

## ARBORETUM'S ECOSYSTEMS

**Dry-Mesic Prairie** – The north entrance to the Arboretum and area surrounding the pond represent a prairie ecosystem showing human disturbances such as grazing and probably cropping on the north edge of the site. Remnants of prairie can be seen, including grasses such as Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, and Indian Grass.

**Dry Oak Savanna** – This ecosystem is represented around the picnic tables and east end of the paved trail. In pre-white settlement times, widely spaced oaks were surrounded by prairie, and this ecosystem would have been maintained by fire. With the control of fire, the prairie openings have been invaded by woody species. This ecosystem can be viewed as a transition between the prairie and the forest above the flood plains of Wolf Creek.

**Dry Oak-Hickory** – This ecosystem lies above the flood plains on the north side of Wolf Creek and on the upland areas south of the creek, where it grades into old field areas to the south. The oak-hickory forest is a typical ecosystem for this area and contains Post Oak, Black Oak and Shagbark Hickory as dominant species, as well as rock out-croppings and rock layers at the surface. This area is showing signs of succession with many pioneer, invading species.

**Mesic Oak-Hickory Forest** – This ecosystem occurs in a narrow strip along Wolf Creek and is bounded on the north by the Wolf Creek floodplain and on the south by the limestone cliff. The deep, moist soils support the largest trees on the property, including Red Oak, Chinquapin Oak, Shagbark Hickory, White Ash, Black Walnut, Butternut, Hickory, Hackberry, and Bur Oak. The presence of Paw Paw and Leatherwood shows some resemblance to the Ozark region. The rich soil supports an abundance of spring wildflowers. This is probably the most unique and fragile ecosystem on the site. Its deep, rocky draws are visible from the Bluff Trail.

**Riparian Woodland** – This ever-changing ecosystem is a floodplain with a stream channel, cut banks, small oxbows and low terraces. Flooding is evident and the soils are saturated at various times of the year. Typical tree species include Silver Maple, Black Willow, Honey Locust, Eastern Cottonwood, Elms, Sycamore, Bur Oak, Butternut Hickory, Green Ash, Hackberry, Black Walnut, Red Mulberry, and Osage Orange.

**Wooded Draws** – These areas exist to the west of the main pond and around the site where two ponds previously existed south of Wolf Creek. Species include Rough Leaf Dogwood, Red Elm, Red Cedar and Buck Brush, as well as some prairie remnants such as Prickly Pear, Pale Purple Coneflower, Milkweed, various grasses. The areas to the south show less diversity, probably due to cropping and grazing. These areas are limited and can be considered the result of the invasion of woody species into what was grassland or pasture.

**Dry Wooded Swales** – Similar in appearance to the Wooded Draws but with soil that is dryer and more shallow. The areas to the south show fewer signs of development and less diversity.

**Old Field** – This severely disturbed zone shows no remnant prairie species due to over grazing and cropping. It is in the early stages of old field succession with the invasion of pioneer species. Prior to human use, it probably resembled the Dry-Mesic prairie found on the northern portion of the Arboretum. A 10-year prairie restoration project has begun the process of returning this area to pre-settlement condition.

**Environmental Education/Visitors Center (EEVC)** accommodates learning programs and social events. The facility showcases innovative and practical environmental building features and technology. Restrooms are available as well as comfortable seating.

**Picnic Pavilion** is available to the public unless it has been reserved. The nearby picnic benches and grills are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Erickson Water Garden** creates a space that captivates the visitor with a dramatic blend of bird and butterfly plants, wildflowers, and ornamental grasses. Benches throughout the garden offer space for reflection. Relax to the gentle sound of tumbling water and our Garden Bell.

**Legacy Garden & Allie's Glade** includes shade plantings in a natural environment. A grape bower offers a quiet spot to enjoy the garden. Don't miss our spring show of dogwoods and rebuds and join us as we watch our Bald Cypress Grove develop. The waterfall and streamway provide action and serenity in one.

**Marder Woodland Garden** features regional native species and wandering streamways. The Garden is accented by impressive wood and stone arbors that help to define space in the informal woodland garden. A koi pond offers a serene contrast of color and character that hints at the exotic.

**Children's Garden** is a whimsical and insightful experience for young visitors. Visitors can climb to the top of the Sky Watch, explore the switchgrass maze, walk through the vine covered Shrinking Tunnel, visit the Story Tree and Council Ring, and check out the inhabitants of the Frog Pond including Copper Hopper Chopper.

**Monet Garden** attempts to capture the subtle blending of soft colors and shapes typical in the original Monet gardens. Willow trees, perennials, and annuals surround ponds, creating a colorful palette that will make you feel as though you are in one of Monet's paintings.

**Xenescape Garden** – (zer-ti-scape) Based on key principals demonstrating that water-efficient gardens can not only be practical and functional, but visually pleasing. Plants are selected for and grouped by their water needs.

**Arboretum** offers homeowners, landscapers, and arborists an opportunity to view and evaluate a wide variety of trees. Trees are carefully selected for suitability to local soil and climate conditions, insect and disease resistance, and overall low maintenance requirements.

**Byrd's Grove** – our newest addition, offers quiet seating and a lovely view of Margaret's Pond. *Trees, shrubs, benches and other structures are opportunities for commemorative donations.*



## THE GARDENS

## OVERLAND PARK

# ARBORETUM & BOTANICAL GARDENS

## VISITOR'S GUIDE



## ARBORETUM ETIQUETTE

- ▶ Please stay on trails and sidewalks.
- ▶ Dogs must be kept on leash, are restricted from concrete walks, and waste must be removed.
- ▶ No bicycles, skateboards, roller blades, or motorized vehicles are allowed on trails.
- ▶ Plants, animals and insects may not be collected or removed from the Arboretum.
- ▶ Please do not climb on rocks or in trees.
- ▶ Fires are permitted in permanent grills only.
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- ▶ Children should be attended by an adult at all times.
- ▶ Visitors are not allowed on the property when the Arboretum & Botanical Gardens are closed.

## OUR LOCATION

Take U.S. 69 to 179th Street; go west approximately 1/2 mile. The Arboretum is on the southwest corner of Antioch and 179th Street; enter off 179th. Antioch is not a through street from the north.



**Open Daily**  
April 10 to September 30.....8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
October 1 to April 9.....8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Closed Christmas Day**

**Admittance is Free**  
with the exception of fees for certain special events that are held at the Arboretum

**Rental of the EEVC, pavilion or garden space**  
is available by calling Leisure Services at 913.895.6390

**Tours and educational field trips are available.**

**Like to volunteer?**  
Contact The Friends of the Arboretum at: 913-327-5771.



Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens  
179th & Antioch Road  
Overland Park, KS 66085

913.685.3604 • [opkansas.org](http://opkansas.org)

