



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D C

Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens

National Capital Parks - East



Welcome to
Kenilworth
Park and
Aquatic
Gardens

Welcome to the only National Park Service unit cultivating water-loving plants. This 12 acre sanctuary features over 45 ponds filled with a variety of tropical and hardy water lilies, lotus, and other aquatic species. Established on the east bank of the Anacostia River, the human made shallow ponds and dikes includes 70 acres of fresh water tidal wet-land. The quiet oasis offers a scenic break from the busy pace of Washington, DC and a place to observe local wildlife through four seasons. The park provides recreational opportunities along the Anacostia River and serves as a great outdoor classroom.



A Park's Story

Walter B. Shaw was a man of determination who, after he lost his right arm in service during the Civil War, taught himself to write with his left hand. He accepted a job here as a clerk in the U.S. Treasury Department, married, and later bought 30 acres from his mother-in law in the 1880s.

Shaw's fondness for water lilies led him to plant a dozen wild water lilies from his home state of Maine in an unused ice pond. Over time, this hobby became a thriving business as Shaw built more ponds, collected exotic water lilies, developed new varieties, and sold plants and blooms around the world.

With the help of his daughter, Helen Fowler, Shaw created a unique garden, of sparkling water and colorful blooms of the lilies. Helen followed her father as manager of W.B. Shaw Lily Ponds. She traveled looking for plants from Asia, Egypt, and South America. Her pastel studies of lilies are displayed at the visitor's center.

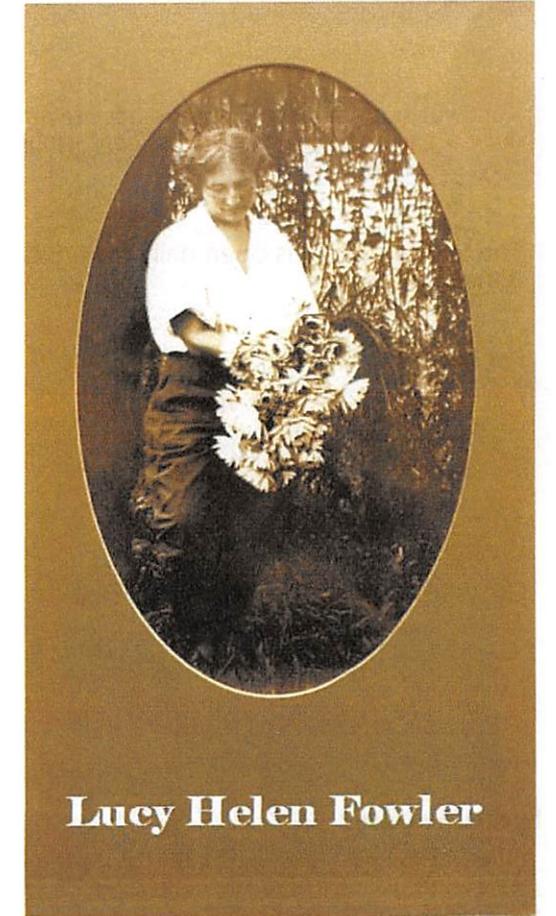
In the 1920s visitors by the thousands came to see the waxy flowers open in the summer sun. President Calvin Coolidge and his wife Grace came to stroll under the willows, and admire the beautiful flowers.



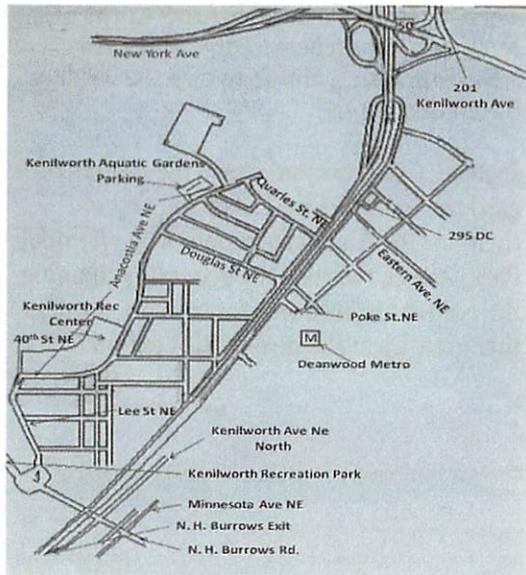
Mr. Walter B. Shaw

Then in the 1930s the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, on orders to dredge the Anacostia River, moved to take the gardens by condemnation.

Instead, Congress purchased the 8 acres of-gardens in 1938 for \$15,000 to preserve them for the American people. The National Park Service received the property renaming the gardens Kenilworth for the community that grew up at the turn of the century.



Lucy Helen Fowler



Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens grounds are open daily 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (closed Thanksgiving Day, December 25 and January 1)

The Visitor Center is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For more information:

call (202) 426-6905 or visit www.nps.gov/keag

To find the park by GPS, use 1550 Anacostia Ave NE Washington DC 20019

Or write: National Capital Parks, East
1900 Anacostia Dr. SE
Washington, DC 20020

Special Features

A boardwalk into the marsh, a trail along the Anacostia River. A few picnic tables are available. No grills, or alcohol are allowed.

About Water Lilies and Lotus

Hardy water lilies begin blooming in late May with waxy cup shaped flowers. Tropical water lilies are more open flowers in intense pink, blue, purple, yellow and white, with rippled often spotted leaves. They bloom late July through early fall. The lotus, in mid-summer, have large leaves growing several feet above the water. Its showy flowers drop



petals to reveal seedpods that look like shower-heads.

Mornings are best for viewing flowers; the afternoon heat makes most blooms close.

About Kenilworth Marsh

The marsh surrounding the ponds is a fresh water tidal flood plain of the Anacostia River. It is fresh water cleaned by the marsh that flows through a series of pipes into the ponds. Managed for water quality and wildlife one finds plants and animals typical of wetlands, wild rice, sedges, raccoon, eagles and fox. The wetland serves as a filter for water flowing into the Anacostia River and as a catch basin for floods.

Park Entrance: The entrance to Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens is at 1550 Anacostia Avenue NE between Douglas Street and Pond St.

Garden Access by Metrorail/Bus

From the Deanwood Metro Station take the V7 Bureau of Engraving bus to Kenilworth Ave. and Douglas St. Walk to the end of Douglas St. to go right on Anacostia Avenue. Another option is to exit the station at Polk St., cross the pedestrian overpass to Douglas Street. At the end of Douglas go right on Anacostia Ave.

Driving Directions

From South of Route 50: Take DC Route 295 north. Take the Eastern Avenue Exit. At the top of the ramp make a U turn to the left. Make the second right after that onto Douglas. At the end of Douglas go right on Anacostia Ave. were 1/2 block on left past Douglas St.

From North of Route 50: Take DC Route 295 South. Take the Eastern Avenue Exit. At the top of the ramp go straight down two blocks. Make the second right after onto Douglas. At the end of Douglas go right on Anacostia Ave. were 1/2 block on left past Douglas St.

For additional details to plan your trip on metro bus and/or metro rail visit www.metroopensdoors.com

