About the Park
Mission: “A place of serenity celebrating the trees, shrubs, plants and birds of the Yampa Valley”

Gardening at 6,800 ft (2,000 m) in the mountains is a challenge. Winter snowfall averages 180 inches (15 ft/4.6 m) and blankets the ground for up to four months from December to April. Annual precipitation of 24 inches (2 ft/70 cm) comes mostly as snow, with little summer rain. Winter temperatures get down to minus 10°F (-23°C) in January and may stay below zero for two to three months without a thawing frost. The Park is in USDA Hardiness Zone 4. Native plants thrive here as do high altitude and high latitude plants from other parts of the world. The Park has 500 acres and 60 gardens; many sponsored by individuals and organizations.

The Yampa River, for which the Park is named, runs from the Flattop Mountains at 12,000 ft (3,700 m) to its confluence with the Green River at 5,100 ft (1,600 m) in Dinosaur National Monument.

The Park charges no entrance fee because its operations are entirely funded by the voluntary contributions of its members, garden sponsors and donors. It is a City park but there is no direct City funding. However, the City provides banking, office and vehicle maintenance work, creating a remarkable private/public partnership for the Park. A parcel of flat land was donated to the City in 1992 by a local couple who constructed the Park with their own funds. It was opened to the public in 1997 and since then over 5000 has been managed by the Yampa River Botanic Park Association. This is a group of dedicated local citizens who work many volunteer hours in the gardens and help solicit funds to employ our outstanding and dedicated staff.

Serenity and Design Vision
An urban oasis, free from traffic, commercial and the engineered society. The Park’s design avoids straight lines, the paths twist and turn, the gardens are three-dimensional, the ponds are free-form and clusters of trees filter out the sounds of traffic.

Self-Guided Garden Tour
The neighborhoods below are color-coded to the map (over). The Tour starts from the Main Entrance, goes south and clockwise round the Park then to the center. Throughout the gardens are native pine trees, spruces, firs, junipers, cottonwoods, aspens and non-native fruit trees. Most of the plants here are perennials. Most plants are labelled.

Hummingbird Neighborhood
The Butterfly Garden features plants on which butterfiles feed or lay their eggs. The Hummingbird Garden has flowers that attract these tiny birds, mostly broad-tailed. They arrive in the summer in breed and in August and the Yampa River flows to 1000 miles to reach the mountains of Mexico. The Crevice Garden displays plants growing between vertical rock faces as they do naturally in the nearby mountains.

Rainbow Neighborhood
Each of the Color Gardens has flowers of a different color. Some annuals are used to maintain color throughout the season. The Waterwise Neighborhood, which has a stand of sub-alpine and Douglas fir trees.

Wind Neighborhood
 Continue south to the Medicinal Herb, Culinary Herbs and Sensory Gardens. Beyond is Windigo Garden and the Wind Sculpture, which has turned continuously since 1998. The Waterwise Neighborhood features dryland plants of the intermountain west. Enjoy September Charm, the grove of aspen trees and the Garden for All Season with its sandstone blocks from the mountains near Rocky Mountain National Park. Follow Loop Walk to see the Pioneer Garden, featuring plants that the early settlers brought across the plains.

North Neighborhood
Continue south to the Medicinal Herb, Culinary Herbs and Sensory Gardens. Beyond is Windigo Garden and the Wind Sculpture, which has turned continuously since 1998. The Waterwise Neighborhood features dryland plants of the intermountain west. Enjoy September Charm, the grove of aspen trees and the Garden for All Season with its sandstone blocks from the mountains near Rocky Mountain National Park. Follow Loop Walk to see the Pioneer Garden, featuring plants that the early settlers brought across the plains.

Natives Neighborhood
Wander left to see the Hidden Garden, shaded by two large cottonwood trees that were here before the Park. Above it are the gardens around the Reclining Pond: the Reflecting Garden, the Grove Garden and the Perennia Garden. The pond’s source of water, a Fish Creek, a half-mile away and the water travels in a ditch through other properties, a right protected by Colorado water law.

Reflecting Neighborhood
The adjacent Painter’s Garden features plants that grow in the niches between large rocks on this cool north-facing slope, but the Secret Trail is only for the agile. Next is the High Country Natives Garden which has thickets of native shrubs and plants from the surrounding mountains and it is left to grow fairly wild. At the end of this garden, backtrack to Jeff’s Walk.

