



BARTRAM'S GARDEN Field Notes: 2023 Annual Report

As I reflect on 2023, I am reminded of a comment from a friend who told me that "Bartram's Garden is looking back at its past to catapult into the future."

I have to agree. Garden staff are looking back at Indigenous ecological traditions and knowledge and implementing these practices into their work to maintain and help protect the Garden against the reality of climate change. And we are looking back at our fraught history to acknowledge the 18th-century record of Harvey, a free Black man previously in the shadows of the Garden's history, by providing a space for future visitors to reflect at the Harvey Memorial Garden newly installed in 2023.

This past year, we faced the loss of the Garden's long-time historian, Joel Fry, who was a significant contributor in our process of looking back. His legacy of research, collaboration, and botanical curiosity will continue to influence the Garden's future for years to come.

We would not be able to deliver on our mission without the support and generosity of our Southwest Philadelphia community. No matter what challenges and surprises the future may bring, Bartram's Garden will always remain a welcoming green space for inspiration, healing, and learning for all.



Maitreyi Roy

Maitreyi Roy, Executive Director

Fostering Nature-Based Learning

- Welcomed more than 5,000 students for educational workshops, field trips, and our Little Explorers program.
- Hosted free workshops for local growers on topics like natural pest management and potted perennial fruit in partnership with SWWAG.
- Employed 40 local high schoolers through intensive paid internship programs to develop skills in agriculture, environmental science, landscape design, advocacy, and community engagement.
- Ushered in a new 9-month cohort studying herbalism, gardening, and traditional medicine-making in Building Your Home Apothecary.



Headshot of Maitreyi Roy courtesy KD Morris
Photography: Honey Fest photograph courtesy Ray Valdez Photography

Connecting to the River

- Welcomed more than 2,500 neighbors and visitors on the Tidal Schuylkill River with free boating and fishing programs at the Community Boathouse
- Collaborated with Oshun Swim School to offer trauma-informed, Afro-Indigenous centered swim programs for Southwest Philadelphia residents
- Performed weekly river water quality monitoring tests to inform safe public recreation and advocate for improved river protections.



Growing in Southwest Philadelphia

- Planted over 100 trees in Southwest Philadelphia with the ROOTS Tree Crew to increase neighborhood tree canopy.
- Built and installed 60 new garden beds for Southwest residents and supported 300 home gardeners with seeds, soil, and other growing resources.
- Grew, harvested, and distributed more than 15,000 pounds of chemical-free, African Diaspora-centered produce to neighbors at market stands and Pick-Your-Own days
- Welcomed more than 200 growers from 35 organizations to learn and celebrate land-based cultural traditions of the African Diaspora at the Spring Skill Share and Rooted Revival events.



Celebrating Culture, Wellness, and Community

- Celebrated with more than 6,000 visitors and local vendors at free festivals including Honey Fest, Juneteenth, Handmade Holidays, and more.
- Celebrated one year of sweat lodge ceremonies led by partners from the First Nations and Indigenous Diaspora.
- Welcomed budding cyclists to our Bike Hub for free bike rentals and learn-to-ride classes with the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
- Awarded 9 micro-grants to Southwest residents in support of community projects like Millennial Juneteenth's 4th Annual Juneteenth Celebration
- Collaborated with more than 40 partner organizations to host almost 350 free events for Southwest neighbors, including film screenings, weekly walking groups, and more.



Photographs of youth yoga and group exercise Wright Eye Visuals; biking class photograph courtesy Ray Valdez.



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, 2023. 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