



5. Hollies Holly shrubs were strategically placed in gardens to define boundaries. Their waxy leaves and red berries added a unique texture and color to Victorian gardens. The English Holly along the east side of the house (near the bird feeder), was part of the Voelker-Orth family's garden. The hollies in the Voelker Orth Museum's garden provide food and shelter for birds.

6. Produce Victorian gardens stressed utility as well as aesthetics. Kitchen gardens provided vegetables and herbs, cutting gardens provided plants used in flower arrangements, trees and arbor plants provided fruits, and bees provided honey and much-needed pollination. The Voelker Orth Museum maintains an herb garden, grape arbor, and beehive.

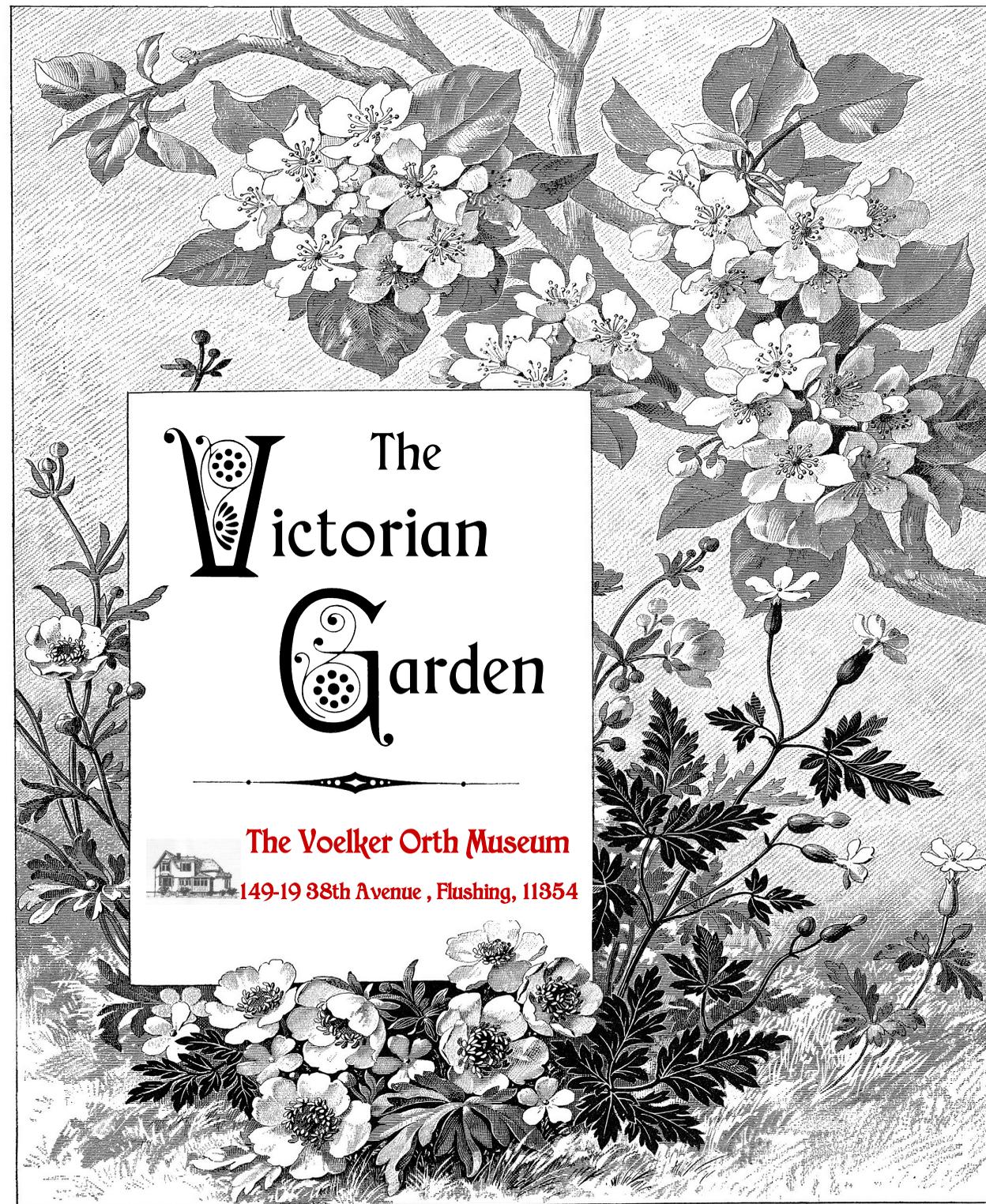
7. Water features Fountains, bird baths, and artificial ponds added peaceful sounds and views to the garden's design and appealed to the Victorian interest in nature. The fresh water in the bird bath and artificial pond at the Voelker Orth Museum provides sustenance to birds, fish, and bees.

