

Panoramic views of the lake can be seen from Berta Moore's house, and change season by season. In midsummer, fields of colorful daylilies are center stage. Here you can see two of the many bird statues that adorn this garden guarding the path to the lake.

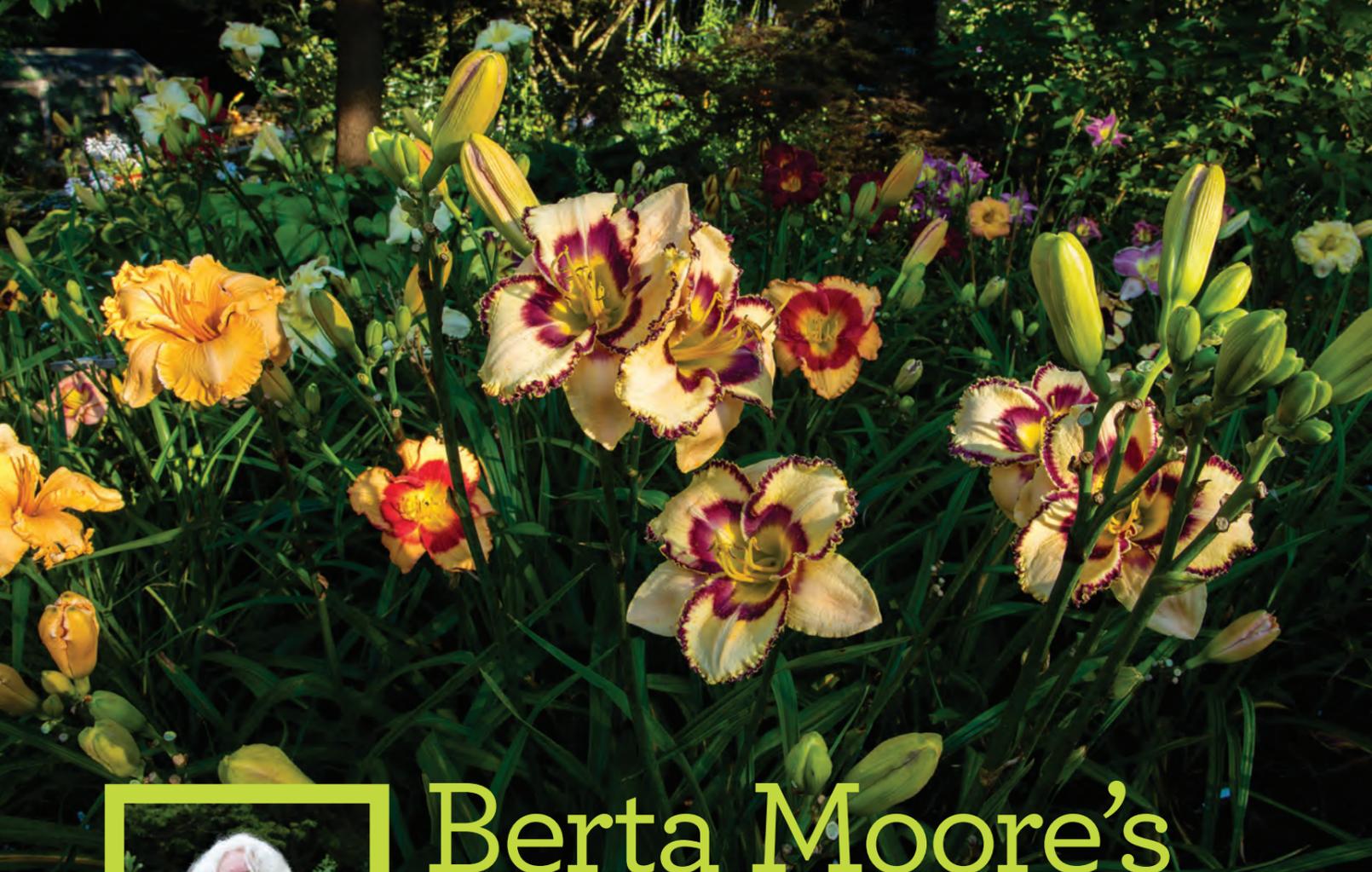
As Time Goes By

Timeless Gardens & Tireless Gardeners

It's inevitable that successful gardens evolve over time. Living plants are not static, and as gardeners learn more about their craft, they envision their space in new ways. The three gardens featured here—two in expansive rural settings and one on a narrow city lot—have passed through a number of stages, but what is most noteworthy about them is that they have been tended by the same dedicated hands since they were first planted decades ago.

