

Live Free and Dig

with the Littleton Garden Club

Favorite things

BY MARY BINGMAN

Littleton Garden Club

"These are a few of my favorite things"

This line is from a famous song that many will remember. It's one of the most popular pieces from the famous musical, *The Sound of Music*. It's often sung as a holiday song even though it is not a traditional tune.

As we launch a brand new year, I'm sharing some favorite things in nature and gardening.

They have inspired me.

Hopefully, no matter what the weather is doing outside- you can find some inspiration too.

Favorite Nature Quotes

"In nature, nothing is perfect and everything is perfect. Trees can be contorted, bent in weird ways, and they're still beautiful."

— Alice Walker

"Many eyes go through the meadow, but few see the flowers in it."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Nature is the source of all true knowledge."

—Leonardo Da Vinci

We all need spaces that nurture our souls. Visiting a garden with a peaceful moment outside; being under a large evergreen tree

canopy covered in snow, or seeing a chipmunk scurrying by can help. In the winter, if I cannot get out for a refreshing cross country ski, I take solace in a good book or a quality nature movie or documentary.

Favorite documentary type movies or series

• "My Octopus Teacher" (2020) Netflix

"My Octopus Teacher" is a story about connection told by a free-diving filmmaker who bonds with an octopus living in a South African kelp forest.

• "Our Planet" (2019-2023) Netflix

"Our Planet" was the first nature documentary series created by Netflix. It includes David Attenborough's familiar voice. This documentary offers thrilling views and carries an urgent message. It shows the damage caused by climate change.

• "The Green Planet-Series one, seasonal worlds," BBC (2022)

The series was filmed on the South African Cape. It is colored by millions of flowers, all competing for pollinators. It shows a huge summer fire that wipes out the landscape. They somehow capture the very moment the Fire Lily blooms. It hasn't flowered since the last fire 15 years

ago. It emerges into a world with no other life around. The pollinators somehow find these small tubular flowers. The filming is spectacular. Viewing that little red Fire Lily among all the charred ground leaves you with a sense of hope.

Favorite Gardens in Europe:

• Kew Gardens in England. I love old glass greenhouses and the tropical collections there.

• Keukenhof, The Netherlands

This is the best place to experience the splendor of bulbs blooming in the spring. Spectacular large plantings featuring some new varieties. Also, it is a short train ride from Amsterdam. You can view the fields of colorful bulbs in full bloom en route to Keukenhof.

Favorite Gardens in the US -West

Japanese Tea Garden and the San Francisco Botanical Garden, San Francisco, Calif.

What a setting and so well maintained!

Favorite Arboretum in New England

Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, Boston, Mass.

There are spectacular labeled tree specimens. It is a great place for a peaceful walk in the city in any season as you appreci-

ate the splendor of the varieties of trees.

Favorite place to see amazing botany!

The Ware Collection of Blaschka Glass Models of Plants

(or simply the Glass Flowers), Cambridge, Mass.

It is a collection of extremely realistic glass botanical models at the Harvard University of Natural History. It was created by the Blaschkas back in the late 1800's at their studio in Germany. It includes life-size models (representing 780 species and varieties of plants). There are about 3,000 detailed models. The amazing part is how these delicate glass models survive so close to the subway system! An added bonus is that this museum is conveniently near a great selection of restaurants.

May you find your own "favorites list" as we start a new year and the long winter upon us.

"I simply remember my favorite things

And then I don't feel so bad!"

As we begin our 2nd year of writing this column, the Littleton Garden Club members wish you a Happy New Year!

For more information about our club or our meetings, visit our Web site: <https://www.littletonnhgardenclub.org/>.