

Country Gardens

Collect
Vintage
Garden
Accents

Design
Simplified

Get the Look You Want
Plan, p. 33

Smell the
Roses
Fragrant Antique
Favorites

Make Your Own
Herbal Spa
Treatments



Landscape architect
Kate Field



*Delphinium
grandiflorum*
'Blue Butterfly'

You might call her a
“garden whisperer.”

Landscape architect Kate Field can connect with even the most unmanageable landscape and bring out its true beauty. “You’ve got to listen to the site,” Kate says. “If you don’t, it won’t speak to you.”

Kate does listen—as she designs landscapes for clients of her firm, Katherine Field and Associates, and for her own Portsmouth, Rhode Island, garden. “The site can tell you where to define little rooms, where the microclimates are,” she says. “It’s a way of thinking; the site gives you the constraints and opportunities for design.”

A gravel roadway that runs through her own property presented Kate with challenges. Stripped of topsoil, the roadbed was compacted from years of use. Kate wondered if anything would grow there. But she also noticed the lovely sunset views and saw advantages to the site's remoteness. "I wanted a garden away from the house," she says. "We needed a family spot, a place to teach the kids about gardening. I had to have a garden where I could cut flowers, experiment with plants, and then close the gate and go play golf if I wanted to."

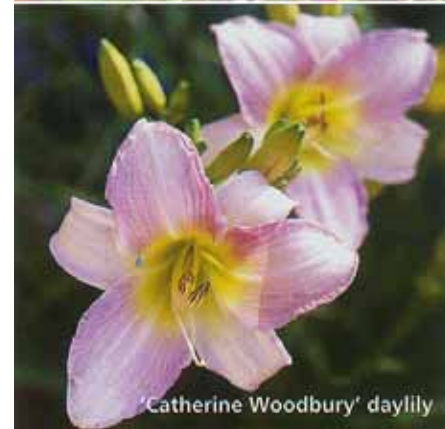
So she began shaping a garden, considering the site limitations in her design. Where the soil was the worst, Kate decided to cultivate fish instead of flowers. Today, a 9x16-foot pond sits in the middle of the old roadbed. A generous skirt of stone paving surrounds the pond, disguising the poor soil beneath. Containers set at each corner of the pond make growing flowers easy; underwater shelves for water plants add more greenery in the formerly barren spot.

Beyond the pond, raised beds filled with rich soil make for a lush garden setting. Landscape timbers define the beds and highlight the simple symmetry of the garden's layout. Lawn areas between the beds contrast the smooth greenness of grass against the fluffy, colorful flowers.

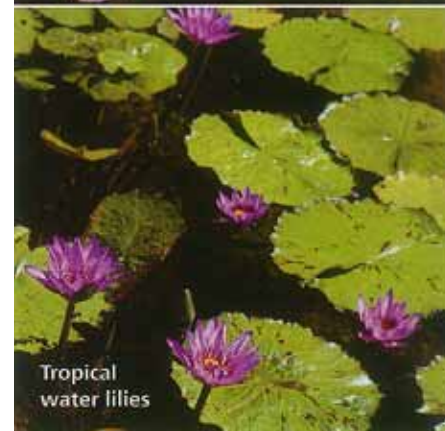
Arborvitae and transplanted rhododendrons provide an evergreen backdrop for flowers and vegetables. In the distance, grand old copper beech trees dot the grassy acreage. "In the late afternoon and early evening," Kate says, "plants are backlit by golden western light." Nature's spotlight shines on Kate's garden and, it seems, whispers quiet approval.



Clematis
'Juliette'



