EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN TALLINN BOTANIC GARDEN

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Tallinn Botanic Garden is situated in a landscape protection area of the Pirita River Valley
TALLINN BOTANIC GARDEN HOLDS DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES BASED ON ITS PLANT COLLECTIONS AND NATURAL HABITATS

- Guided tours in collections
- Exhibitions and thematic days
- The permanent exhibition of lichens, mosses and tree fungi
Nature trails about 6.5 km, with altogether 22 viewpoints

Curriculum-based nature education programmes for school students from 2nd to 11th grade

Educational group Nature Child for younger students
Guided tours to learn about the plants and collections are conducted by expert guides in four different languages.

Outdoor and greenhouse guided tours can be arranged upon request in English, Finnish, Russian and Estonian.

In the outdoor collections of the Garden, there are over 6000, in the greenhouses, which were reconstructed between 2010 and 2011, there are over 2000 different plant taxa.
To help people learn about the indoor and outdoor collections at their own pace, (as well as walking the study trail), an **audioguide** developed and produced. The already popular guide contains around 12 hours’ worth of information (in Estonian, English, Russian and Finnish) that visitors won’t find in the booklets in the collections or on the 22 boards along the trail and in printed matter.
EXHIBITIONS AND THEMATIC DAYS

- The first exhibition at the Botanic Garden “Fungi, mosses and lichens” was organised in 1980.
- Since the year 2000, there has been a new exhibition almost every month. These are very popular among the visitors of the Garden, which is proved by the multiplied number of visitors on the days of exhibitions.
- Exhibitions and tours on exhibition topics during exhibitions are free-of-charge but normal Garden admission charges apply.
THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION OF LICHENS, MOSSES AND TREE FUNGI boasts over 200 species (60-70 from each group) of the most common lichens, mosses and tree fungi in Estonia and is open year-round. Worksheets can be printed out from the Botanic Garden website: http://botaanikaaed.ee/
About 6.5 km of **nature trails** with altogether 22 viewpoints run through several landscapes and habitats, natural or strongly influenced by human activities.
Nature trail passes even the former Kloostrimetsa bog.
The explanatory posters, booklets in different languages and worksheets for students are available at the ticket office free of charge and on the website of Botanic Garden.
The Garden launched education days on four topics in 2006 but has since expanded the selection to 11 different themes for students from Grades 2-11.

In the last 10 years the Garden has conducted one-day programmes for 789 classes from 92 different schools (including 35 from outside Tallinn) – around 16,000 students and 674 days of instruction in total.

The Garden does not have its own teachers; the education days are conducted by its specialists – biologists and geographers and, for example, gardeners.
• Every programme includes exploring of the Garden greenhouse and/or outdoor collections.
• The groups of maximum 32 students are booked in advance.
• The total length of a study is 3-4 hours including lunch break for 15 minutes. The groups are divided into two, for better contact and active participation.
• The knowledge and experience are acquired through active participation. Worksheets have been compiled for different programmes and different age groups, and practical activities are carried out all through the study day.
How does a magnifying glass make small lichens bigger (Trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants)
When is a plant a tree or shrub? (Trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants)
How to make a herbarium specimen (Trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants)
Learning through play (House plants and useful plants)
How to pot plantlets of *Chlorophytum comosum* (House plants and useful plants)
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Measuring water transparency with a Secchi disc (Water and soil ecosystems)
Sampling of plants and invertebrates from a pond (*Water and soil ecosystems*)
Sampling the soil (Water and soil ecosystems)
Working with globes (Natural and climatic zonality)
A tour in the rainforest (Natural and climatic zonality)
Filling up the worksheets, working with herbarium and plant key (Plant reproduction and propagation)
Morphological characters of plants (Plant reproduction and propagation)
Weighing bulbs (Plant reproduction and propagation)
Measuring and weighing different fruits (Fruit and dispersal)
An older wooden house on the territory of the Botanic Garden has been reconstructed for the nature education purposes by the Environment Department of Tallinn some years ago.
EDUCATIONAL GROUP Nature Child

• Educational group Nature Child, which is aimed at Grades 1-6, comes together from October to June.
• Members of the group examine the peculiarities of the plant life in bogs, the connections between healthy eating and the plant kingdom and Estonian orchids growing in nature. They also learn about mosses, edible plants, native willows and plants growing in different zones around the world and how they adapt.
• Young botanists sow seeds and plant seedlings at the Botanic Garden, dissect fish at the Estonian Natural History Museum, study amphibians at Tallinn Zoo and participate on a traditional spring excursion to the island of Aegna.
More educational activities

• The Garden’s specialists hold dozens of talks on nature education and research in a year, conduct in-service training, make radio and television appearances, write articles in popular science magazines, share botanical and horticultural information over the phone and online and contribute to the work of the botany terminology committee. In the last decade, 10 nature education books have been authored by staff from the Garden’s Environmental Education Department.

• Many plant enthusiasts ask advice on plant diseases and pests, unknown plants identification and tips for taking care of houseplants.
Welcome to Tallinn Botanic Garden!