



CELESTIAL SUMMER PLANTING GUIDE

2026

WELCOME

Anchoring a diverse and vibrant live-work community, Madison Square Park is both an intimate neighborhood park and an international destination for 60,000 daily visitors. A public space since 1686, the park has been a gathering place for people from all walks of life for centuries. Today, it is also a public garden, urban forest, wildlife habitat, public art exhibition space, a haven for children and pets to play, and one of New York City's most transcendent and welcoming places.

Since 2002, the park has been managed by Madison Square Park Conservancy, the nonprofit that raises 100% of the park's operating budget.



MADISON SQUARE PARK'S MOON TREE

What is a Moon Tree?

In early 1971, NASA astronaut Stuart Roosa carried seeds from five tree species with him on the Apollo 14 mission. After returning to Earth, the seedlings, known as Moon Trees, were distributed to schools, state capitals, national parks, NASA centers, and dignitaries around the world.

What is an Artemis Moon Tree?

Building on the Apollo 14 legacy, NASA's Artemis Program sent a new generation of Moon Tree seeds into space aboard the Orion spacecraft in late 2022. The seeds orbited the Moon for approximately four weeks before returning to Earth, where Forest Service scientists studied, germinated, and grew the seedlings.

American Sweetgum

(Liquidambar styraciflua)

We are proud stewards of an American Sweetgum moon tree, known for its distinctive star-shaped leaves, brilliant fall colors, and adaptability to various climates. The tree can be found on Farragut Lawn on the north end of the park.

Celebrating the Moon Tree

After a year of growth, the tree will be celebrated with a day of lunar programs on July 16, the anniversary of the first lunar space launch. To further celebrate our Moon Tree, the park's summer horticultural display will highlight a lunar theme, featuring night-blooming flowers and plantings with celestial names and themes. In partnership with the Poetry Society of America, themed poems will be placed throughout the celestial plantings, including a newly commissioned poem inspired by our Moon Tree's journey.



SUMMER 2026

Lawn	Common Name	Botanical Name
Seward	Creeping Jenny	<i>Lysmachia</i> 'Outback Sunet'
Seward	The Four'O Clock	<i>Mirabilis jalapa</i>
Seward	Giant Hyssop	<i>Agastache</i> 'Apricot Sunrise'
Conkling	Royal Cape Plumbago	<i>Plumbago auriculata</i> 'Monott'
Conkling	Purple Fountain Grass	<i>Pennisetum advena x setaceum</i> 'Rubrum'
Conkling	Starflower	<i>Pentas</i> 'Starcluster White'
Southern Fountain	Kangaroo Paw	<i>Angiozanthos flavidus x rufus</i> 'Big Red'
Southern Fountain	Eyeball Plant	<i>Acmella oleracea</i>
Southern Fountain	Lantana	<i>Lantana</i> 'Bandana Gold'
Reflecting Pool	Moonflower	<i>Ipomea alba</i>
Reflecting Pool	Night Jasmine	<i>Cestrum nocturnum</i>
Reflecting Pool	Billy Buttons	<i>Craspedia globosa</i>
Reflecting Pool	American White Waterlily	<i>Nymphaea odorata</i>
Reflecting Pool	Missouri Waterlily	<i>Nymphaea</i> 'Missouri'
Reflecting Pool	Midnight Serenade Waterlily	<i>Nymphaea</i> 'Midnight Serenade'

CELESTIAL GARDEN MAP



- 1.Seward
- 2.Conkling
- 3.Southern Fountain
- 4.Reflecting Pool

SEWARD

DAWN/DUSK

CREEPING JENNY | *LYSMACHIA* 'OUTBACK SUNSET'



Creeping Jenny | *Lysmachia* 'Outback Sunset' is native to China and is grown mainly as a trailing groundcover or hanging-basket "spiller," prized as much for its gold-and-green variegated foliage as for its flowers. The small, cup-shaped, red-centered yellow flowers open during the day with no real closing cycle and carry no notable fragrance. They draw in butterflies and other small pollinators, though the plant is grown more for color impact than as a major pollinator resource. Bloom time runs from mid-spring into summer, sometimes sporadically continuing through the season rather than as one continuous flush. Flower color stays a consistent golden yellow with a red eye across the cultivar, while the foliage varies more — ranging from chartreuse and lime green to gold with a green center blotch, sometimes taking on a coppery-bronze blush in cooler weather.

THE FOUR'C'CLOCK | *MIRABILIS JALAPA*



The Four'c'clock | *Mirabilis jalapa* flower not only comes in colors you might see at dawn or dusk: purple, pink, and violet, but the flower opens at dusk, between 4pm to 8pm, and closes in the morning. Once open, the flowers emit a strong fragrance, drawing in nighttime pollinators. This plant is native to North, Central, and South America, and can get quite big and shrubby. Different colors of flowers may appear on the same plant and they bloom till fall, allowing us to enjoy them for months to come.

