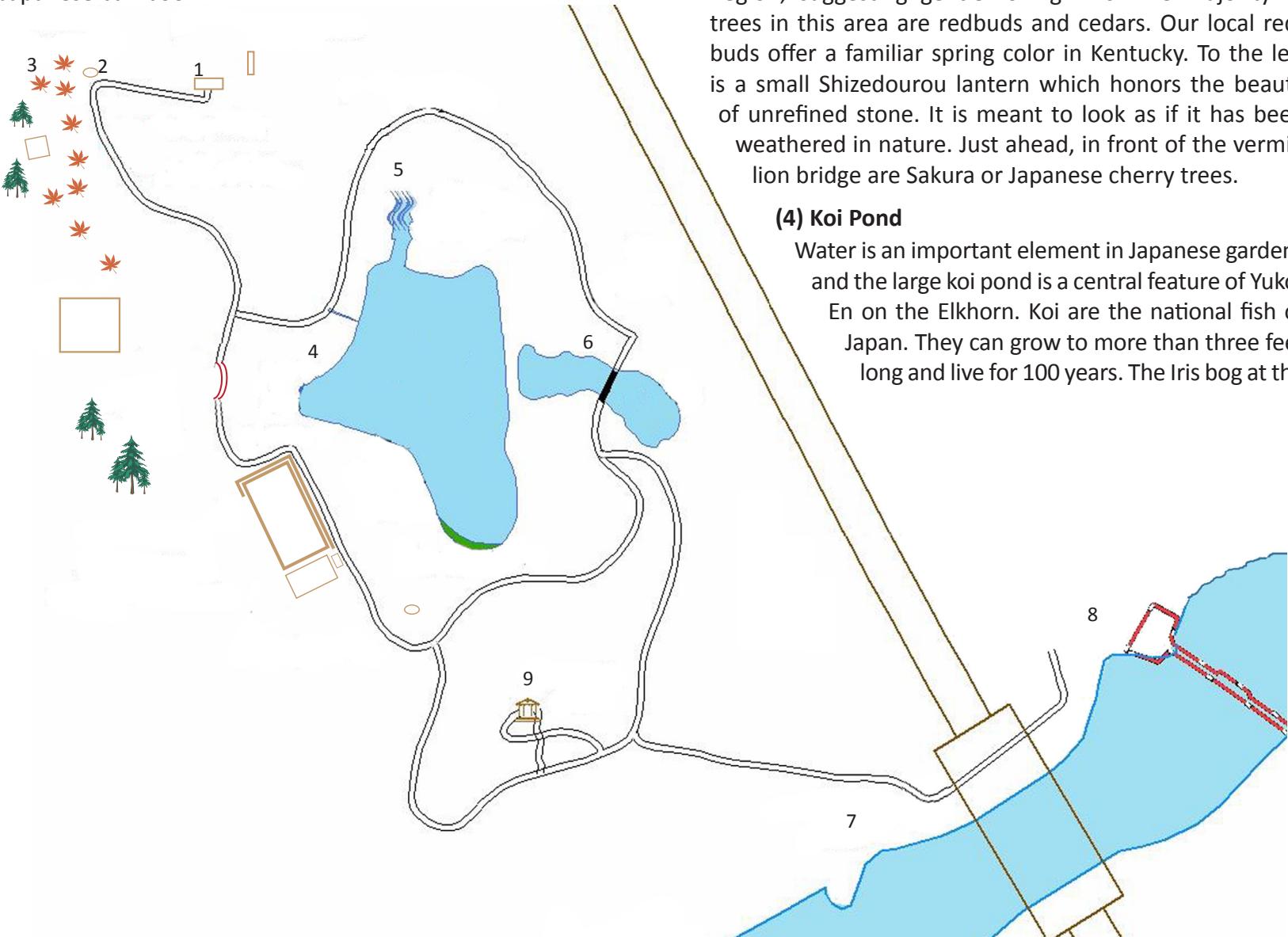


(1) Tokugawa Gates

The large gate marks the entrance to the garden and represents the Tokugawa Shogunate Era 1603-1868. The gate was built by local craftsmen, carpenters and metal workers. To fully experience the garden, according to custom, as you enter, leave your worldly stresses and cares behind. The path is lined with native cane, a plant similar to Japanese bamboo.



