

**Contents:**

1. Follow-up on the Biodiversity Education Colloquium
2. New on-line content for botanical gardens
3. Plantes pour la vie
4. Sila: Clue In To Climate Change
5. Education in Botanic Gardens, International Congress 2006
6. Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and Education
7. Small but perfectly formed -BGCI's publications in one new resource
8. Upcoming educational events
9. Acknowledgements

**1. Follow up on the Biodiversity Education Colloquium**

The Biodiversity Education Colloquium, organised as part of the *Investing in Nature: A Partnership for Plants in Canada* project was held at the Montreal Botanical Garden in Quebec, Canada, from December 1 to 3, 2004. In the largest get-together of Canadian botanical garden & arboreta representatives in over 30 years, 63 representatives from 27 botanical gardens, arboreta and related institutions across the country gathered to develop ways of improving and expanding educational efforts to promote plant conservation, biodiversity and sustainability. For the second day of the colloquium that focused specifically on biodiversity education, 36 additional environmental educators from Quebec also joined us.

Due to the strong common interest in education for plant conservation and sustainability, a powerful cohesiveness was established between the participants. The Biodiversity Education Colloquium addressed a number of themes, including developing and evaluating educational programs on biodiversity and conservation, using a variety of education and communication technologies and various aspects of promoting conservation and sustainability. Working groups made recommendations and developed plans to strengthen collaborative efforts to more effectively educate and engage visitors in conservation.

We gratefully acknowledge support from sponsors: HSBC Holdings plc. Department of Canadian Heritage, Friends of the Montreal Botanical Garden, Marie-Victorin Foundation and partners: Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Canadian Botanical Conservation Network, Royal Botanical Gardens and Montreal Botanical Garden.

- Full summary and working Group summaries: [www.bgci.org/canada/inst\\_develop.html](http://www.bgci.org/canada/inst_develop.html)

**2. New on-line content for botanical gardens**

We are pleased to announce that proposals to increase plant conservation and educational materials available to the public via the Internet were accepted from the following:

- **Memorial University of Newfoundland Botanical Gardens** is creating a "Biodiversity Hub" on their web site to draw attention to local flora, related plant conservation projects, education programmes and photos.
- **Harriet Irving Botanical Garden** is developing its own educational and interactive web site to provide virtual tours, activities, and insight into plants, biodiversity, and habitat conservation of the Acadian Forest Region.
- **Mitis River Park/ Reford Gardens** is establishing a web site, plant fact sheets and activities to present the plant conservation mission and values interpreted in their park and nature sanctuary.

- **Chateau Ramezay Museum** is expanding the Governor's Garden section of their web site to include historical stories, conservation issues and cultivation information of heirloom and historically important garden plants.
- **Royal Botanical Gardens** are designing web based activities to provide teachers with pre and post visit support to complement on-site educational programmes.
- **Niagara Parks Botanical Garden** is constructing a web section to highlight plant conservation, habitat restoration and environmental stewardship projects in both the botanical garden and adjacent park areas.
- **Columbia Valley Botanical Garden** is launching a completely new web site to highlight their garden, it's mission of conservation and education, and introducing important local partners in conservation.
- **VanDusen Botanical Garden** is adding a host of plant conservation resources, educational activities, photos of BC native plants, and links to regional ecological organisations.
- **Milner Gardens and Woodland** is developing an education section to their web site to provide details about their educational programmes, photos, interpretive information and ecological resources.

Look for new content on-line at the end of March 2005!

### 3. **Plantes pour la vie**

The Plants for Life web site has recently been translated into French: [www.plantsforlife.net](http://www.plantsforlife.net) ! For posters to distribute at teacher workshops, for scheduled groups or special events, contact Sarah Kneebone: [sarah.kneebone@bgci.org](mailto:sarah.kneebone@bgci.org)

### 4. **Sila: Clue In To Climate Change**, *Barb McKean, Royal Botanical Gardens*

This national travelling exhibit raises awareness about one of our most pressing environmental issues. Sila is an Inuktitut word meaning climate and all things around us in the environment. This trilingual exhibit (English, French and Inuktitut) contains real-life examples of climate change in different parts of the world, and shows how some areas are coping with the challenges. Sila is on display until April 30, 2005, at Royal Botanical Gardens' Nature Centre. The exhibit was produced by the Canadian Museum of Nature, in collaboration with The Centre for Traditional Knowledge and supported by the Government of Canada Climate Change Action Fund, the Canadian International Development Agency, RBC Foundation and Canada Post.

- Exhibit information: [www.nature.ca/exhibits/trvsila\\_e.cfm](http://www.nature.ca/exhibits/trvsila_e.cfm)
- Related garden-based educational programming: [bmckean@rbg.ca](mailto:bmckean@rbg.ca)

### 5. **Education in Botanic Gardens, International Congress 2006**, *Julia Willison, BGCI*

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) is pleased to announce the 6<sup>th</sup> International congress on Education in Botanic Gardens, hosted by the University of Oxford Botanic Gardens, and in collaboration with Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and BGEN (Botanic Gardens Education Network). "The Nature of Success: Success for Nature" will be held from Sunday 10th to Thursday 14th September 2006.