GIANT HYSSOP | *AGASTACHE* 'APRICOT SUNRISE'



Giant Hyssop | *Agastache* 'Apricot Sunrise' is an F1 hybrid bred from *A. coccinea* and *A. aurantiaca*, both native to the southwestern U.S. and Mexico, so the plant itself is a cultivated hybrid rather than a wild species. Its tubular apricot-orange flowers stay open through the day and don't have a distinct closing cycle — they remain accessible to pollinators continuously while in bloom — and both the blooms and the grayish-green foliage carry a sweet minty-anise fragrance. It's a magnet for hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees, and it blooms from late spring/early summer into fall, sometimes lasting until the first frost. Other Giant Hyssop *Agastache* varieties widen the color palette considerably, ranging through purple, blue, pink, red, yellow, and white.

CONKLING

STARS

ROYAL CAPE PLUMBAGO | *PLUMBAGO AURICULATA* 'MONOTT'

Royal Cape Plumbago is native to South Africa and Mozambique, where it grows as a scrambling shrub in valley bushveld. Its phlox-like, five-lobed flowers open during the day and have no real fragrance. They're a strong draw for butterflies and bees, with hummingbirds occasionally visiting too. Bloom season runs mainly from late spring through fall, though in frost-free climates it can flower nearly year-round. 'Royal Cape' *Plumbago* itself is a deep, vivid blue selection, while the species comes in paler sky-blue, white (var. *alba*), and occasionally pink-flowered forms.



PURPLE FOUNTAIN GRASS | *PENNISETUM* *ADVENA X SETACEUM* 'RUBRUM'



Native to tropical Africa, the Middle East, and parts of southeast Asia. It's an ornamental grass rather than a true flowering plant, so it doesn't really "open" or "close" — it produces soft, fluffy, bottlebrush-like plumes that stay on display continuously once they emerge. There's no fragrance, and since the plumes are essentially nectarless, they don't attract classic pollinators, though small insects sometimes use them for shelter. The plumes appear from mid-summer through fall, rising above the burgundy-red foliage. The species also has green-leaved forms, but 'Rubrum' is prized specifically for its wine-purple foliage topped with rose-red to smoky-purple plumes.

STARFLOWER | *PENTAS* 'STARCLUSTER WHITE'

Native to tropical East Africa, Madagascar, and the Arabian Peninsula. Its small, star-shaped white florets cluster into rounded umbels that stay open all day with no real closing cycle, and despite their nectar-rich appeal, the blooms have no detectable fragrance. They're a top-tier pollinator plant, drawing butterflies (especially swallowtails), hummingbirds, and bees thanks to their tubular shape and steady nectar supply. It blooms from early summer until the first frost as an annual, or nearly year-round as a perennial in warm climates. Beyond white, the Starcluster series spans pink, red, rose, lavender, violet, and appleblossom shades.



SOUTHERN FOUNTAIN

SUN



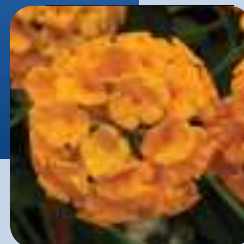
KANGAROO PAW | *ANGIOZANTHOS FLAVIDUS X RUFUS* 'BIG RED'

We chose this dramatic plant to draw attention to the fountain urns, and the bright red of this plant's flowers really shine in the full sun of the fountain area. This plant's common name is Kangaroo Paw because of its flower resembling, you guessed it, a kangaroo's paw! Flowers are tubular and furry, standing tall on curved stems that come up from flat leaved foliage. Native to Western Australia, this plant can take the heat and dry of our New York summer season without folding from the stress! Highly attractive to humming birds and other pollinators, we are excited to grow this plant this summer!



EYEBALL PLANT | *ACMELLA OLERACEA*

This whimsical plant is reminiscent of little suns, featuring bright yellow spherical flowers with a red center. Commonly known as 'Eyeball Plant', they also remind folks of eyeballs! Another common name for this plant is 'Toothache Plant', due to the high content of spilanthol in the blooms, an antiseptic alkaloid that acts as a numbing agent. This plant was used historically to treat minor toothaches when the flower is chewed on. The "eyeball" flower is actually composed of dozens of tiny individual flowers, making it easy for pollinators to collect pollen in one convenient landing spot. Because of their shape and rich nectar, these flowers primarily attract fireflies, hoverflies, honeybees, and small butterflies.



