



The Botanical Garden of the University of Tartu

The Botanical Garden of the University of Tartu (BG UT) was *founded in 1803* and is the oldest permanently working botanical garden in the Baltic countries and, nowadays, one of the easternmost botanical garden in the European Union. Development of plant collections, research and education has been carried on by many well known botanists, professors of the University, such as Carl Friedrich von Ledebour, Alexander von Bunge, Nikolai Kuznetsov, Teodor Lippmaa, August Vaga , etc.

The Botanical Garden is a tranquil green oasis in historical downtown Tartu, and covers 3.5 ha at 38, Lai Street , and 0.5 ha at 4-6, Oa Street. The landscape has been changed due to the anthropogenic influence, but there is an old bastion (7 m high), the fragments of the medieval city wall and the pond (0.3 ha, 3 m deep). The location of buildings, brickwork, gates, pathways, grounds and tree groups is kept in their historic situation in the early 19th century. The greenhouses of the garden are protected as national architectural monuments.

The **collections** of the garden consist of more than 7000 *taxa* (in 2010): 5,700 outdoor and 1,300 in the greenhouses, arranged in the different gardens/displays/greenhouses.



The Pond

Outdoor

Arboretum – planted on the outside slopes of the old bastion, 1000 specimen, 700 taxa, mostly from Europe, East Asia and North America. The oldest tree is the Olga bay larch, *Larix gmelinii* var. *olgensis* (Henry) Oстенf. et Larsen (d=105 cm), which was planted already before the foundation of the Botanical Garden at that place, i.e. more than 200 years ago. The biggest tree is the Norway maple, *Acer platanoides* L. (d=135 cm).

Rock Garden – planted inside the old bastion, more than 1000 taxa of mountain and boreal plants. There are the beautifully arranged Figural Flower Bed and the Summer Stage for cultural events in the Rock Garden.

Rose Garden – founded in 1949, reconstructed in 2009, with more than 200 cultivars of roses, incl. cultivars bred in Estonia.

Peony Garden – founded in 2005, exposes more than 250 varieties of peonies.

Clematis Garden – founded in 2007, exposes the most valuable 50 cultivars of this lianes, bred in Estonia.

Garden of Medicinal Plants – founded in 2011, exposes more than 100 medicinal plants in different raised beds and pots.

Systematic Garden: Garden of Monocots - exposes 300 taxa of vascular plants, and *Garden of Dicots* – exposes 880 taxa of vascular plants.

Estonian native plants – exposes 150 species of vascular plants, incl. 70 species of endangered and rare plants.

Perennial beds – planted over many years in different parts of the Garden, exposing 2,400 taxa of perennials.

Beds of annual ornamental plants, incl. the figural flower bed on the bastion slope.



Systematic garden – monocots – and green houses

Greenhouses

There are 4 greenhouses for plant education. The Palm House was reconstructed in 1983, and the other three in 2002-2005. At Oa Street, we have two greenhouses for propagation of tropical (73 m²) and subtropical plants (210 m²).

Palm House: height 22 m, area 500 m², exposes 660 taxa of tropical and subtropical plants, incl. 70 species of palms.

Succulent House: height 5.6 m, area 103.5 m², exposes 325 taxa of succulent plants.

Subtropical House : height 12.4 m, area 113.6 m², exposes 130 taxa of subtropical plants.

Tropical House: height 12.4 m, area 82.3 m², exposes 200 taxa of tropical plants.

Experimental and Reproduction Garden: 4-6, Oa Street, area 0.5 ha (founded in 2007) has beds, frames, plastic house, reproduction house for subtropical plants (210 m²), reproduction house for tropical plants (73 m²), two experimental units (36 m²+36 m²), and other rooms (62 m²).



Clematis 'Jaan', bred in Estonia



Rose 'Koit', bred in Estonia

Research is focused on the conservation of valuable ornamental, medicinal plants and spices, and on endangered native plant species. There are more than 500 valuable cultivars included in the data bank, and most of the valuable ornamental plants such as *Clematis*, *Syringa*, *Lilium*, *Primula*, *Sempervivum*, etc., bred in Estonia, are growing in the conservaton beds. The collection of native endangered plants is developing every year. Today we have 70 species of rare vascular plants, i.e. 28 % of the rare plants of Estonia protcted by law.

Education in the garden is going on at the academic and public level. In 2010, there was more than 800 students using the plant collections to obtain knowledge from 23 different courses. Public education is going on in co-operation with the Society of Friends and the Environmental Centre of the City of Tartu. Over the past years we have organized 2-4 thematic days, 10 exhibitions, 150 guided tours and other botanical events for the public.



The Palm House

Visitors' Centre (founded in 2005) consists of the reception/information room (43.5 m²), class room(44.1 m²) and other rooms (20 m²). Every year there are different workshops, training courses, meetings, exhibitions and other educational and cultural events in the Visitors' Centre. Together with the Summer Stage and the green areas it is in use for public events (concerts, plays, exhibitions, weddings, receptions, etc.).

Number of visitors (in 2010): 118,600 (total), incl. 16,596 (with tickets).

The Botanical Garden of the University of Tartu is a member of the Botanic Garden Conservation International, the EU Botanic Gardens Consortium, the Association of Baltic Botanic Gardens and has signed the International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation. The Seed List, *Index Seminum*, has been compiled since 1849. In 2010, the *Index Seminum* consisted of seeds for exchange of 769 taxa .



Wildlife, June 2008

Staff: (total 13.5)

Gardeners – 7
Administration – 3.5
Botanist – 1
Technician – 1
Field worker – 1

Budget (in 2010): 372,000 EUR

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