8. Paths Paths led pedestrians to new areas of the garden and disguised the spatial limits of the garden's design. The main path in the Voelker Orth Museum's garden borders the lawn.

9. Fences Fences were used to create boundaries within and around Victorian gardens. Victorian fences were often made of cast iron. The Voelker Orth Museum's resembles popular Victorian cast iron fences.

10. Rooms with a view Gardens were planned to make the home interiors seem more spacious, with views of the garden acting as extensions of the indoor space. The view from the Voelker Orth Museum's conference room overlooks the garden's lawn, carpet bedding, and artificial pond.

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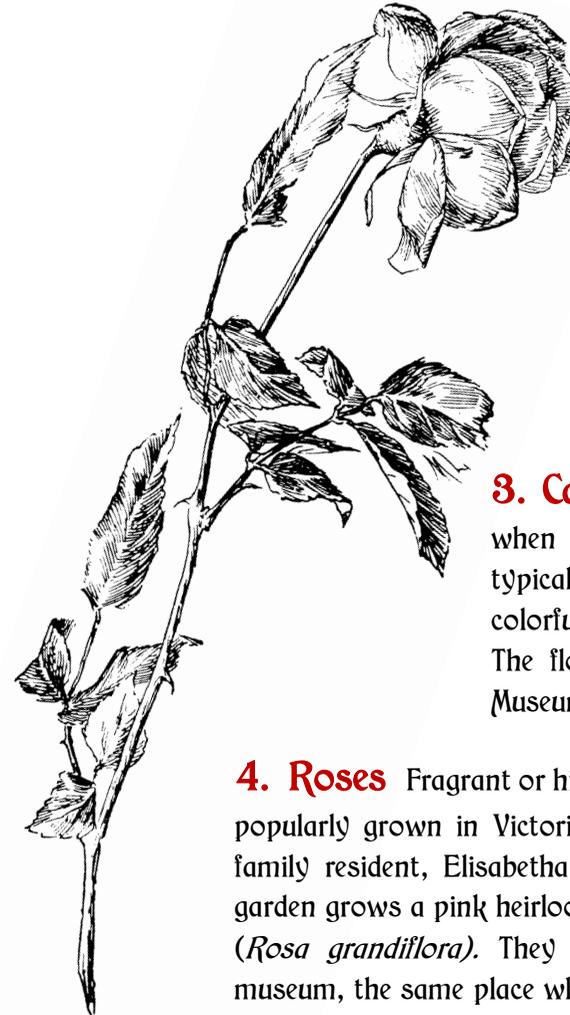
During the late Victorian Period (1865-1900), members of the middle class embraced home gardening as an activity worthy of their increasing amount of leisure time. Prospective gardeners could educate themselves using one of the many gardening manuals published throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. These manuals were written specifically for middle-class home gardeners, and informed their audience how to create successful gardens with familiar plants and species discovered by explorers earlier in the century. Home owners considered the successful garden an extension of their indoor living space, and gardens were often used for entertaining guests and hosting outdoor activities. The home garden was also a respite during the hot summer days before air-conditioning.

The Voelker Orth Museum's garden maintains the style of the late 1890s to the early 1900s, when Conrad and Elisabeth Voelker moved to Flushing with their young daughter, Theresa. The Voelker Orth Museum's garden is a haven for wild birds and other beneficial wildlife, and it provides a welcoming place for educational programs, entertainment, and relaxation. Please take some time to relax and enjoy the garden.

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What makes a garden *Victorian*?

The distinguishing concept of a Victorian garden is that its design treats the house and garden as a single unit (called the "home grounds" by Victorians). The successful garden was both aesthetically pleasing, with ample attention given to various textures and colors, and utilitarian, with many edible or useable plants. Here are ten key elements of a Victorian garden, all of which can be found at the Voelker Orth Museum:



1. Lawn Lawns were used as outdoor rooms for hosting social events like teas, concerts, and lawn sports (e.g. croquet). The Voelker Orth Museum uses its lawn for events, plays, parties, and weddings!

2. Flower Beds Flower beds provided specific locations for flowers in the home grounds. Flowers commonly included in Victorian gardens were hydrangea shrubs, foxgloves, hollyhocks, snapdragons, and dahlias. The Voelker Orth Museum grows these flower species (and more!) throughout different seasons.

3. Carpet Bedding Flowers were arranged in designs that, when viewed from above, looked similar to the patterns typically seen on carpets. This "carpet bedding" created a colorful mosaic of flowering plants in Victorian home gardens. The flower beds surrounding the lawn at the Voelker Orth Museum are examples of carpet bedding.

4. Roses Fragrant or historic heirloom rose varieties were popularly grown in Victorian gardens. In honor of the last family resident, Elisabetha Orth, the Voelker Orth Museum garden grows a pink heirloom rose called the Queen Elizabeth (*Rosa grandiflora*). They are grown in the front of the museum, the same place where Elisabetha grew her own pink roses.