

University of Washington Botanic Gardens
Digital Tree Tours of the Washington Park Arboretum



Nature of Love

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and honor the Coast Salish peoples of this land, the land which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Suquamish, Tulalip and Muckleshoot nations. Since time immemorial, the Coast Salish peoples have been the original stewards of these lands. Colonization and its modern systems of oppression continue to disrupt their work. We hope that this acknowledgement serves as a first step in our commitment to authentic relationships with Native and Indigenous communities moving forward.

We are excited to share a brand new collection of digital tree tours for the Washington Park Arboretum! Developed by our AmeriCorps member, Thuy Luu, these tours feature some of the Arboretum's iconic collections and seasonal attractions. This new free public programming invites visitors to dive deeper into the stories of the Arboretum's tree collections and offers a variety of routes and themes to fit different schedules and interests.

A total of four tours were created with more anticipated to come:

- The **Ancient Trees** tour highlights five species that appear to be very closely identical to organisms only otherwise found in fossils.
- The **Champion Trees** tour includes seven of the Arboretum's many champion trees, which are the largest specimens of their kind in Washington State.
- The **Nature of Love** tour visits several plants and places that inspire love, sex and romance through their lore, form and reproduction.
- The **Spring Flowers** tours (short and extended version) showcase some of the Arboretum's best spots to observe spring blooms.

Google Maps were created for each tour with pinpointed specimens and locations. A visitor can use the tree tours website to take the tours which include specimen photographs and more detailed information on the identification of each species. They may also take the tours directly on the Google Maps phone application which better shows their location relative to the tour points.

The goal of creating these digital tours is to enhance the accessibility of the Arboretum's collections to our visitors. These tours are free to access and viewable on browsers for both desktop and mobile devices. They encourage people to explore the Arboretum at their own pace whether in-person or remotely. We hope you get a chance to explore the Washington Park Arboretum with these digital tours. If you have an idea for another tour theme you would like to see, email us at urbhort@uw.edu.

Nature of Love

The natural world is sweet, romantic, sexual, and so are humans!

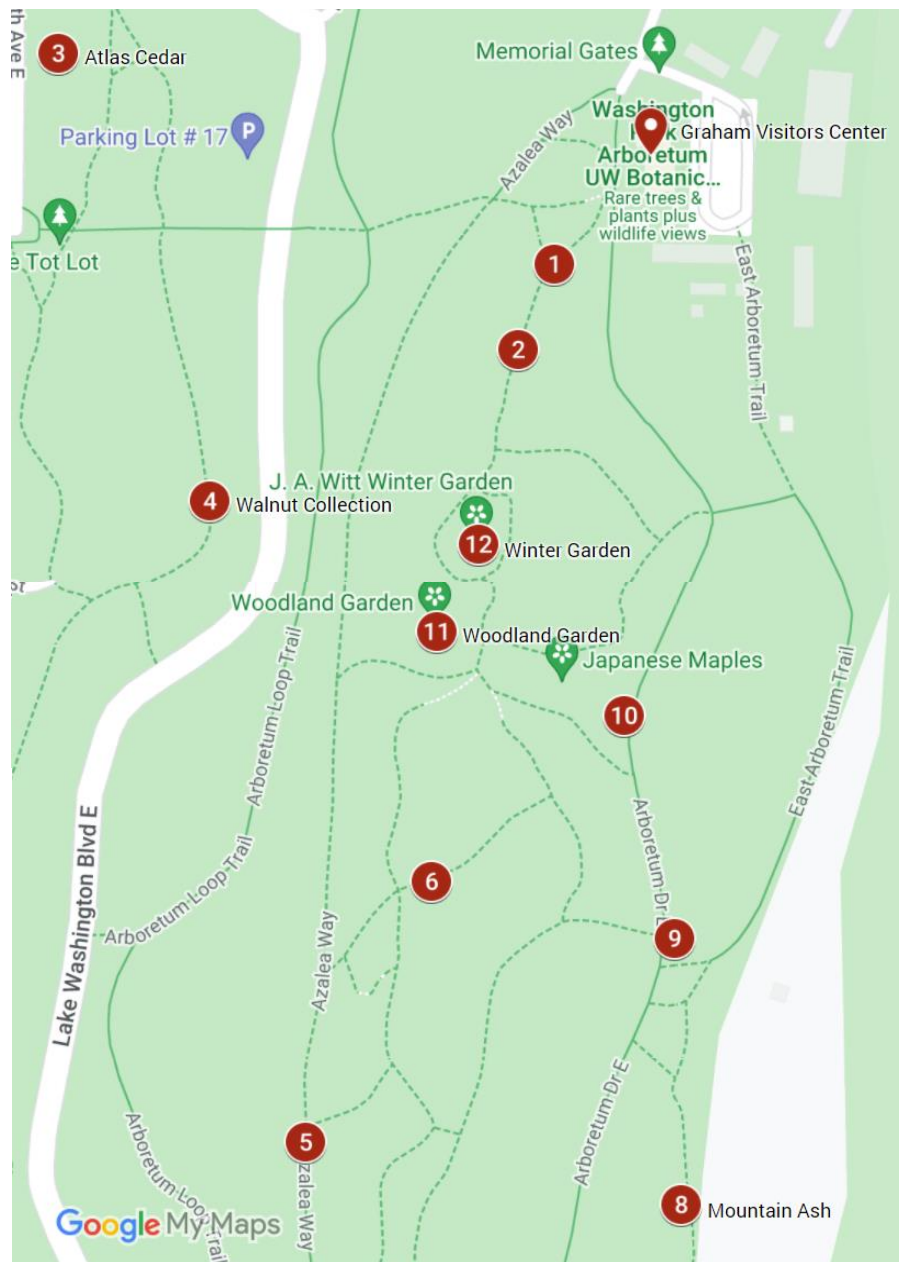
Trees and plants influence the way we think about love, marriage, and sex. From their natural forms to their effects on the human body - the story of plants and humans are intertwined.

