



BARTRAM'S GARDEN

FIELD NOTES

2021 Annual Report



As I reflect on 2021, especially on the heels of an unprecedented 2020, the first sentiment that comes to mind is gratitude. Amidst these uncharted times, I am thankful for the resilience and commitment with which staff and partners have continued to advance the mission of Bartram's Garden in service of our Southwest Philadelphia community. These past two years have shown that our connections to each other and the outdoors are essential for our health and well-being, our ability to grow and thrive. Our 2021 successes are a testament to the relationships and partnerships that the staff, Board, and community partners have nurtured and grown; I am

truly grateful for the collective resilience of these relationships. Here's to more beauty, fresh air, and joyous moments in nature for us all in 2022!

Maitreyi Roy
Maitreyi Roy
Executive Director

CARING FOR THE LAND & RIVER

- + Welcomed eager anglers and paddlers to the newly renovated public dock. More than triple the size of the previous dock, the expanded access is lower to the water and includes accessible kayak launches, making it easier and safer for people of all abilities to enjoy boating.
- + Planted 35 native trees and shrubs along the waterfront in an effort to aid against shoreline erosion, increase biodiversity, slow water runoff, and provide natural shade for visitors. The planting was led by the Youth Tree Crew in partnership with Moms Bonded by Grief to establish a memorial grove for victims of gun violence.
- + Organized large-scale cleanups throughout Southwest Philadelphia, working in partnership with United by Blue, the Philadelphia Water Department, and the Community Life Improvement Program.
- + Unveiled Bartram's to 61st Street trail and greenway. Led by the Schuylkill River Development Corporation, the extension features 1.6 acres of greenway, a riverfront platform for fishing and community events, and an overlook that boasts stunning views of the city and river.



LEARNING TOGETHER

- + Welcomed an inaugural cohort for the Youth Tree Crew. This internship grew out of a partnership with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Moms Bonded by Grief, and the Institute for the Development of African American Youth to focus on community greening and tree equity throughout Southwest Philadelphia.
- + Hired 37 students to participate in intensive internships at the farm and river. Farm interns studied urban agriculture while supporting food security in Southwest Philadelphia, hosting weekly farm stands and installing garden beds throughout the neighborhood. River interns studied the watershed and urban ecosystems while also honing broader skills like community organizing, data collection, and environmental justice.
- + Continued research and public presentations about the complex histories of Bartram's Garden, including an ongoing focus on the Black history of Southwest Philadelphia and guided tours showcasing botanical, ecological, and cultural accounts.
- + Engaged 5,000 children through virtual and in-person programs focused on science, nature, and wellness.



EMBRACING WELLNESS & JOY IN NATURE

- + Activated the North Mile and new southern trail with free organized bike rides in partnership with the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia. Programming featured monthly "learn to ride" classes for youth and adults.
- + Expanded programming to focus on healing, wellness, and joy by partnering with local DJ's, artists, performers, makers, and healers to provide artist-led workshops, herbal remedy classes, live music, and curator-led tours focused on the land, river, and histories.
- + Exhibited collaborative public art including a largescale mosaic installation made by community members as a symbol of hope and renewal and Lenapehoking-inspired meadow weaving and cobb oven construction in partnership with the Alliance for Watershed Education.
- + Extended access to visitor amenities and the Welcome Center to include the winter season. Published a user friendly new self-guided visitor map, now available for free.
- + Proudly celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Sankofa Community Farm. Festivities included community dinners, intergenerational events, and a free fall Harvest Festival.



ADVOCATING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

- + Hosted the third annual ecoWURD Environmental Justice summit in partnership with WURD Radio. The summit focused on the climate change crisis and the relationship between violence and the environment.
- + Lobbied the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for improved assessment practices of river health using data from weekly water quality monitoring collected by the Denkyem River Guardian youth interns and volunteers. Students and staff were also lauded as featured speakers during water quality presentations hosted by River Network and the American Philosophical Society.
- + Sankofa Community Farm interns presented alongside scientists and environmental justice activists at the Franklin Institute's Youth Climate Summit, exploring climate change, its impacts, and solutions.
- + Engaged Just Strategies to lead staff and Board in comprehensive racial equity trainings and assessments. This work included educational workshops on topics including managing trauma, empathetic communication, and building a culture of inclusion as well as a full equity assessment of organizational practices.
- + Supported neighborhood residents in their partnerships with The Local Initiatives Support Corporation and external developers as they build capacity for community advocacy.

JOHN BARTRAM ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS Charles Lomax, President | Eric W. Swanson, Vice President
FISCAL YEAR 2021 Jillian C. Kirn, Secretary | Anna Jungclaus, Treasurer

