

THE WALLED GARDEN

This guide describes a suggested route around the Walled Garden. Whichever way you move around the gardens, take your time and enjoy the tranquillity here at Scampston.

The layout of the Walled Garden was designed by Piet Oudolf in 1999, one of the leading figures of the New European Garden Style of planting. Although his ideas are now much imitated, the garden here at Scampston is an outstanding example of the way in which Oudolf combines his skill as a designer with his authority and knowledge as a plantsman, in what remains his largest private commission in the UK.

Plants in the Walled Garden are either individually labelled or labelled on a planting plan which is located next to the border. There are also Plant Identification books in the Conservatory and the Ticket Office. Please do take care near the open ponds and lakes.

1. Plantsman's Walk:

An avenue of limes, planted in blocks of three, with a border of mainly early flowering plants and cloud-clipped box. Of particular interest in spring is *Viburnum plicatum*, with its white horizontal plates of flowers, a good selection of both herbaceous and tree peonies and an under-planting of many unusual bulbs. In summer, look out for the interesting berries of *Actaea alba* and the huge leaves of *Tetrapanax papyrifer* 'Rex', whilst in the autumn, hydrangeas, acers and *Euonymus planipes* look particularly spectacular.

2. Drifts of Grass

Here you will find swathes of *Molinia Poul Petersen* grass running through the close mown grass of the lawn. By mid-August tall flower spikes give a dramatic sense of movement as they wave in the breeze. In the centre, shading the seats, are four *Phellodendron chinensis* trees under-planted with *Salvia verticillata* 'Purple Rain'. The shrub planting to either side of this area is maturing so that the neighbouring gardens will eventually be hidden from view.

3 & 4 Cut Flower and Vegetable Gardens

These gardens supply the house and Café with a range of fresh vegetables and flowers. The planting schemes change regularly. Several of the circular beds in the Cut Flower Garden are being planted and maintained by local schools and volunteers as part of a Heritage Lottery funded project. Note also the interesting gate between these two gardens which was designed by local craftsman Peter Coates. The gate contains the word *Yat*, which is Yorkshire dialect for gate.

12. The Mount

Finally, you will leave the garden via the Mount – a crisp grassy mound from which the whole design scheme and the view beyond can be appreciated. With its flat topography, formal ground patterns and low tapestries of plants, the Walled Garden cries out to be viewed from above. Climb the steep staircase to the crowning platform, and you will get a fuller sense of the whole Oudolf design. The Mount is surrounded by a wildflower meadow which at different times is alive with giant snow-drop-like leucocjums, blue and cream camassias, lilacs and scabious. The ornamental orchard of Yoshino Cherry trees are arranged in lines around the Mount. In April, the cherry blossom is spectacular, though brief.

11. Serpentine Garden

The Serpentine Garden contains six serpentine hedges of clipped yew, contained by clover shaped elements. The beds in this garden contain many interesting shrubs including *Parrotia persica* and *Magnolia loebneri*, these are under-planted with mainly early-flowering herbaceous species.

9. Katsura Grove

The backdrop to the Perennial Meadow is the Katsura Grove. The leaves on the trees in this area have a strong scent of caramel in the autumn and are under-planted with 'woodlanders' to give colour late into the year. The central oval bed is inter-planted with *Molinia* 'Transparent', which waves in the slightest breeze when in flower, and *Monarda* 'Pawnee' which flowers well even in this shady area.

8. The Conservatory

Built by Richardson of Darlington in 1894, the Conservatory was restored in 2015 thanks to grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and others, and is once again a focal point at the heart of the garden. Now in use as a Heritage and Learning Centre, the Conservatory houses a fascinating series of exhibition rooms.

Do take time to have a look around and discover the surprising history of the building and the people that have lived at Scampston in the past. The Conservatory hosts a range of courses & lectures, please do ask in the Ticket Office for more details.

7. Perennial Meadow

The Perennial Meadow is in front of the Conservatory and surrounds the old dipping pond. Here Oudolf has used his technique of naturalised planting to give a long season of interest. The form of each plant – leaf, flower head and stem – is just as important as its colour and scent. Notice that, due to the careful choice of plants and the maintenance routine of this area, no staking is required. This area is a magnet for butterflies and bees – enjoy sitting in one of the meadows and watch them at work.

6 & 10. Spring and Summer Box Borders

Three metre squares of box sit within traditional herbaceous borders backed by beech hedges in the Spring and Summer Box Borders. The choice of plants for these beds ensures that the borders look their best at different times of year. The borders are a riff on traditional herbaceous borders. They are full of Oudolf's characteristic plant palette – soft hued perennials punctuated by ornamental grasses.

5. Silent Garden

In the Silent Garden, 24 round columns of yew, with their square clipped bases, are allowed to reach a height of three metres before their tops are levelled. The columns reflect splendidly in the elegant rectangular pond, around which they are symmetrically arranged. This minimalist garden, with its broad expanse of lawn, has become much stronger and steadfast as the yews have matured. The modest low bench fits with the clarity and simplicity of the design. Deliberately restricting this area to just green planting gives a wonderful calming atmosphere.