The congress will provide a forum for environmental educators from botanic gardens world-wide as well as educators and other staff from plant science institutes, education and conservation organisations, zoos, museums, national parks and nature reserves, to discuss these ideas and issues - particularly pertinent in the light of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Themes being addressed during the congress include: Achieving sustainability: ideas and solutions; Public awareness of plants; Reflection on practice; and Education for all: working with challenging groups.

To register your interest in the congress or to submit a paper, poster or presentation, visit [www.bgci.org/educationcongress](http://www.bgci.org/educationcongress)

## 6. **Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and Education**, Sarah Kneebone, BGCI

The new Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and Education section of the BGCI web site ([www.bgci.org/education/gspc\\_and\\_education](http://www.bgci.org/education/gspc_and_education)) encourages educators, from any environmental education organisation, to see your work as being directly relevant and important to realising the targets and, of course, the ultimate goal of the GSPC – to halt the current and continuing loss of plant diversity.

Education – raising awareness of the need for plants and plant conservation, is a cross cutting aspect of this significant international initiative. Check out the examples showcased, add your own contributions and consider voicing your opinion in a consultation on Target 14 ‘The importance of plant diversity and the need for its conservation incorporated into communication, educational and public-awareness programmes’.

- Global Strategy for Plant Conservation : [www.bgci.org/files/7/0/global\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.bgci.org/files/7/0/global_strategy.pdf)

## 7. **Small but perfectly formed – BGCI’s publications in one new resource**, Sarah Kneebone, BGCI

Over the past three months BGCI has been distributing a brand new resource to its members. The CD-Rom, called ‘*Plants for the Planet: Resource Pack for Botanic Gardens*’, contains 58 key education and policy documents from BGCI and its associates, in 7 different languages – Russian, Portuguese, French, Chinese, Spanish, German and English.

The CD provides an invaluable resource for educators – 20 back issues of *Roots*, the education review, covering topics as varied as Interpretation, Habitats, Science, Environmental Ethics, Ethnobotany, Sustainability for the Future and Teacher Training. Educators will also benefit from the complete proceedings of all five past International Congresses on Education in Botanic Gardens, including the most recent ‘*Connecting with Plants: Lessons for Life*’, Sydney, 2002. Also included in Portuguese, English and French is the wonderful interpretation manual ‘*Making your Garden Come Alive: Environmental Interpretation in Botanical Gardens*’ written by Maryke Honig and published by SABONET (Southern African Botanical Gardens Network).

A limited number of *complementary* copies are available for Canadian educators – please contact Laurel McIvor: [lmcivor@rbg.ca](mailto:lmcivor@rbg.ca).

Additional copies can be ordered from [www.bgci.org/policies/bgci\\_publications.html](http://www.bgci.org/policies/bgci_publications.html), costing £12.00 for members or £18.00 for non members plus postage and packing.

## 8. **Upcoming educational events**

Events are posted in the language(s) in which they are presented:

- **du 9 au 13 mai, 2005**  
**L'ERE, un champ d'innovations:** congrès de l'Association Canadienne Française pour l'Avancement des Sciences [www.aqper.qc.ca/bulletin/intereb.28.10.04.htm#proj](http://www.aqper.qc.ca/bulletin/intereb.28.10.04.htm#proj)  
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, Chicoutimi, Québec
- **June 29-July 2, 2005**  
**Rooted in Your Community: AABGA Annual Conference** [www.aabga.org](http://www.aabga.org)  
Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A
- **September 30 – Oct 2, 2005/ du 30 septembre au 2 octobre, 2005**  
**Creating Ripples: Education, Environment and Culture: EECOM Annual Conference**  
**Faire des vagues en éducation, environnement et culture: Conférence EECOM**  
[www.eecom.org/english/conferences.html](http://www.eecom.org/english/conferences.html) ou [www.eecom.org/francais/callFrench.html](http://www.eecom.org/francais/callFrench.html)  
Huntsville, Ontario
- **September 10-14<sup>th</sup>, 2006**  
**“The Nature of Success, Success for Nature”:** Education in Botanic Gardens, BGCI’s 6<sup>th</sup> International Congress [www.bgci.org/educationcongress](http://www.bgci.org/educationcongress), Oxford, U.K.
- **More botanical & environmental education events/conferences**  
[www.bgci.org/canada/edu\\_events.html](http://www.bgci.org/canada/edu_events.html)

- **Plant conservation events/ conferences**  
[www.rbg.ca/cbcn/en/news/coming/index.html](http://www.rbg.ca/cbcn/en/news/coming/index.html)

## 9. Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following for their contributions and support:

Translation: Catherine Gouillard

Our sponsors: HSBC Holdings plc & the Department of Canadian Heritage: Museums Assistance Programme

Our partners: Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Canadian Botanical Conservation Network, Royal Botanical Gardens and Montreal Botanical Garden

**English and French copies of this newsletter are available in pdf format: [www.bgci.org/canada](http://www.bgci.org/canada)**

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*If you would like to subscribe, have any questions or if would like to contribute a news item, please contact Laurel McIvor, newsletter editor and writer (unless otherwise indicated):*  
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