City in a Garden

Chicago’s motto became “City in a Garden” in 1830 and ever since then the city as a whole has committed to bringing green spaces into our urban landscape. Discover different ways you can help make our city greener as you walk through the Conservatory’s outdoor spaces.

In a garden you can find... a compost bin! Recycle nutrients and reduce the amount of garbage you have by starting a compost bin. Table scraps and garden waste become food for your garden in these helpful bins. Look for one in the Urban Demonstration Garden.

In a garden you can find... a living wall! Our floriculturists (plant caretakers) built a special garden bed, called a living wall, on a vertical frame to add life and color to the side of our building. Look for one in the Monet Garden.

In a garden you can find... a trellis! Our floriculturists (plant caretakers) built a special structure, called a trellis, for plants to climb on. This tall, vertical frame can add color without taking up a lot of ground space. Look for a trellis in the Monet Garden.

In a garden you can find... a raised bed! You can plant, harvest and eat vegetables in the city, you just need healthy, living soil. Build a raised bed and fill it with healthy soil to lift your vegetables out of the city soil. Look in the Urban Demonstration Garden.

In a garden you can find... a honey bee! As bees collect nectar for food from different flowers, they carry pollen from one plant to another, helping plants grow and make new seeds. These insects are called pollinators. Find a honey bee in the Sensory Garden.

In a garden you can find... a butterfly! A butterfly, like a bee, is a pollinator. It uncoils its long straw-like tongue, called a proboscis, to sip nectar from flowers. Look for a butterfly in the Monet Garden.

In a garden you can find... a vegetable! We have many family favorites, like carrots, tomatoes and garlic. Look for a label of a vegetable in the Urban Demonstration Garden. Please just look, don’t pick, so other visitors can see them, too!

In a garden you can find... a rain barrel! Save rain water for another day by using a rain barrel. The white funnel on the top directs rain drops into the barrel where it can be stored for later use in the garden. Find one in the Urban Demonstration Garden.