A flower's bloom can invoke such magnetizing feelings of joy and sensuality. What is life without plants? They have always seen to our survival.

This tour will visit several plants and places that inspire love, sex and romance through their lore, form and reproduction. Come explore the Arboretum through the lens of love!

Romantic stops on this tour include:

1. Pacific Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*)
2. Oak Collection
3. Atlas Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*)
4. Walnut Collection
5. Japanese Cherry (*Prunus* sp.)
6. Loderi Valley
7. Sweet Bay (*Laurus nobilis*)
8. Ash Collection (*Sorbus* spp.)
9. Big Leaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)
10. Hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.)
11. Woodland Garden
12. Winter Garden



Nature of Love

1. Pacific Madrone



- Look here in the forest and try to find a tree with curves that is snuggling up to a tall, handsome Western red-cedar.
- The Pacific madrone tree, a broadleaf evergreen related to rhododendrons and azaleas has sweet little white flowers in spring and juicy red fruit in the fall that is edible but not tasty. Arbutus means the wild strawberry tree in Latin.

2. Oak Collection

- This collection is one of the biggest and best in the country with over 70 species, varieties, and cultivars. The only oak native to Washington is the Garry Oak. *Quercus garryana* is named after Nicholas Garry, deputy governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1822-35.
- This five-acre collection planted mostly in the early to mid- 1940s. Most are deciduous white oaks, some evergreen, and others are relatives in the oak family - like beech trees.
- Acorns are the fruiting bodies of the oak. It is said carrying acorns can increase fertility, strengthen sexual potency and preserve youthfulness.
- The acorn has also been associated with couples and love divination. Dropping two acorns into the same bowl of water will provide the inquirers with news. If the acorns float together, it was meant to be. If they float apart, woopsie!



3. Atlas Cedar



- The atlas cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) is a large cedar tree native to the Atlas Mountains of Algeria and Morocco.
- Hill's Book of Evergreens says this about evergreen trees in general "...a thousand years is but a tick of the clock when we try to conceive of the ancestry of Evergreens. They were here before the mountain ranges existed, millions of years before man or any type of mammal life was on earth."