(2-3) Tahara Snow Lantern

At the top of the path is a large Yukimi Gata, snow lantern. This type of lantern is most beautiful after a snowfall when the roof line is highlighted. Beyond the lantern is a Maple Grove, it includes a variety of maple trees from both America and Japan. From this point, the pathway opens to a portion of the garden that represents the Bluegrass Region, suggesting gentle rolling hills. The majority of trees in this area are redbuds and cedars. Our local redbuds offer a familiar spring color in Kentucky. To the left is a small Shizedourou lantern which honors the beauty of unrefined stone. It is meant to look as if it has been weathered in nature. Just ahead, in front of the vermillion bridge are Sakura or Japanese cherry trees.

(4) Koi Pond

Water is an important element in Japanese gardens and the large koi pond is a central feature of Yuko-en on the Elkhorn. Koi are the national fish of Japan. They can grow to more than three feet long and live for 100 years. The Iris bog at the

southern end of the pond, with its decorative Kotoji lantern, serves as the pond's natural bio-filter. Two other lanterns grace the pond, the Maru-yukimi round top snow viewing lantern and the Rankei lantern, with its arched supporting column extending over the lake so that its image is reflected in the pond.

(5) Upper Waterfall and Mountain

A limestone outcropping forms the waterfall. The small cone shaped mountain form was inspired by the island of Yakushima in southern Japan, famous for its thousand year old cedar trees and great cascading mountain streams.

(6) Tahara Waterfall Garden

Just before you reach the lower falls, you will see a sculpture of Watanabe Kazan (1793-1841). See the Kazan handout to learn about his influence in our sister city Tahara

(7) North Elkhorn Creek

Elkhorn Creek was the pathway to settlements in the Bluegrass and continues to be a shared resource in the life of the community. In 1860, Walt Whitman wrote of the Elkhorn in his epic poem Leaves of Grass. The creek is part of the Shakkei or borrowed scenery of the garden.

(8) Wallace Dam

The pathway continues under the US 25 bridge to Cardome Landing, a small park with a picnic area and access to Elkhorn Creek. The waterfall created by the dam adds a charming view from the garden.

(7) Hermit's Hut - Elkhorn Viewing Spot

Log structures are familiar to both Kentuckians and Japanese. Here, triangular cut logs replicate the ancient treasury building in Nara, Japan. The cedar posts at the front reflect a Japanese stylistic element. The weighted roof is used in the mountainous regions of Japan to hold shingles in place during typhoons. The rocky landscape approach is similar to the Temple of One Thousand steps in Akita Prefecture.