Berta Moore began with views of a lake and woods near Spencer, Indiana, and created a kaleidoscopic landscape of flowers, plants, and trees. Dan and Lisa Burnham closed their retail nursery in northeast Monroe County but continue to incorporate unusual combinations of plants in their private, contemplative garden. And the city garden of Laura Ley and Barry Kern has morphed from a small vegetable patch into a garden of densely packed beds of colorful annuals and perennials. In each case, both garden and gardener have matured *in situ*.

By Moya Andrews • Photography by James Kellar



(top) A close-up of a few of Berta's colorful daylily cultivars.

(Inset) Berta's personality is as exuberant as her garden. A knowledgeable horticulturist, Berta's passion for plants is reflected in her eclectic repertoire of botanical specimens, many of which are rarely seen in southern Indiana. Her love of all creatures has enabled her to create a sanctuary for an astonishing number of unusual birds.

Berta Moore's

Passion for the Natural World

When Berta Moore and her former husband purchased 40 acres near Spencer, Indiana, in 1979, "there was just lawn, privacy, and water," she recalls. The property included a 3-acre pond and a one-story bungalow. Over time, the house was expanded to include a second story and more windows to capitalize on the views. And year after year, Berta planted daffodils, daylilies, and other plants and trees.

"I planted every tree on the property near the house," she recalls. "Some of my favorites are a native lettuce leaf magnolia with huge white blooms, big-leaf and little-leaf European lindens, a forest pansy redbud, two moisture-loving bald cypresses near the pond, and a fragrant fringe tree. All of their roots have settled comfortably into this ground, and they have also settled into my heart."

In mid-summer there is a kaleidoscope of color as masses of daylilies stretch from the house to the water's edge. Many are unusual cultivars, such as the tall yellow 'Sears Tower,' a double pink 'Almost Indecent,' and the striking red/yellow 'Paco Bell.' Tall Oriental lilies also

bloom in profusion, especially the pale cream 'Big Brother,' whose scent fills the air.

Berta developed her passion for the natural world at an early age. She was only 2 years old when her family moved from urban Germany to rural Ohio. "My father was a physicist at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and taught us scientific principles," she says. "My mother loved plants and animals and taught herself how to milk a cow from a German encyclopedia." The family menagerie even included a domesticated monkey.

Over time, Berta has populated her own garden with a surprising number of creatures. There are five gamboling dogs, all foundlings; crested pigeons; silver and Lady Amherst's pheasants; bantam chickens; and five emus. "I just love emus. I read a story when I was young about an emu that went fishing," she says. "I have two boys and three girls, and they have houses for shelter in the winter." There is a waterfall and pond with koi, and a 25-year-old Australian blue-tongued lizard who monitors the action at the bird feeders from a glass case in the dining room.



In the garden there are also a number of bird statues, a stone dinosaur, a table in the form of a praying mantis, and several benches where visitors can rest and enjoy the rich variety of plants in this lush garden. Those plants include *Brunfelsia*, a tender plant that winters indoors and has lavender flowers; Berta's mother's *Clivia*; iris 'Wabash,' a gift from a high school friend; bear's breeches with its dramatic foliage; native blue gentian; and crinkle leaf dogwood bush 'Pucker Up.' Crotons, with their multi-colored leaves, are houseplants that are enjoying the summer outdoors.

Since 1983, Berta has planted between 200 and 1,000 bulbs each fall so that early, mid-season, and late-season daffodils bloom and paint the earth yellow from March through May. The garden, she says, "has been a labor of love over many years to create a welcoming sanctuary that nurtures many of God's creatures."

1. A few years ago, Berta decided to create this waterfall from local stone so she could add an auditory dimension to the character of her garden and provide a home for some interesting fish.
2. Vibrant color is provided by innumerable daylilies and black-eyed Susans.
3. Bicolor daylilies.
4. Daylilies with ruffled petals.
5. Throughout the garden, there are many nooks and quiet spaces where visitors can rest and enjoy different perspectives of the plantings.
6. An Australian emu, one of five that live year-round in Berta's welcoming sanctuary for creatures from all parts of the world.
7. A second story was added to the house many years ago so that views of the lake could be enjoyed more easily.