ABOUT OUR FOUNDERS

Virginia and Prentice Bloedel purchased this property in 1951 and owned it for more than 30 years. The reluctant heir to his father’s timber business, Mr. Bloedel was educated at Yale University. A naturalist at heart, perhaps the longest reaching “green” idea of Mr. Bloedel’s was his introduction of Virginia Bloedel. Working with the rugged geography of the land, they artfully transformed a rough-hewn Northwest forest into a harmonious series of curated gardens, structural features, and distinctive landscapes, using nature as canvas and paint.

Visiting Bloedel Reserve is specifically designed to be a quietly immersive experience in nature. A 2-mile trail of well-maintained bark winds through the Reserve; to walk the entire loop, plan approximately 2 hours.

SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Spring is peak floral season in the Rhododendron Glen Summer brings shades of green glowing against the sky Autumn paints colors across the gardens Winter fills open vistas with frost-tipped grasses

MEMBERSHIP & SUPPORT

Apply today’s admission and become a part of our ever-growing community of members. Visit our website to learn more about how you can support the Reserve.

ACCESSIBILITY

Bloedel Reserve strives to be accessible for all guests. Please ask Guest Services for an accessibility map. Wheelchairs are available at the Gatehouse and Residence.

ETIQUETTE

• Respect the garden and stay on trails and lawns
• Disconnect from technology: silence your cell phone, and minimize use
• Picnics, drones, pets, portrait photography, smoking, vaping, alcoholic beverages and weapons are not allowed

The land that is now Bloedel Reserve is located on the ancestral lands of the Suquamish Tribe, who stewarded it thoughtfully for thousands of years.

Angela Collins purchases the property, develops a beach cabin, and engages architect J. Lister Kimes to build the Residence, which was completed in 1931.

1931
Prentice and Virginia Bloedel purchase “Collinswood” from Mrs. Collins and engage Holmes to finalize the original home, renaming the property “Agate Point Farm.”

1951
The Bloedels live on the property full time and develop landscapes with help from leading designers and thinkers, including Thomas Church, Richard Haag, Fujitaro Kubota, and Dr. Koichi Kawana.

1974
The first Master Plan is completed, weaving together 20 distinct landscapes and outlining needs for public access.

1985
Bloedel Reserve opens to the public with very limited attendance.

1988
Public visitation expanded, community programming developed, and public charity status earned.

2010
The Strolls for Well-Being and Creative Residency Programs launched.

2014
An ambitious program of improvements is undertaken, including the Buxton Bird Marsh & Pollinator Meadow, Front Entry, Japanese Garden & Guest House, and Compost Facility.

2021
Learn more: bloedelreserve.org

2015-

Mr. Bloedel’s retirement years and, almost every day, he could be found walking the grounds. Mr. Bloedel was deeply interested in the relationship between people and the natural world, and the power of landscape to evoke emotions—from tranquility to exhilaration. He was far ahead of his time in his understanding of the therapeutic power of nature and funded early research into the psychological effect of time spent outdoors.

Mrs. Bloedel was a patron of the arts and was responsible for the original design, furnishings, and develop landscapes with leading designers and thinkers.

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Mrs. Bloedel was a patron of the arts and was responsible for the original design, furnishings, and much of the artwork in the Residence. Because Mr. Bloedel was colorblind, she inspired the color palette of the Rhododendron Glen...her favorite blooms are on display there.

Bloedel Reserve is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization.
JAPANESE GARDEN
Showcasing idealized natural features that invite visitors to experience plants, stones, and water in carefully composed scenes.

Service Road
Paved route ends

JAPANESE GARDEN
East Entrance

MID POND
Welcoming guests into the light with expansive views of the water, lawns, and the Residence beyond.

RESIDENCE & BLUFF
Sweeping, dramatic vistas of Puget Sound and the Cascades connect the grounds to the greater Salish Sea landscape.

MID POND & BOARDWALK
Paired yet contrasting experiences of Reserve topography provide an enchanting, immersive experience of naturalistic woodland.

POLLINATOR MEADOW
Ringed by a hedgerow rich in bird habitat, native plants span a gentle hill, inviting visitors to emerge from the cool woodland into open space.

TRESTLE BRIDGE & BOARDWALK
Paired yet contrasting experiences of Reserve topography provide an enchanting, immersive experience of naturalistic woodland.

MOSS GARDEN
Finely textured and primeval—an intimate rainforest landscape of mosses forming a bed for trees, stumps, and fallen logs.

RESIDENCE & BLUFF
Sweeping, dramatic vistas of Puget Sound and the Cascades connect the grounds to the greater Salish Sea landscape.

MEADOW TRAIL & SHEEP SHEDS
Offering expansive views of the pond, islands, and water’s edge where native plantings create habitats for wildlife.

SEWAN POND & ORCHID TRAIL
Providing a peaceful relationship between water and woods as the path wanders upward through tall trunks of hemlock and fir.

REFLECTION POOL
and adjacent CAMELLIA TRAIL
Providing a peaceful relationship with water and a soothing transition through dappled woods.

RHODODENDRON GLEN
Sinuous pathways through steep terrain and diverse vegetation create a myriad of visual experiences.

ARRIVAL GARDEN
Creating a seamless entry experience reflective of the diversity and informality of the Reserve’s landscapes.

SWAN POND & ORCHID TRAIL
Providing a peaceful relationship between water and woods as the path wanders upward through tall trunks of hemlock and fir.

THE JOURNEY

1. Arrival Garden & Gatehouse
2. Western Red Cedar
3. Trail Junction
4. Meadow Trail & Sheep Sheds
5. Forest
6. Buxton Bird Marsh & Pollinator Meadow
7. Trestle Bridge
8. Boardwalk (Stairs)
9. Boardwalk Bypass
10. Viewpoint
11. Mid Pond
12. The Residence
13. Bluff Overlook
14. Stair Bypass
15. Waterfall Overlook (Stairs)
16. Himalayan Birch Trail
17. Bluff Trail
18. Christmas Pond
19. Rhododendron Glen
20. Horseshoe Trail
21. Orchard Trail Entrance (Stairs)
22. Swan Pond
23. Orchard Trail
24. Maple Lane
25. Japanese Garden
26. East Entrance
27. Sand & Stone Garden
28. Japanese Guest House
29. Japanese Garden (Stairs)
30. Japanese Garden Exit
31. Moss Garden
32. The Reflection Pool
33. Camellia Trail Woods
34. Exit to parking lot

Horticulture & Design
Conservation & Stewardship
Creativity & Inspiration
Nature & Well-Being

“...being present in nature elevates and nurtures the human spirit, heals hearts and minds, and enriches our communities, and our world.” —Virginia Bloedel

LEARN MORE

START YOUR JOURNEY HERE

Paved Route: 1. Gatehouse to 12. Residence

Hiking Map Points
Main Trail (Bark)
Suggested Route
Gravel Trail
Route (Pavement)
Service Road (Closed)
Service Road
Stairs
Bench
Restrooms
First Aid Kit
AED
Parking
Water Bottle Fill Station