

## **Stories the Denver Botanic Gardens can tell us about the past, present and future of the natural world**

**Day and Time:** Tuesdays, 1:00 – 2:30 (meeting at DBG at 1pm)

**Length of Course:** four consecutive Tuesdays, beginning April 30th

**Facilitator:** Molly Gardner

**Location:** Denver Botanic Gardens, 1007 York Street, Denver. Parking is free in the structure across from the gardens.

Participants will pay for their own entrance fee. Purchasing a membership is recommended. Membership for seniors for a year is \$45.00.

We will meet in the lobby in Gates Hall at 1:00pm each session and begin a tour of the gardens. Comfortable walking shoes, sunglasses, a hat, sunscreen and water are all recommended to make your tour most comfortable. We will meet rain or shine, so bring appropriate weather wear.

Tours will run approximately one and a half hours with opportunities to sit along the way.

### **Week 1:**

Starting way back... Some basics about plants, ancient gymnosperms, cycads and the development of angiosperms. The dawning of flowering plants, orchids and others, co-evolution of flowers and pollinators, plant travel, and the evolution of current eco-systems as the earth settled after the last ice age. Bio diversity.

### **Week 2:**

Humans and plants, hunters and gatherers to agriculture. The development of gardening as a hobby. Estate gardening, formal gardens, orangeries, knot gardens in Europe. Hybridization. Humans and plants settling the New World. The Columbian Exchange.

### **Week 3: The Present**

Relationships to the plant world today, native versus non-native plant selection, using plants to solve environmental problems, returning to an understanding of herbal properties and medicines, mind-bending properties of plants, arguments for a plant based diet.

### **Week 4: The Future**

As the climate changes so change the plants. What have we seen already in plant distribution in response to climate change? How are plants affected, which plants will thrive or struggle? What do we project will happen down the road? What are the Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver and national governments doing to adapt to the changes brought on by changing climate?

While we'll focus on climate change in this segment, we will also discuss other changes to the plant world brought on by human activity.