco-system.

Turn left and walk towards and up the steps to the peninsula. The South American peninsula, another of our regional gardens, has many interesting flowers this month, but probably the most unusual in appearance is the **5 - amaranth (*Amaranthus*)**, a grain from Mexico. Because amaranth was used by the Aztecs in their religious ceremonies, the Spanish Conquistadores banned its cultivation. Fortunately, it continued to grow as a weed. The grain is a good source of high quality protein, iron, and lysine and is gluten-free.

Walk around the peninsula and exit, turning left to cross the floating bridge. Then turn left, walk up the incline and turn right into the Grotto. The **6 - Grotto** you are walking through is made of black basalt composite rocks, volcanic in origin, which came from a construction site at the eastern end of False Creek. In the early 1970s, when the garden was under construction, many contractors donated excavated material to the garden.

Leaving the Grotto, you are in the Heather Garden, a collection of plants in the Ericaceae family, designed to evoke the features of a bleak moorland scene in Scotland. The late-summer and early fall blooming **7 - heather (*Calluna vulgaris*)** comes in a variety of colours of pink, red and white. This one is *Calluna vulgaris* 'Dunnet Lime', found as a seedling near Dunnet Head in Scotland. In Scotland,

heather was used for many purposes: small brooms, woven mats, baskets, even ladders and roof thatching. The **8 - Scottish Shelter** is an example of stone construction from the highlands - and more donated rocks, in this case brown basalt. It is a cool place to sit for a while if it is hot.

Continue along the path past the shelter and turn left at the next junction. Then continue straight ahead into the Perennial Garden.

This is a theme garden, which shows two ways to display perennials - formal and island beds. On the right are the island beds, an idea of Alan Bloom (Blooms of Bressingham). Walk between the first two beds. On your left is **9 - stonecrop (*Sedum spectabile* 'Brilliant')**, combining interesting foliage with wonderful fall flowers that attract butterflies. This plant has been given the prestigious Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society and is very easy to grow. Look for different varieties of sedum in the other beds. Turn left and cross the walkway to the traditional formal border backed by a Yew hedge. In the middle of the border, are the **10 - sneezeweed (*Helenium* 'Coppelia')**. Introduced by Blooms of Bressingham, they are also attractive to butterflies. These colourful flowers are members of the extensive Aster family - the largest family of flowering plants. This bed contains many other plants in the Aster family.

Now exit the way you came in and turn right toward the Heritage Rose Garden. As you walk towards it, notice the plantings to your left, which are especially beautiful in September.

The Heritage Rose Garden will be on your right, just beyond the Laburnum Walk. At this time of the year you should see rose hips on **11 - the Alba rose (*Rosa x alba* 'Alba Semiplena')**. Gather rose hips after the first frost and make rose hip syrup or tea which is high in Vitamin C and said to have promising analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties.

Continue walking to the stone arch and take the steps leading into our **12 - Formal Rose Garden**. This garden is a special challenge here in Vancouver because of our rainy climate. The roses in this garden have been specially chosen for their resistance to black spot. The soil has been carefully prepared and a sprinkler system installed to water, when necessary, at ground level. No pesticides or herbicides are used on our roses! Although the roses are at their best in the summer, if the weather is fine in September, we still get a beautiful show.

Exit via the stairs at the left of the rose garden, turn left, then left again and proceed into the **13 - Black Garden**, another theme garden. Here you will find plants that have foliage and/or flowers which appear to be black as they are so dark coloured. What is so striking is how they are interplanted with lime-green foliage plants. The contrast makes both colours pop!

Turn right at the little path that goes up the stairs and through the grasses. Grasses are especially beautiful in autumn with their seed heads waving in the breeze. This bed holds a collection of many grasses. Look for the tall grass **14 - *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Morning Light'**, which has showy coppery-pink plumes in autumn. Considered one of the best of the *Miscanthus*, this plant received the Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit in 2001.

At the paved path, turn right, walk toward the tent, turn right again and look into the **15 - Stanley Smith Rock Garden**. Funding for this garden came from a grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust, a well-known benefactor of projects in Botanical gardens of many countries. In Vancouver, both UBC and VanDusen Botanical Gardens received support for projects dealing with Alpine Plants. Notice also the unusual and dwarf conifers throughout this garden.

Hopefully you have enjoyed your tour around this small part of the Garden! If you have time, you may also enjoy a walk up to Mrs. Beeton's Vegetable Garden next to the Maze.