

A (Very) Brief History of Prospect Garden

Lee Corbin, a mayor of Yachats known affectionately as the “Trails Czar” provided the initial vision for this park. Over several years, residents worked to bring his vision to fruition. Armed with a trail plan drawn by local landscape architect, Jerry Sands, the then owner of Gerdemann Botanical Preserve, residents requested an archeological assessment and worked to secure City approval.

Then in 2007, an intrepid group of Yachats volunteers and youth from Angell Job Corps attacked and cleared this area that was overrun by blackberry, English ivy, morning glory and every weed known to Yachats. The volunteers created a trail and planted shrubs. Sadly, a water main break washed out much of the plant material. The remaining plants did thrive and became the foundation for a future iteration of this park.

The Yachats Trail Committee was formed in 2009. By 2011, a group led by Yachats Trails Committee chair Lauralee Svensgaard, worked to create a demonstration garden of native plants in this park. Yachadians donated and planted many of the plants. Thanks to the dedication of numerous Yachats’ citizens this park became a garden.

In 2010, Leslie Carter, a long-term resident, tireless community volunteer and frequent walker of this Yachats trail passed away. Her neighbors organized the placement of a memorial bench. This delightful structure is still enjoyed by residents and visitors alike as they look toward our amazing landscape. Further memorials followed to remember those who came before us and celebrate our community of Yachadians.

However, it takes persistence and constant care to maintain a garden in our luscious climate. By 2014, despite efforts of the Yachats Trails crew, the garden was overrun by weeds. In a third iteration, the Trails team again cleared the area and replaced a few plants. About this time, the trail became part of the Yachats tsunami evacuation system.

Without constant maintenance, though, the garden was again totally overrun. In 2016, a few neighbors volunteered to provide the required on-going weeding. Once again, the trails crew came in and did a macro-clearing. The volunteer neighbors expanded the garden on both the south and east ends to encompass the whole lot. In 2018, the Angell Job Corp. built a new fence to visually separate the garden from the neighboring property.

The focus is still to use primarily native plants as the non-native plantings often do not flourish or in some cases become invasive. More importantly, native plantings provide an opportunity to help restore the area to the original habitat known to the Indigenous Peoples. Native plants are adapted to our wet winters and arid summers and provide habitat for native bees and mammals.

Over 300 native plants have been installed since 2016. Most were donated by Yachadians and the Trails Committee. The volunteer efforts of several locals keep the garden weed free (almost). The Yachats Trails crew regularly has work sessions to maintain the path, install wood chips and help with weeding. It truly takes the village to create and maintain this place.

Please take a few minutes to wander along the path of our little garden. Our pamphlets help with plant identification but, most importantly, our garden is a place of relief from the pressures of everyday life. A place to take a deep breath, reflect and enjoy some peace.