(16) Maho-An Tea House

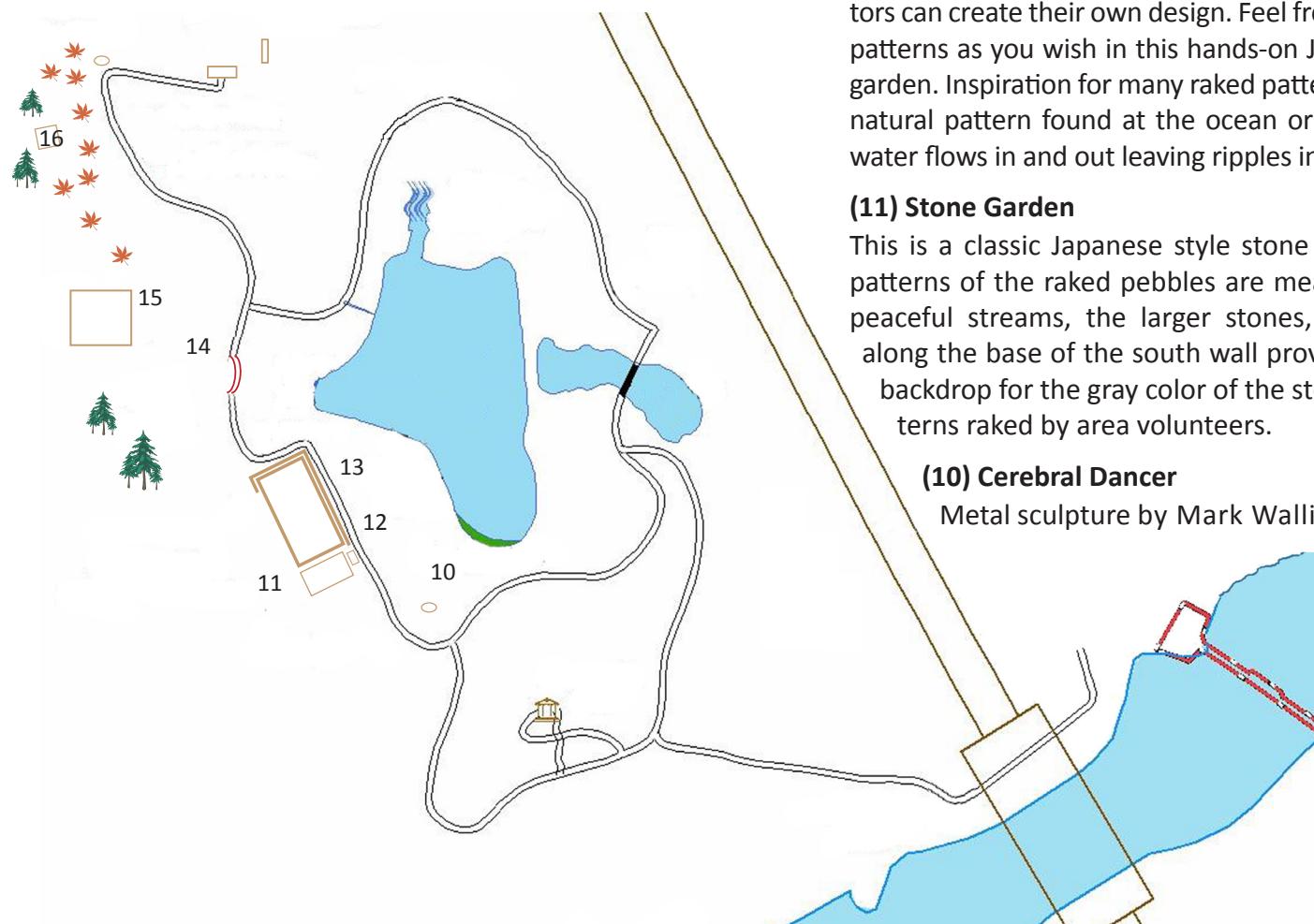
Set in a lovely grove of pine trees, this open air building is designed to be used for the tea ceremony and also serves as a quiet resting place in the garden.

(15) Raku House

This structure houses a kiln used to create a special type of pottery associated with the early tea ceremony in Japan, the raku tea bowl. This is the only working kiln within a Japanese style garden in or out of Japan. Event and monthly firings of the kiln by potters in the region are open to the public.

(14) Arched Bridge and Dry Stream

The bridge arches over a stream similar to those in Japan's



volcanic mountain region. When the stream is dry, the rocks become a karesansui, dry landscape or dry mountain water. In this way the stream remains, whether there is water running or not. When flowing, the stream runs into the pond below.

(13) The Villa

Yet to be completed this lovely structure will serve as a community meeting place, event and educational center. Currently it is being used for Japanese style exhibits to be viewed through the windows.

(12) Children's Stone Garden

A smaller stone garden has been constructed so that visitors can create their own design. Feel free to create as many patterns as you wish in this hands-on Japanese style stone garden. Inspiration for many raked patterns comes from the natural pattern found at the ocean or in river beds when water flows in and out leaving ripples in the sand.

(11) Stone Garden

This is a classic Japanese style stone garden. The subtle patterns of the raked pebbles are meant to remind us of peaceful streams, the larger stones, islands. The moss along the base of the south wall provides a subtle green backdrop for the gray color of the stones. Enjoy the patterns raked by area volunteers.

(10) Cerebral Dancer

Metal sculpture by Mark Wallis of Spencer, IN.

Welcome to Yuko En

The Official
Kentucky-Japan Garden

Self-Guided Tour Map