- One love story of the cedar (with unclear origins) involves an evil emperor. This emperor fell in love with the wife of one of his faithful servants. So evil was this Emperor that he first imprisoned and then killed his servant just to be with the servant's wife. The wife, wanting nothing to do with the Emperor threw herself from a cliff – preferring death to being with him. Even in their death the Emperor would not let the husband and his wife be buried together. But, each grave grew a cedar. Each cedar grew so large, that over time the roots and branches entwined and grew together signifying the powerful love of the faithful servant and his wife.

4. Walnuts

- This area includes walnut, hickory and pecan trees. The Latin name *Juglans* derives from Jovis glans, "Jupiter's nuts", a nut fit for a god. As you walk along, keep your eyes peeled for Jupiter's nuts! See if you can find remnants from fall. Speaking of fall, this is a beautiful fall color area to visit with wonderful shades of yellow and red.
- The fallen leaves and roots secrete a toxin called juglone which kills many popular garden plants, such as tomato, apple and birch; all walnuts produce juglone, but the black walnut produces larger amounts than other species. Juglone appears to be one of the walnut's primary defense mechanisms against potential competitors for resources (water, nutrients and sunlight).



5. Japanese Cherry

- Many trees take on an unusual and unique form or shape as they grow. Trees seem to almost have a fluidness or movement associate with them. Take a look at the Japanese cherries and see what comes alive for you. For us, this tree has movement almost as though it's in the middle of a dance. This is where we can see trees as art, as sculptures. Sakura is the Japanese name for ornamental cherry trees, *Prunus serrulata*, and their blossoms.
- Cherry blossoms are an enduring metaphor for the ephemeral nature of life-lasting but a short time, and as such are frequently depicted in Japanese art - for example in the fabric used for kimonos.
- In China, cherry blossom is the symbol of feminine dominance, female beauty and sexuality. The cherry blossom is the Chinese symbol of feminine principle and it also symbolizes love in the language of herbs.



6. Loderi Valley



- This valley is named after the large-growing Loderi hybrid rhododendron known for their large fragrant flowers. Plants inspire people to be in love with plants. These Loderi hybrid rhododendrons are the result of the work of a man who loved rhododendrons. His name was Sir Edmond Loder. Hence the name Loderi.
- The name "rhododendron" derives from the Greek *rhodo-* (rose) and *-dendron* (tree).
- Observe and appreciate the form of shrubs in this valley. Note the bended trunks and branches and how some look like limbs rising from the ground or perhaps an upside down person with their head in the ground.
- This ¼-acre valley was planted in the early 1950s. The peak bloom is from late April through June. This is a fragrant amazing place in late spring. The flowers are nearly the size of your head and smell so sweet. A lovely place to stroll with a date.
- Speaking of fragrances, let's go visit a very fragrant tree!

7. Sweet Bay with your Bae

- Sweet bay laurel (*Laurus nobilis*) is a culinary herb used to flavor many dishes. It is native to the Mediterranean. Fresh leaves are very mild and do not develop their full flavor until several weeks after picking and drying.
- California Bay tree or laurel (*Umbellularia californica*) is similar to Mediterranean Bay, but stronger in flavor (pictured).
- Bay leaves from all over are used in cooking and the flavor or aroma is mostly from its essential oil, eugenol.



- In Roman mythology, Daphne, daughter of the river god Ladon, was a nymph loved by Apollo. She was a beautiful shy girl who went to her mother Gaia when Apollo's desire became too strong. Her mother changed her into a laurel. The laurel became sacred to Apollo and was used for purification because of its strong aromatic scent. Laurel is associated with Apollo throughout Greek legends. In Greek mythology, Cupid shot Daphne with a love-repelling arrow and Apollo was shot with a love-exciting arrow. Apollo was unkind to Cupid, so Cupid got revenge.

8. Mountain Ash

- The UW Botanic Gardens' Ash (*Sorbus* spp.) collection is the largest in the country. This collection is beautiful any time of year, but it is of particular interest in fall when the pomes (fruit like apples) are fully ripened and colorful. Incidentally, mountain ash is in the Rose Family.



