



In 1969 Phylabe Houston invited neighbors and friends to share in the planting and care of vegetable and flower gardens for their own use on a 20,000 square foot plot now known as the Community Gardens.

The oldest and largest public gardening facility in Greeley, the Community Gardens program promotes self-sufficiency, local foods, and sustainable agriculture with 28 DIY flood-irrigated garden plots that measure 60'x10' each (also available as half plots).

Community Garden plots are available for rent during the growing season, April through October.

- ☞ Irrigation water, soil preparation and a selection of tools are provided
- ☞ Gardeners of all skill levels are welcome

For more information about the Community Gardening Program, please call 970.356.8097 x:3



# HOUSTON GARDENS

...a hidden treasure!

*A brief history...*

The Gardens commemorate the spirit and foresight of the Union Colony pioneers who visualized the effect that water brought from the mountains could have on this arid region.

Once part of the short grass prairie, the Houston Gardens Property was most recently part of a large hayfield owned by George Meredith Houston. Houston, who moved to Greeley in 1890 to enroll in the newly founded Normal School, was a teacher, state senator and mayor. Amongst other things, he was an avid gardener and particularly interested in irrigation. In 1907, Houston married Gladys Sanborn and in 1910 their only child, Phylabe, was born. Phylabe and George shared a vision of one day turning their farmland into a botanic garden.

The dream eventually came to fruition when Phylabe donated the property to the Assistance League of Greeley. The land was transformed into a botanic garden and a nature center dedicated to her father and the original pioneers who brought irrigated water to this semi-arid area of Colorado. Houston Gardens effectively establishes a mountain and plains retreat in an urban area that functions as an educational resource center for any person or group interested in the natural environment.

In 2014, the West Greeley Conservation District (WGCD.org) took over the management of Houston Gardens from the Assistance League and, as of 2016, obtained ownership of the property. This hidden treasure is worthy of discovering!



# HOUSTON GARDENS

...a hidden treasure!



## GEORGE M. HOUSTON GARDENS

515 23rd Ave., Greeley, CO 80634

Owned & managed by West Greeley Conservation District

WGCD.org | 970.356.8097 x:3



Free & Open to the Public

<p><b>Spring</b> April-May</p> <p>Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun 8 am - 4 pm</p> <p>Tues, Thurs 11 am - 6 pm</p>	<p><b>Summer</b> June-Aug</p> <p>Open Daily 8 am - 7 pm</p>	<p><b>Fall</b> Sept-Oct</p> <p>Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun 8 am - 4 pm</p> <p>Tues, Thurs 11 am - 6 pm</p>
<p><b>Winter</b> Nov-March</p> <p>By Appointment</p>		



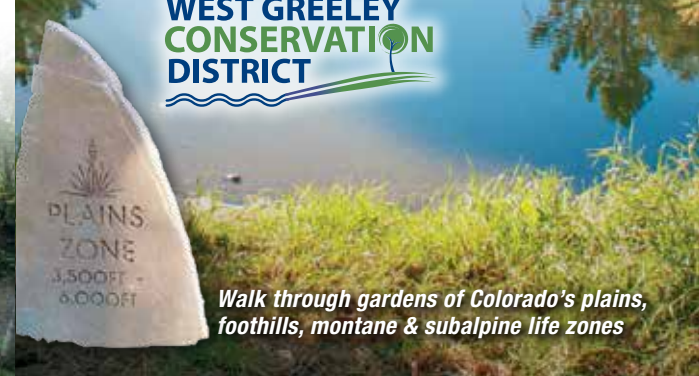
# HOUSTON GARDENS

...a hidden treasure!

NATURE CENTER

COMMUNITY GARDEN

EVENTS CENTER



Walk through gardens of Colorado's plains, foothills, montane & subalpine life zones

## NATURE CENTER

**H**ouston Gardens features 7 acres of native and locally adapted plants including theme gardens and displays of four of the five ecosystems found in Colorado—montane, subalpine, foothills, and prairie.

As you follow the handicapped-accessible nature trail through each ecosystem, the scenery gradually changes from aspens, to pines and firs, to sumacs and brush, and finally to junipers, cottonwoods and sagebrush. The gardens also feature two ponds, a flowing creek, two Eagle Scout trails, and countless species of flora. The garden also has an assortment of native mammals and birds, including foxes, raccoons, northern flickers, blue jays, hawks, and fox squirrels.



## EDUCATION AND WORKSHOPS

**T**he gardens serve as a learning platform for youth, urban backyard stewards and small-acreage landowners. West Greeley Conservation District hosts workshops on irrigation, soil health, tree pruning, xeriscaping, native planting and more.

Sign up for the District's newsletter at [WGCD.org](http://WGCD.org) to receive updates.



GARDENS EVENT PARKING  
ENTER WEST OF THE  
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB  
2400 W. 4TH ST.  
GREELEY, CO 80631

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## COLORADO LIFE ZONES NATURE WALK

### Plains 3,500' to 6,000' Elev.

Grasslands cover the eastern third of Colorado (up to 6,000 feet) and are made up of primarily short-grass species. The climate is hot in the summer and highly variable in winter. Summer thunderstorms and winter blizzards, which provide up to 16 inches of moisture annually, can be sudden and violent. Wind driven fires played a role in development of this ecosystem. Agriculture and urban sprawl have impacted the health of prairies and few areas in Colorado remain a truly native ecosystem.

### Foothills 6,000' to 8,000' Elev.

The foothills zone is the transition from the grassland/semi-desert shrublands of the lower elevations to the coniferous forests found in the montane zone. In Colorado, this zone can be found both east and west of the Rocky Mountains. Plant species native to this ecosystem generally have extensive lateral root systems to maximize water uptake and leaves with waxy coatings or hairs to reduce water loss during the growing season.

### Montane 8,000' to 10,000' Elev.

The montane ecosystem is dominated by pines, Douglas-fir and aspen. Ponderosa pine, which can be found growing in the adjoining Foothills ecosystem as low as 5,600 feet, is more common on dry, south facing slopes east of the Continental Divide and in the southwestern portion of Colorado.

### Subalpine 10,000' to 11,500' Elev.

Englemann spruce, subalpine fir, limber pine and bristlecone pine are common inhabitants of the subalpine ecosystem. The zone is characterized by a short growing season, high snowfall and cold temperatures, and locally strong winds.

*Life zone descriptions courtesy of Colorado State University Extension. Learn more at <http://www.ext.colostate.edu>.*

*To keep up to date with activities at Houston Gardens and West Greeley Conservation District, visit [WGCD.org](http://WGCD.org) and sign up for the free e-newsletter.*



Houston Gardens is available year-round for:

- ☞ Weddings & Receptions
- ☞ Reunions & Memorial Services
- ☞ Anniversary, Graduation, & Birthday Celebrations
- ☞ Meetings & Workshops

Along with the 7-acre nature facility, conveniences include ample parking, electrical & water services, and handicap-accessible lavatories. During private events, the facility is closed to the public.

For rental rates, availability, or to schedule a viewing, call 970.356.8097 x:3



**Main Entrance**  
515 23rd Ave.  
Greeley, CO  
80631

