

Füvészkert – Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem

BOTANIKUS KERT

The first botanical garden in Hungary was laid out in 1771 at the University of Nagyszombat (today Trnava in Slovakia), founded in 1665 by Cardinal Péter Pázmány. Thanks to the diligence of its creator Jacob Winterl, professor of chemistry and botany and of his student, the renowned scientist-polyhistor Pál Kitaibel the garden's collection soon achieved universal fame. The garden was relocated several times, first to Buda and then to Pest and it found its present site more than 150 years ago. In 1788 Professor Winterl published the garden's first seed catalogue. From 1802 to 1812 Kitaibel published his research results in Vienna, describing the plants he had identified in a luxurious three-tome publication in collaboration with Franz Adam von Waldstein, an Austrian botanist, *Plantae Rariores Hungariae*.



The present site was once a country estate, laid out with an English garden, mainly functioning as a hunting lodge and belonging to the aristocratic Festetics family, but today it is hidden in the typical urban environment of modern Budapest. The Festetics mansion forms the central building of the garden. It was designed by the famous architect Mihály Pollack in 1802. Today it houses the library of ancient botanical and horticultural works, documents from the history of the garden, a herbarium of some 4000 sheets representing both indigenous and exotic species, and provides the venue for academic lectures and popular science programmes. The monuments of the garden include columns erected in the late 1800s to commemorate the authors of the first "Hungarian Herbal", Sámuel Diószegi and Mihály Fazekas, a memorial to honour its great patron, Palatine József, who arranged for its relocation to the present site, and the bust of the world famous natural scientist of the Carpathians, Pál Kitaibel.



The botanical garden has been a national monument since 1960, and today it displays over 10,000 species and varieties. The historic palm house was erected in 1865 and recently underwent a thorough renovation, re-opened on 1 September 2011. The palm house and the greenhouses, renovated in 1984, are home to the tropical and subtropical species of the collection. There is an impressive variety of cacti, bromeliads, orchids, palms and arums. The so-called Victoria House was specially built in 1893 for the Amazonian water lily.





Another of the garden's treasures is the arboretum. Although it occupies only a small area it still has more than 800 tree and shrub species. The rockeries offer a glimpse of the floral biodiversity of Europe's alpine regions. Hungary is represented by more than 400 indigenous plant species.



The garden was immortalised in one of the scenes in Ferenc Molnár's famous children's book, *The Boys from Pál Street*. Molnár often visited the garden as a student, something which is quite clear from the lovely



scenes in the book from the garden, but the lake with its island that has such a central place has disappeared, giving way to the ever growing city and, in particular, to the hospital which now occupies two-thirds of the original area of ten hectares.

The ELTE Botanical Garden is now over 235 years old and is more than ever devoted to fulfilling its traditional role in a modern environment, transferring knowledge to its students on the diversity of plant life, serving as a living museum and a haven for endangered plant species from Hungary and from around the world, educating the public, furthering the cause of environmentalism, and surviving as a “green island” in an modern built-up metropolis, where the little ones can experience their first encounter with nature at its most colourful and those in the autumn of life can find peace and harmony.



Contact details

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Opening hours:

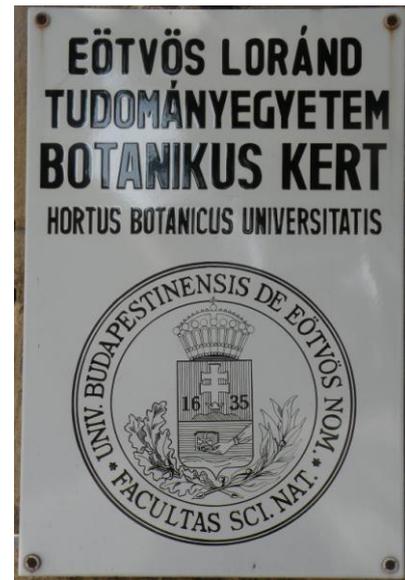
April-September: 9-17; greenhouses 9-12 and 13-16
October-March: 9-16; greenhouses 9-12 and 13-15

Entrance ticket:

Adults: 700 Ft
Students/pensioners: 300Ft
Family ticket (two adults and two children): 1700 Ft

Public transport:

Metro 3 to Klinikák Station
Bus 9 or trolleybus 83 to Kálvária Square



Entrance to the Garden