



The Jerusalem Botanical Gardens Children's Discovery Trail

**An innovative approach to
designing a Garden for Children
in a Botanical Garden**

Our vision for the children's garden

To invite children to discover and experiment with the treasures of Nature through an exciting, hands-on experience.

How does one plan a children's section within a botanical garden?

- Child development theories
- Educator's focus groups
- Other institutions with informal education functions

Desirable attributes of the Children's Garden

- Take into account child development theories
- Merge with the diverse topography of the garden
- Exposure of lesser-known areas within the Gardens;
- Reach a diverse, cross-cultural demographic.

**How can one Garden achieve
all these goals?**



Designated children's garden?



But what about exposing visitors to the diverse areas of the garden?

Islands of designated exhibits?



But what about creating a coherent thematic sequence?

A Discovery TRAIL















Explore, discover, create meaning

What does the trail look like?

- Defined architectural language
- Thematic activity sections
- Runs through the sections of the garden
- Merges with the existing topography
- Non-verbal language: symbols and icons



Look	Feel	Smell	Taste
			
Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring
			
			
Water station	Rocks and soils	Roots	Canopy



The Trail

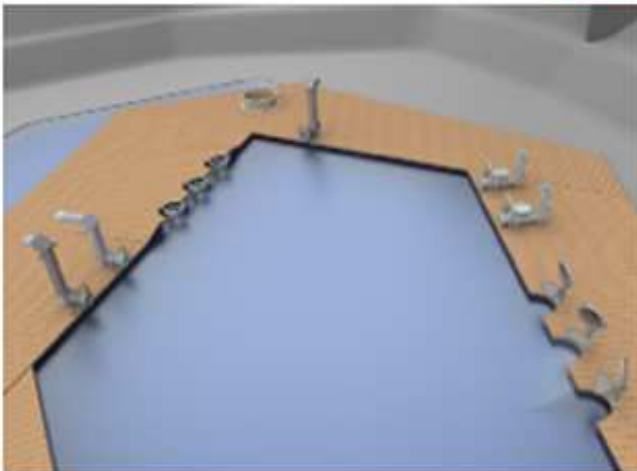




Water

Observing life above, On the surface of, And under the water.

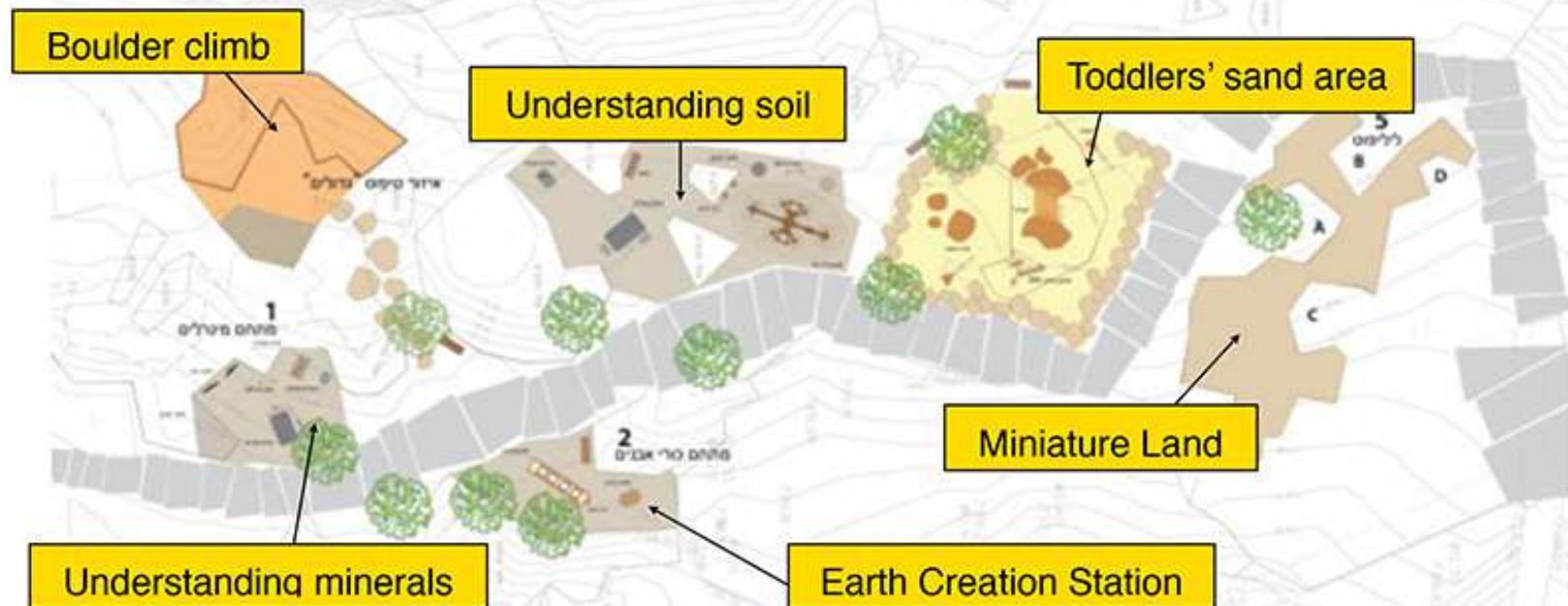
Using recycled, rain water



Rocks and Soil



The rocks and soils station will feature six exhibit areas that attract children to play, dig, break, sift, arrange, combine, create from and separate different soils and to learn that soils come from rock which is broken down by the elements and by the roots of plants. Children will also be introduced to minerals.





Boulder climb



Miniature Land "Lilliput"

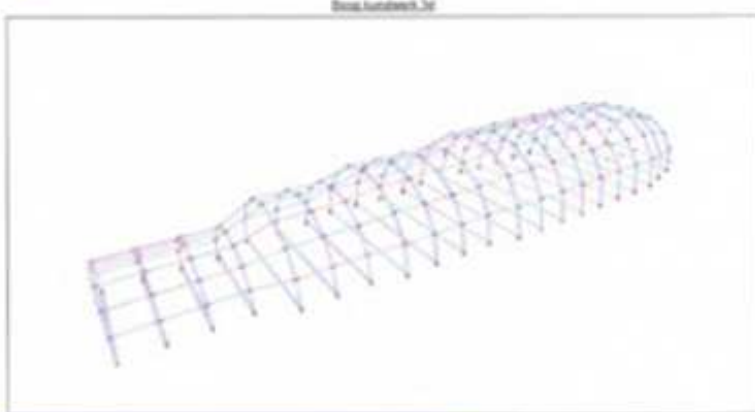
Up in the Trees – Canopy walk

- A 135m (443 foot)-long bridge reaching 10.5m (34 foot) high
- Feeling of space above ground
- Discovering parts of the tree
- Bird watching



Roots – Cycle of Life

- An iconic environmental sculpture
- Representing a fallen tree
- Suggesting that life-roots, comes from the soil



Initial design of skeleton



Entrance for children



Entrance for adults & wheelchair-bound

Our Roots is the brainchild of Dutch-born artist Will Beckers, whose bio and work can be seen www.willbeckers.com

“Lilliput” – imagination and social development



Rocks & Soil – sensations, physical and cognitive development



Water – physical and social development



In Conclusion

The trail is not just a discovery trail for children it is also a platform through which to achieve other garden aims:

- attracting new audiences
- Platform for new programs
- strengthening the Garden's brand as a family institution
- Bringing new life into the Gardens