Catherine Woodbury' daylily



Tropical
water lilies

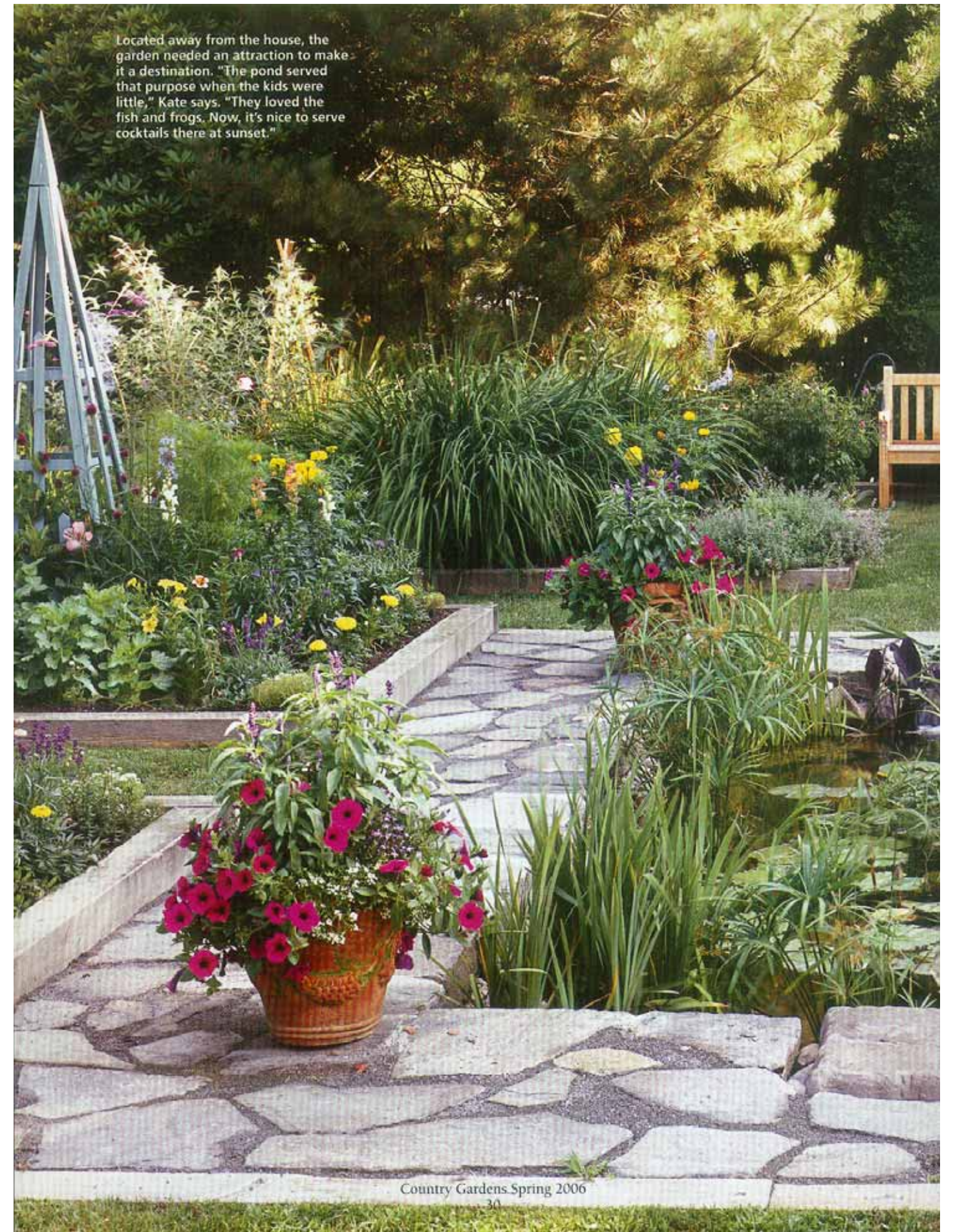
garden at a glance

Zone 6 microclimates of 7

Size 6 1/3 acre

Age 10 years

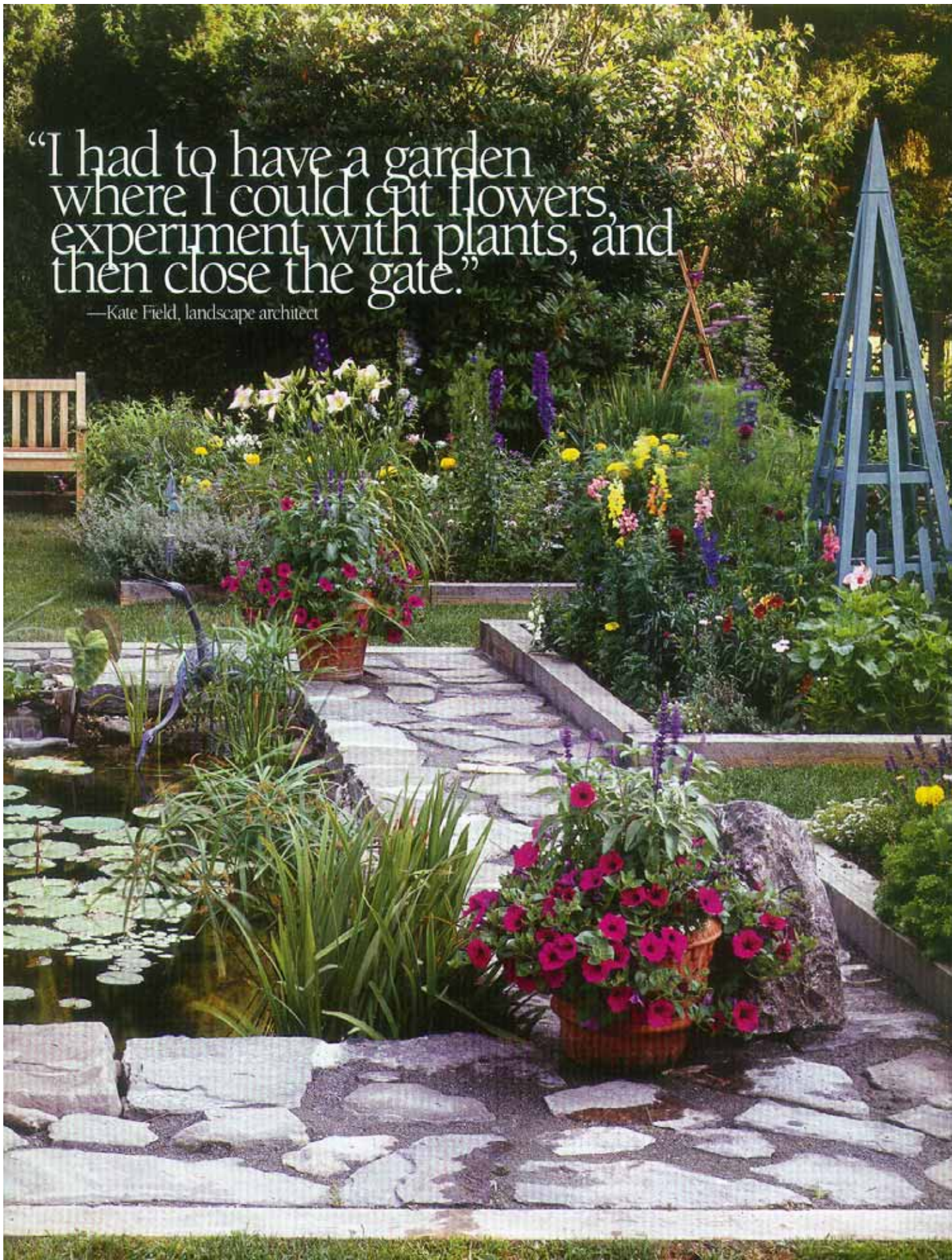
Special conditions A former roadway, the garden site was compacted, full of gravel, and had no topsoil. Winters bring deep frosts.



Located away from the house, the garden needed an attraction to make it a destination. "The pond served that purpose when the kids were little," Kate says. "They loved the fish and frogs. Now, it's nice to serve cocktails there at sunset."

“I had to have a garden where I could cut flowers, experiment with plants, and then close the gate.”

—Kate Field, landscape architect



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|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Rhododendrons | 7 Gooseberries | 13 Foxgloves | 19 Vegetables with ornamentals |
| 2 Pine trees | 8 Boxwood | 14 Rose of Sharon | 20 Pond |
| 3 <i>Arborvitae</i> | 9 False heather | 15 High bush blueberries | 21 Crane statues |
| 4 Rhubarb | 10 Hollyhocks | 16 Stone wall | 22 Containers |
| 5 Raspberries | 11 Sunflowers | 17 Flower border | 23 Obelisks |
| 6 Currants | 12 Pole beans | 18 Lily and phlox border | 24 Mixed flowerbeds |