



BARTRAM'S GARDEN

Field Notes: 2024 Annual Report

Even through the challenges of 2024, the Garden brought joy, laughter, and learning to neighbors, visitors, children, and families. Last year, the Garden and our neighbors reckoned with a toxic chemical contamination along the Bartram's Mile Trail, as well as a devastating fire that scorched one of our primary event spaces, the Eastwick Pavilion. I am most heartened by the voices of caring concern and by the support we've received through this tumult.

Your love for the Garden inspires us. I am thankful to the extraordinary team of staff, volunteers, and community partners who keep visitors and participants safe and informed so that the Garden can help people find joy in unexpected places. We are committed to remaining a welcoming green space for inspiration, healing, and learning, and the accomplishments of the past year demonstrate all that your support helps make possible.

Whether it's experiencing the camaraderie found at a volunteer day, taking part in community greening, or enjoying a casual stroll across these 50 acres, I hope you will join me in celebrating the inspiration and healing that can be found throughout this legendary landscape as we continue bringing engaging, nature-based opportunities to all.



Maitreyi Roy, Executive Director



Sharing Joy with Southwest Philadelphia

- Partnered with 20 local artists, teachers, and performers to welcome 950 visitors to arts and cultural events, film screenings, bi-weekly mindfulness classes, and movie nights.
- With support from KABOOM!, began community design process for the Garden's new nature-themed playful learning space--coming in 2025!--in collaboration with design firm TinyWPA.

Cultivating Interest in the Natural World

- Expanded partnerships with local schools to serve 4,419 school-children through free, hands-on environmental education programming.
- Introduced Floriculture, a free monthly class on the art of harvesting and preserving dried botanicals.
- Welcomed then-EPA Administrator Michael Regan to announce major federal funding for brownfields remediation adjacent to the Garden, a big step toward fostering environmental health in Southwest Philadelphia.
- Hosted the USDA Equity Commission's Northeast Convening at Sankofa Community Farm at Bartram's Garden. The day included an intimate conversation about urban agriculture and the importance of food sovereignty between our students and staff with then-U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding.



Expanding Community Environmental Efforts

- Welcomed nearly 2,000 visitors for free weekly boating and fishing, supported by 100 Community Boathouse volunteers.
- Thanks to the support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, created a new online water quality data interface for visitors and neighbors to stay informed about Tidal Schuylkill River health and safety.
- Launched the Lenape Research Fellowship to better understand and incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge in our land care practices, in coordination with a panel of Indigenous advisors from around the country.
- Planted 100 trees throughout our Southwest neighborhood and built 60 home garden beds for local gardeners and families.

Shaping a Sustainable Future

- Launched a new strategic planning process to guide organizational decision-making and growth, working collaboratively with staff, Board, the Southwest Philadelphia Community Leadership Team, and many other stakeholders.
- Thanks to city and state funding, replaced the Historic Barn roof, preserving the structure's historical integrity to ensure it remains welcoming for continued public use for many years to come.
- In partnership with Mural Arts, began the first phase of on-site construction for FloatLab, a world-class art installation and river access point projected to open to the public in 2026.
- With Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, concluded the design phase for the new Ecosystems Education Center and Freshwater Mussel Hatchery, advancing this transformative project to be shovel-ready as soon as fundraising is complete.



Photographs: Sankofa Community Farm youth interns speaking to the Secretary of Agriculture (in red tie); schoolchildren playing in Ginkgo leaves; new Barn roof (Bartram's Garden)



BARTRAM'S GARDEN
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With support from our generous network of donors, members, and sponsors, Bartram's Garden successfully completed the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. Audited financial statements are available upon request.

A full list of our staff, Board, and the Southwest Philadelphia Community Leadership Team can be found at bartramsgarden.org