LANTANA | *LANTANA* 'BANDANA GOLD'

Bandana Gold belongs to *Lantana camara*, native to the tropical regions of the Americas. Its small tubular flowers, clustered into rounded "landing pad" umbels, open during the day and carry a light, sweet-spicy fragrance, while the leaves give off a stronger, citrusy-pungent scent when crushed. It's a favorite of butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds. Bloom season stretches from early summer all the way to the first hard frost — lantana rarely takes a break. Beyond gold, the Bandana series comes in pink, red, yellow, and white, and individual flowers often shift color (from yellow to orange to red, for example) as they age and get pollinated.



REFLECTING POOL

MOON/NIGHT

MOONFLOWER | *IPOMEA ALBA*

Not your regular morning glory, these plants have blooms double the size of other species, almost as big as your hand! Fragrant and pure white flowers draw in nighttime pollinators like nocturnal moths and bats. Even our specialized native bees are drawn to its sweet fragrance, like the mallow bee (*Melitoma taurea*), who visits the blooms in the early morning or dusk hours. They open at dusk and close at dawn, and their blooms shine bright even in the nighttime. They like to climb and vine so they are stationed by the Farragut monument, framing Farragut on each side and situated with trellises. With a common name like Moonflower, it's no surprise that we chose to grow this plant for our celestial plantings. This plant is native to the tropical Americas, so it is used as an annual here in New York.



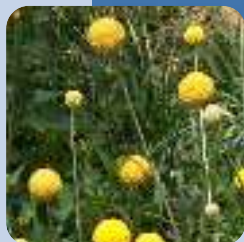
NIGHT JASMINE | *CESTRUM NOCTURNUM*

While not a true jasmine, whose genus is *Jasminum*, this night blooming shrub was a must for our moon garden display. Situated near entrances to the Reflecting Pool area and behind benches, these plants have intensely fragrant, tubular flowers that attract night time pollinators. Commonly named lady of the night, this evergreen shrub is native to lowland tickets and disturbed areas in the West Indies, ranging from southern Mexico to Panama. We have two varieties on display including *Cestrum fasciculatum* 'Ruby Clusters', which has red fragrant tubular flowers on display at the Fountain area.



BILLY BUTTONS | *CRASPEDIA GLOBOSA*

Another plant on display in the Reflecting pool area is *Craspedia globosa*, commonly named Billy Buttons! Small, perfectly round blooms balanced on a single stem create a plant you might see in a Dr.Suess book. What may look like a perfectly round single bloom is actually made up of several small flowers. Comical and cute, this plant is reminiscent of little moons, and their bright yellow draws the eye, while their silvery hairy foliage act as a contrast. The bright yellow also serves to attract pollinators like bees and butterflies, yellow being one of the colors these pollinators see best. Native to Australia and New Zealand, it can take dry, hot New York summers in stride.



REFLECTING POOL

AQUATIC GARDEN

AMERICAN WHITE WATERLILY | *NYMPHAEA ODORATA*

Native to ponds and slow streams across eastern and central North America. Its sweetly fragrant white flowers open each day and close again at night, with each bloom lasting 3–4 days before being pulled underwater to set seed. The blooms are primarily pollinated by honeybees and a sweat bee species, along with various flies and beetles. It blooms from roughly June through October, staying a consistent white, while related hybrids extend into pink and yellow tones.



MISSOURI WATERLILY | *NYMPHAEA* 'MISSOURI'

A tropical night-blooming hybrid created by hybridist George H. Pring in 1932 at the Missouri Botanical Garden, in whose honor it's named. Its pure white blooms with a bright yellow center can reach up to 14 inches across, making it one of the largest tropical water lilies grown. The flowers open in the evening and stay open until around 8 or 9 the next morning, carrying a subtle fragrance and relying on nocturnal pollinators like beetles. It blooms through the summer months above deep green, bronze-tinted pads.



MIDNIGHT SERENADE WATERLILY | *NYMPHAEA* 'MIDNIGHT SERENADE'

A tropical, day-blooming hybrid created by hybridizer Craig Presnell in 2000. Its bright purple, double flowers have petaloid centers and sit above attractively mottled pads, with a slight fragrance similar to its parent cultivar 'Midnight.' Blooms typically open in the morning and close by evening, drawing bees as the main daytime pollinators. It flowers from summer into fall and won the IWGS Banksian Award in 2002 for best medium/large tropical waterlily.



**SCAN TO TAKE THE
MSPC COMMUNITY
SURVEY 2026**



VISITORS INFORMATION

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PARK HOURS

Summer Hours:

6 AM - 12 AM from June 1 - Oct 31

Winter Hours:

6 AM - 11 PM from Nov 1 - May 31

GETTING HERE

Subways: R, W, 6 23rd Street Station

Citibike: 26th Street & Madison Avenue
and Broadway & 25th Street



GUIDED TOURS

Garden Walk - Every 2nd Tuesdays

History Tour - Every 4th Tuesdays



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