

MAP KEY

1. Entrance Arbor

Stop at the nearby mailbox to obtain brochures on composting, pros and cons of the compost bins on display, program schedules, and a site map with garden descriptions.

2. Kiosk

Circle the kiosk to learn how to mix vegetable kitchen scraps and grass clippings (Greens) with leaves (Browns) so you can make black gold (Compost) at your home. Consider how composting benefits your garden and the environment. Observe the water conservation feature within the kiosk where 300 gallons of rain water can be stored for use by gardeners.

3. Compost Bins

Surrounding the kiosk are more than 20 types of home-constructed and commercial composting methods. Signs compare the advantages and disadvantages of each. Check inside a bin to see the greens and browns heating up and becoming compost.

4. Butterfly Garden

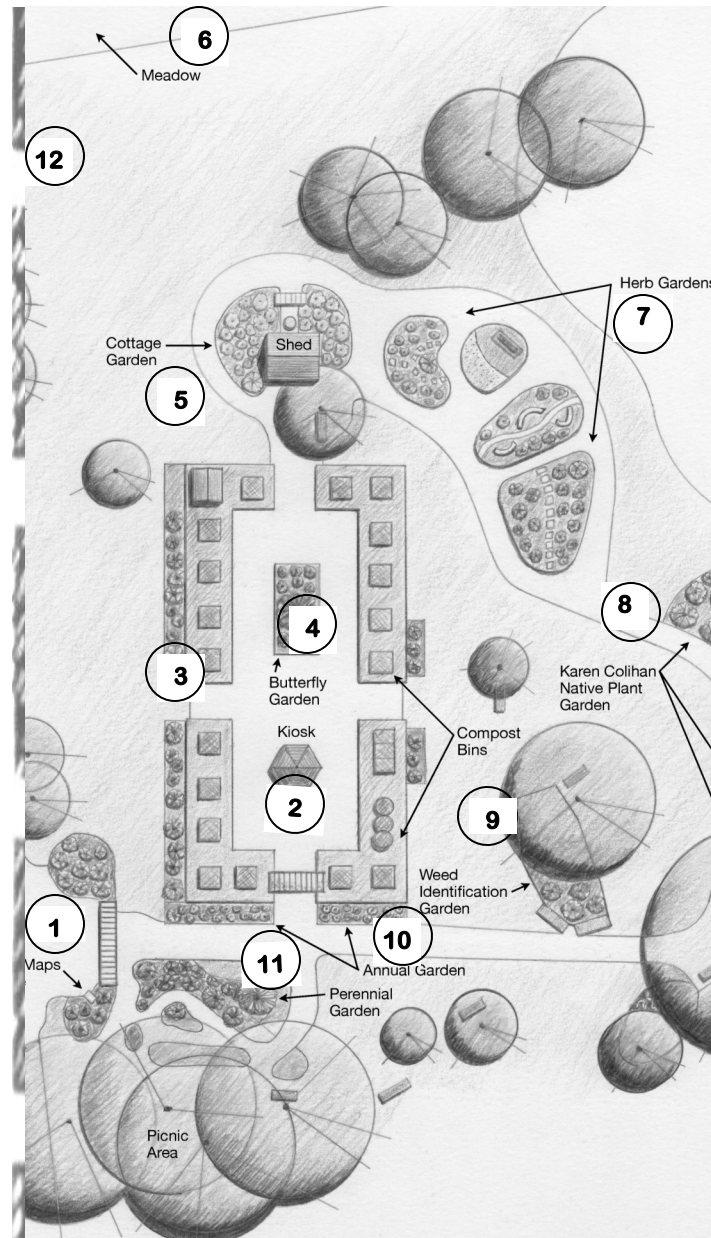
Be delighted in the beauty of the butterfly and the different stages of its life cycle. The nectar and host plants here have been specially chosen to provide the kind of food, water source, and shelter that butterflies and their caterpillars prefer. At the base of the kiosk is a second nectar source bed, and on the east side of the compost bins are two host garden beds that are caterpillar food sources.

5. Cottage Garden

Planted around the tool shed, the Cottage Garden offers an informal mix of perennials, biennials, annuals and vines. The garden is home to two rain barrels, a birdbath, a window box planter, a bench with two adjacent pots and an arbor. The plants and hardscape are arranged to display the style of a "Cottage Garden".

6. Meadow

Throughout the year bluebirds are one of the many species of wildlife that can be observed in this wetland meadow recently restored with native grasses and wildflowers. This habitat provides the four basic elements necessary for wildlife to survive: food, water, cover, and places to raise young.



Parking (including two disabled spaces) is convenient. Other MEG site features include picnic tables, benches, two restrooms, and easy access to Mercer County hiking trails, including the Lawrence-Hopewell Trail, Curlis Woods, and Rosedale Park.

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7. Herb Garden

The Medicinal section of the Herb Garden highlights herbs used for healing and wellness. The center Culinary section now features a raised bed with improved drainage and enhanced soil. The section nearest the shed tests the ability of selected herbs to grow in heavy clay soils.

8. Karen Colihan Native Plant Garden

Think of ecological balance and harmony as you walk around these trees, shrubs and perennials that are native to wetlands of the Eastern Deciduous Forest eco-region focusing on plants native to Mercer County, NJ. Information is provided on site that shows the important relationship between native plants and our local ecosystem.