Trillium Neighborhood
The high wood species once used for indoor heating, Jeff’s Garden climbs the south-facing bank and has volcanic rocks from the Flanks of the Flat Top Mountains. A crevice garden, tucked into the rocks. Beyond the stands of evergreens is Trillium House, the Park’s headquarters, named for the petalled flowers that push up through the snow in nearby mountains in spring. Here are restrooms, the Park Office and Resource Center. The Emerald Room and the patio are used for small functions, and may be rented. Carol’s Garden sits in the rocks on the west side of the building facing the Yampa River. From the Patio, walk up to enjoy the Eagle Garden.

Foliage Neighborhood
Follow the South Ridge Trail to Loop Walk and turn left to Lynne’s Garden, where the Wolf is resting among columbine flowers and aspen trees. Around the corner the Foliage Garden was planted to provide a mosaic of textures. To the left of the gate is the Spring bulbs Garden, a riot of color in May and June.

Kiosk Neighborhood
To the right of the gate is a ridge and Sages Rock Garden with a mixture of rocks and rock plants from around the World. Sit on the bench above to enjoy the Yampa River flowing by. Beside the kiosk is the Rose Garden with the few shrub roses that can survive in this climate. Cross the bridge and turn right to see the potenillas beside the creek and take a look at the Cactus Garden opposite you. As you walk towards the shed, do not miss the Busy Garden and all of its treasures.

Beyond the shed, on the left is Dorothy’s Garden filled with native species. Above sits a bench with a ramada overlooking Emerald Mountain. On the right is the Members Rock Garden, the largest garden in the Park. It gets full sun, but large rocks and gravel trap moisture to permit many interesting rock plants to grow.

Members Neighborhood
North of the Members Garden, between the arches, is the Children’s Garden. It contains a covered amphitheater, a constructive play table called Stumpyland, a play house and a teepee covered in hops. Beyond are vegetable gardens for the staff and Junior Master Gardeners and raised beds which are planted by members of Community Cultivation, a local non-profit. The north-facing slope to your right has a stand of sub-alpine and Douglas fir trees.

Sundial Neighborhood
Returning to the Main Entrance turn right to the flat gardens between Flattop Mountain and the Wolf. The first garden you will see is the colorful Corner Garden and beyond it the Lily Garden with a mixture of tall Colorado native lies and showy oriental lies. Beside the sundial, the Yung Yang Garden showcases unusual shrubs and grasses. The Sundial Garden is a miniature alpine landscape using tuft rock and the Subalpine Garden showcases dwarf shrubs. The Shrub Garden provides shade for the unusual fall colors that leaf out in spring but display their bright pink blossoms leafless in September. Next, Doris’ Arbor Garden features a variety of plants providing blooms most of the year and an arbor decorated with roses and clematis.

Green Neighborhood
Think of The Green as a theater. The pines, spruces and firs are the walls, the grass is the seating. Peter’s Pond and surrounding trees and benches are the scenery. The stage is ready! The Green is the venue for Music-on-the-Green (in season) Thursdays at 12:15 pm) as well as yoga classes, theater and opera. It is available for beautiful weddings and other events each summer.

Pond Neighborhood
Peter’s Pond is shaded by native narrowleaf cottonwood trees. To avoid a killing frost, the Annuals Garden is not planted until June, which is when the water lies begin to flourish in the warmer water. The water from Fish Creek has now travelled through three ponds and from here it will travel under the Loop Walk, under the bridge and it will continue as a wetland into the Yampa River, then the Green and the great Colorado River. It will be tap water for Phoenix, irrigate vegetables in California and a trickle may enter Mexico’s Gulf of California.

Park Memberships
North America Rock Garden Society; American Public Gardens Association. The Park has a “Plant Select” demonstration garden and gets valuable support from the Denver Botanic Gardens.

Membership
Become a member online at ycf.org/park

Membership and gifts are tax-deductible. You can have the satisfaction of knowing you have taken action to sustain the Park if you become a member at one of these levels:

- Glacier Lily $30 - $99
- Columbine $100 - $499
- Trillium $500 - $999
- Sunflower $1,000 - $4,999
- Shooting Star $5,000 - $9,999
- Sego Lily $10,000 - $19,999
- Forget-Me-Not $20,000+
- Business Supporter $100+
- Garden Sponsor $500+

Or, mail your donation.
Make checks payable to “Yampa River Botanic Park”

Contact Us
Phone: 970.846.5172
Email: info@yrbp.org
Visit our Website: yampariverbotanicpark.org
Join us for “Social Gardening” every Wednesday 9 – noon.

FR EE ADMISSION

$900+

$500 - $999

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PO Box 776269, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

Thank you. Your donation helps keep the Park free for all.

YAMPA RIVER BOTANIC PARK
FREE ADMISSION
Steamboat Springs, Colorado

MAP
& Self-Guided Tour