

The Botanical Conservatory and Garden of the City of Geneva



Are you familiar with your Botanical Garden? Why is it called the Botanical Conservatory and Garden? A Conservatory of... botany?

The Botanical Conservatory is a place where scientists, systematic botanists and florists study the plant world, describe it and name species, thereby adding to our knowledge of the biodiversity on planet Earth. Their main resources are herbaria, collections of dried plants, and the library.

The Herbaria

The Geneva Herbaria are among the five most important in the world and contain some six million plant samples. They are the result of a long tradition of botanical research in Geneva that dates back to the 18th century and include plants and fungi from all over the world.

The Geneva Herbaria are constantly being added to thanks to exchanges with other botanical institutes, through donations and purchases and also by plants gathered by the institution's botanists. They include almost 250,000 reference samples (known as types), which are used as a basis for describing new species. More than 40,000 samples are loaned every year so that they can be studied all over the world.



The Library

An amazing library!

Ours is the third biggest botanical library in the world. It contains almost all of the publications and journals about plants published worldwide. Particularly remarkable are the 16th- and 17th-century works and the large 18th-century books,



most of which contain lavish colour-plate illustrations. The Library also contains a sizeable set of works recounting botanical journeys and expeditions, treatises on applied botany and a large collection in other fields such as ecology, horticulture, ethnobotany and the history of gardens. The collection contains more than 100,000 volumes. The Library is open to the general public.

The Herbaria and Library are part of our universal heritage and are Conservatory's raison d'être.

Research

Our scientists develop research focused on the study of plant and fungal organisms and on the biodiversity they represent. This research is carried out in conjunction with exploratory field trips designed to add to our knowledge and herbarium collections. It is a way of deriving a benefit from the work and making it available worldwide through our scientific publications, and also our databases that can be accessed through our website: > www.ville-ge.ch/cjb Our research provides expertise in environmental management in the canton of Geneva and also all over Switzerland and internationally.



Facts and figures

Every year our scientists:

- Discover a dozen previously unknown species!
- Publish around forty scientific articles and works;
- Collect around 4,000 plant samples on expeditions, mostly in the tropics, for the herbaria and for research.

The Botanical Garden

The most visible part of the Botanical Conservatory and Garden is our living collections. The collections in a botanical garden are derived from the exchange of seeds with other botanical gardens around the world. The Garden contains some 16,000 species of different plants originating from the five continents.

Looking after them requires a great deal of skill, a source of great pride to our gardeners. The collections in the Botanical Garden are presented in different sections: rockeries, greenhouses (tropical and Mediterranean), arboretums, medicinal plants and utilitarian plants.



Facts and figures

Every year the gardeners at the Botanical Garden:

- Maintain 28 hectares;
- Sow 1,500 species to maintain and diversify the collections and horticultural beds;
- Collect 2,000 portions of seeds in the Garden and in the wild, which are later exchanged with more than 800 botanical correspondents all over the world;
- Print 600 labels used to identify the trees and other plants making up the collections;
- Store 250 m³ of plant waste, turning it into compost;
- Spend a total of 5,300 hours weeding the rockeries alone.