9. Weed Identification Garden

Designed to help home gardeners identify the myriad self-sown plants that appear in every garden, this exhibit contains local weeds – perennial species and a rotating seasonal display of annual weed species.

10. Annual Garden

Enjoy the vibrant colors of this garden. It is redesigned each year around a different theme by combining unique varieties grown from seed with plants readily available from nurseries.

11. Perennial Garden

Relax in the shade and discover the beauty of the perennials and ground covers that require shade or part sun in order to thrive. This garden demonstrates plants that grow under a variety of difficult conditions including dry shade, competing tree roots, wet soil, and strong winds.

12. Lawrence- Hopewell Trail

Cyclists and hikers can consider the elegant display provided year round by the native grasses and wildflowers that border the trail on the east side and the row of Winterberry hollies bordering on the west side.

What is the Mercer Educational Gardens?

This award-winning site features a self-guided tour of display gardens, a wetland meadow restored with native grasses and wildflowers, and more than 20 composting methods for home use. It focuses on composting of garden and household refuse and on plant selection and culture for various types of gardens. Public gardening events and programs are held at the site several times a year.

Conveniently situated adjacent to the Lawrence-Hopewell Trail, the Gardens are located in a district of Mercer Meadows. They are maintained and supported by the Rutgers Master Gardeners with auxiliary help from Mercer County Parks (www.mercercountyparks.org).

Who Are The Rutgers Master Gardeners?

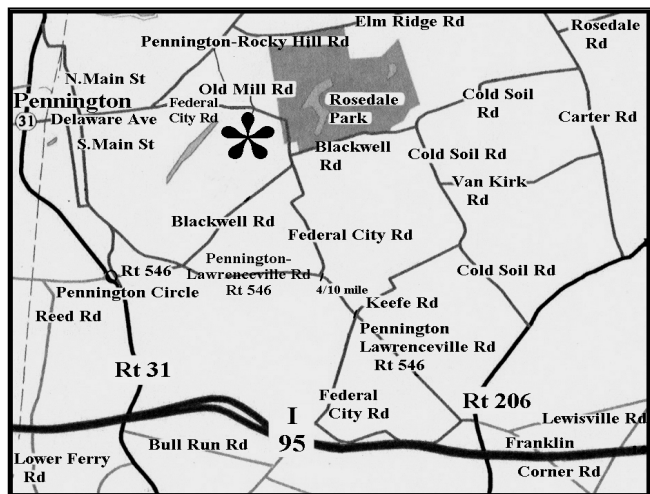
The Master Gardener (MG) Program was created by Cooperative Extension to assist county agricultural agents in serving the public. The State Land Grant University system and its Cooperative Extension outreach offices were created by Congress to assist what was then the predominately agricultural community by disseminating the latest research information. As communities changed from rural to urban and suburban, county agricultural agents found themselves deluged with horticultural questions from the increased population of homeowners and businesses. Started in 1972 by a Washington State Cooperative Extension Agent, the MG program has spread to 50 states and several countries. Eighteen of New Jersey's 21 counties now have a Master Gardener program. Former County Horticulturist, Barbara J. Bromley, started the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Mercer County program in 1993.

Brian M. Hughes, Mercer County Executive
Aaron T. Watson, Executive Director,
Mercer County Park Commission
Dr. Brian Schilling, Director, Cooperative Extension
Chad Ripberger, County Extension Department Head

For more information about the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Mercer County, MEG and our upcoming events, call the Extension Office at **(609)-989-6830**, or visit our website at www.mgofmc.org

Mercer Educational Gardens (MEG)

provides education on environmentally sound garden practices.



DIRECTIONS

From I-95 Southbound

Take the Federal City Road North Exit 5B (there is no exit from I-95 Northbound. Use the Route 31 Northbound directions). Continue to the second traffic light and turn left onto Pennington-Lawrenceville Road (Route 546). Travel 4/10 of a mile and turn right, which is again Federal City Road. Continue past Rosedale Park (at the sharp left bend in the road) and turn left into the entrance for the Mercer County Stables. Circle around past the barn and bear left at the fork to reach the parking lot.

From Route 31 Northbound

At the Pennington Circle turn right onto Pennington-Lawrenceville Road (Route 546 East). At the traffic light, go straight onto Blackwell Road. At the stop sign turn left onto Federal City Road. Continue past Rosedale Park (at the sharp left bend in the road) and turn left into the entrance for the Mercer County Stables. Circle around past the barn and bear left at the fork to reach the parking lot.

From Route 1 Southbound

Take the turnoff for Lawrenceville (Route 546 West). Travel on this road to the second traffic light, and cross Route 206. Continue on this road, which bears sharply to the right, to the next traffic light at Keefe Road. Continue 4/10 of a mile and turn right onto Federal City Road. Continue past Rosedale Park (at the sharp left bend in the road) and turn left into the entrance for the Mercer County Stables. Circle around past the barn and bear left at the fork to reach the parking lot.



MERCER EDUCATIONAL GARDENS

431A Federal City Road
Pennington, NJ
Hours: M-F: 7am-8pm
S-S: 7am-5pm
Self-Guided Tours

Partial Accessibility for the Disabled

www.mgofmc.org

