

2016

**Period Gardens at  
Miller-Cory House Museum**

**New Jersey Native Plants &  
Children's Sensory Garden**

**Colonial Herb & Vegetable  
Gardens**

**Dye & Fern Gardens**

**Heirloom Trees & Shrubs**



**Miller-Cory House Museum  
Westfield, New Jersey  
[www.millercoryhouse.org](http://www.millercoryhouse.org)**

## New Jersey Native Plants and Children's Sensory Garden



Plants in this garden are native to the northeast, or were introduced by early settlers to the area. They have been selected here for their sensory characteristics, i.e. smell, taste, and touch. Many of these plants also shared medicinal and culinary uses during the colonial period. The garden was established in 2004 by the Rake & Hoe Garden Club of Westfield (R&HGC). Specimens in the garden include:

### Native Perennials

Anise Hyssop, *Agastache foeniculum*  
Aster (New York), *Aster novi-belgii*  
Pot Marigold, *Calendula officinalis*  
Coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea*  
Horsetail, *Equisetum hymenale*  
Rattlesnake Master, *Eryngium yuccifolium*  
Lemon Balm, *Melissa officinalis*  
Bee Balm, *Monarda didyma*  
Sweet Cicely, *Myrrhis odorata*  
Bloodroot, *Sanguinaria canadensis*  
Soapwort, *Saponaria officinalis*  
Lamb's Ears, *Stachys byzantine*  
Thyme, *Thymus vulgaris*



### Native Shrubs

Shadbush(Serviceberry), *Amelanchier canadensis*  
Butterfly Weed, *Asclepias tuberosa*  
New Jersey Tea, *Ceanothus americanus*  
Inkberry, *Ilex glabra*  
Bayberry, *Myrica sp.*  
Highbush Blueberry, *Vaccinium corymbosum*



Spring cleanup at the  
Children's Sensory Garden  
by members of R&HGC.

## Colonial Herb & Vegetable Gardens

The **herb garden** by the well house hosts a variety of perennial herbs used during colonial times. In addition to their widespread culinary and medicinal uses, herbs were also used for personal hygiene and when dried, placed throughout the house to mask off-odors, especially during the long winter months. The garden is organized into 4 areas: culinary, medicinal, fragrant and bee-attracting. An inscribed walkway runs through the garden, established in 2015 with memorial donations to Miller-Cory House Museum.



Chives, *Allium schoenoprasum*  
Tarragon, *Artemisia dracunculus*  
Wormwood, *Artemisia ludoviciana*  
Fennel, *Foeniculum vulgare*  
Lavender, *Lavandula sp.*  
Lemon Balm, *Melissa officinalis*  
Mint, *Mentha sp.*  
Love-in-a-Mist, *Nigella damascena*  
Oregano, *Origanum vulgare*  
Rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*  
Sage, *Salvia officinalis*  
Winter Savory, *Satureja montana*  
Lamb's Ear, *Stachys byzantine*  
Feverfew, *Tanacetum parthenium*  
Thyme, *Thymus vulgaris*



The **vegetable garden** by the corn crib provides examples of plants from a cook's garden in colonial times. These would be planted to provide fresh vegetables throughout the growing season. Surplus crops would be canned or dried for use during the winter. Some examples are:

Swiss Chard, *Beta vulgaris*  
Kohlrabi, *Brassica oleracea*  
Carrots, *Daucus carota* subsp. *sativus*  
Pole Beans, *Phaseolus vulgaris*  
Peas, *Pisum sativum*  
Radishes, *Raphanus sativus*  
Rhubarb, *Rheum rhabarbarum*  
Spinach, *Spinacia oleracea*  
Lettuce - all varieties in spring & fall



## Colonial Dye Garden

Local plants were used early on to dye wool and textiles, often borrowing from local Indian customs. Native trees and shrubs used included butternut (bark & roots), black walnut, choke cherry, sassafras, sumac, and berry bushes. Perennials included those in the dye garden:

Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*  
Butterflyweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*  
False Indigo, *Baptisia australis*  
Coneflower, *Echinacea sp.*  
Blue Flag, *Iris versicolor*  
Downy Phlox, *Phlox pilosa*  
Mayapple, *Podophyllum peltatum*  
Bloodroot, *Sanguinaria canadensis*



## Native Fern Garden

Ferns provide a protective ground cover in shady areas and help to stabilize soils on slopes. This shady spot showcases a number of species native to the northeast.



Maidenhair Fern, *Adiantum pedatum*  
Ostrich Fern, *Matteuccia struthiopteris*  
Cinnamon Fern, *Osmunda cinnamomea*  
Interrupted Fern, *Osmunda claytoniana*  
Christmas Fern, *Polystichum acrostichoides*

## Other Heirloom Plantings

On the street side of the Miller-Cory house, heirloom apple trees are planted where once an orchard stood. In colonial times, fruits not consumed during harvest would be cided and cellared for use through the winter months.

Next to the front entrance, left, are heirloom roses and ornamental herbs of the period. These surround a beautiful arbor of hops. Hops (*Humulus lupulus*) is best known for its use in beer fermentation. In addition to their antibacterial and flavoring properties, hops have been used medicinally over the centuries to treat a wide range of ailments.





## History & Background

The *Miller-Cory House Museum* is a restored circa 1740 farmhouse in historic Westfield. It is listed on the *State and National Registers of Historic Places* and is a site on the *New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail*. From its location on a road well traveled even in present times, it witnessed the British retreat from the Jersey militia during the Revolutionary War and served as a homestead to two prominent local families, *Miller* and *Cory*.

Today, the Miller-Cory farmhouse serves as a living museum of colonial America. With its many educational programs, it offers a wide array of opportunities to learn about our past, especially activities associated with daily life during colonial times.

The grounds surrounding the farmhouse include an orchard with 18th century fruit trees, vegetable and herb gardens, and a dye garden with plants that might have been used during colonial times.

The *Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield (R&HGC)* established a new garden area in 2004, to the right of the house entrance, comprised of native plants and perennials for the senses, (NJ Native Plants and Children's Sensory Garden). Funding for the gardens was provided through matching grants from the *Miller-Cory House Museum* and *The Principal Financial Group, Inc.* The R&HGC continues to maintain these gardens.

The herb and vegetable gardens are located to the far right and front of the farmhouse entrance. These are maintained by museum volunteers and the Master Gardening program of Union county. Dye and fern gardens lie behind the house. Fruit-bearing trees and other heirloom shrubs stand to the left of the building.

Plantings have been selected for their historic usefulness to a colonial family. Whenever possible, native plants or introduced species that were available in the 18th century have been planted. Many of these, albeit usually more recent cultivars, can still be found in residential gardens throughout the northeast. It is hoped that a new and greater appreciation for both nature and history will "take root" in those who visit the gardens.



**Miller-Cory House Museum**  
614 Mountain Avenue  
Westfield, New Jersey  
(908) 232-1776  
[www.millercoryhouse.org](http://www.millercoryhouse.org)

### *Special Thanks to:*

Docents and Staff of MC House Museum

Members of Rake & Hoe Garden Club of Westfield

Master Gardeners of Union Co.,  
NJAES Rutgers Cooperative Extension  
[www.ucnj.org/rutgers-cooperative-extension-of-union-county/](http://www.ucnj.org/rutgers-cooperative-extension-of-union-county/)