- The Rowan tree (*Sorbus aucuparia*) plays a fascinating role in folklore across the world. In Norse mythology, the first woman was made from a rowan tree / mountain ash while the first man was made from an ash tree (*Fraxinus* sp.). In Greek mythology, the goddess of youth, Hebe was offering a chalice of ambrosia to the gods, but carelessly dropped it to the demons below. The gods sent an eagle to retrieve the chalice leading to an epic fight. The eagle shed feathers and blood which dropped to the earth below and grew into a rowan tree. The feathers would become the leaves and the blood would become the berries.

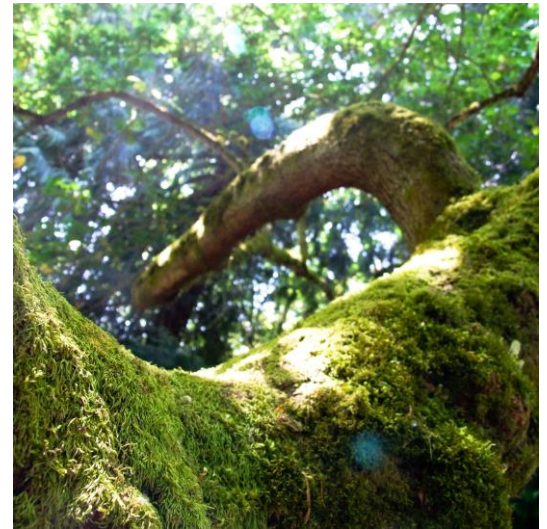
9. Big Leaf Maple

- How sweet - kissing maples!
- This Pacific Northwest native tree is known for its large leaves, which can be up to a foot or more in diameter. It carries a greater load of mosses, ferns and other plants than any other tree species in our region.

10. Hawthorn

- Hawthorns (*Crataegus sp.*) are also in the Rose family and the fruit is a "pome" like an apple or a rose hip.
- It was once said to heal a broken heart. The ancient Greek physician, Dioscorides found that consuming hawthorn fruits was correlated to increase blood flow to the heart. Today, hawthorn is used medicinally by Indigenous communities for heart ailments.
- In Arabic erotic literature, hawthorn is regarded as an aphrodisiac because the flowers presumably smell like aroused women. This is also why the hawthorn was sacred to Hymen or Hymenaeus, the Greek God of the marriage chamber.

11. Woodland Garden



- Designed in 1938, The Woodland Garden is nestled between Loderi Valley and the Winter Garden with two ponds and a stream running through its center. It houses the majority of our Japanese maple collection - one of the oldest plant collections in the Arboretum and the largest in North America.
- Around Valentine's Day, the water has the best flow and is quite peaceful. Take a moment to listen to the sound of the stream. This garden is romantic and beautiful any time of year.



12. Winter Garden

- The Joseph A. Witt Winter Garden was designed by Landscape Architect Ian Robertson as a winter room in the forest focusing on color, texture, form and fragrance. The garden strongly engages the senses including our sense of hearing because it has delicious nectar plants that attract Anna's hummingbird in the winter.
- The male Anna's hummingbird can be identified by the rose-colored iridescence on the top of its head and throat; the female is green-back, with no rufous coloring, and red spots on its throat in a patch. Anna's hummingbird is the main pollinator and a year-round resident in the winter garden. It is one of the earliest breeding birds (December – June) in North America and could have laid its eggs around Valentine's Day.
- Animal, human, and floral sexual behavior are not too different. Flowers are pretty, they get dressed up and they attract a suitor. They use many methods and means to signal their readiness. People do too: They put on flashy clothing, a variety of pleasing (or not pleasing) scents and wear an attitude they hope will attract a certain kind of person. Take a closer look at the camellia flowers. What do you notice?



13. Conclusion

“The wonder is that we can see these trees and not wonder more.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Plants are intrinsically connected to our lives. Our very survival is dependent on the products of plants – food, clothing, shelter, transportation, medicine and clean air. Our spirits are rejuvenated by plants. Our aesthetic - dance, visual art, music, poetry are all influenced by plants. Even our sexuality, our attraction to one another is in part, shaped by plants. Trees and plants are as much a part of our existence as our parents. They are the Nature and Nurture of Love.

We hope you have enjoyed the Nature of Love Tour. We've shown you several places that are spectacular in the spring, summer and fall, and there's so much more to see including a beautiful wetland on the north end of the Arboretum. **Be sure to visit again!**