



Fascination of  
Plants Day

May 18<sup>th</sup> 2013

On 18 May 2013, the [International Fascination of Plants Day](#) (FoPD) was organised for the second time under the umbrella of EPSO. We are very proud to announce that the event was a big success and we generously exceeded last years numbers! In total, **689 institutions** in **54 countries** around the globe opened their doors in order to stir up people's enthusiasm



about plants and their importance for sustainable production of food, horticulture, forestry, as well as the non-food products such as paper, timber,

chemicals, energy, and pharmaceuticals.

Altogether, **over 1000 events** were organised from the very North of Norway to the South of Chile – the latter, with 23 institutions joining, being the record holder on the number of events in the Americas. Nigeria, Mozambique, and Tanzania shared the first place in Africa with two events in each country. In Asia, China and Japan were the most active event organisers, with 23 Chinese and 27 Japanese institutions organising FoPD events.

The most active region was Europe, with EPSO representatives in almost every country. The top 3 of the 27 European countries participating this year were Poland (205 events), Italy (150 events), and Portugal (100 events). 4 countries had ministers as their Patron for the Day: Germany (2 ministers), Czech Republic, Slovakia and Norway.

Numerous success stories have been rolling into our mail boxes the last months. Hereafter you can read a selection of FoPD success stories in the participating countries. But before doing so, we would like to take the opportunity to thank all partners and sponsors of this event. At the global level these were: the [Global Plant Council](#); [Plants of the Future European Technology Platform](#) (Plant ETP); [KWS SAAG AG](#) (KWS); [European Association for Research on Plant Breeding](#) (EUCARPIA); [Society for Experimental Biology](#) (SEB); [International Society for](#)



**Participating countries:** Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Cameroon, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Turkey, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, USA, Zambia

## FACTS AND FIGURES by 24.5.2013

250,000 plant species

**87.600 unique visitors online**

3000 personal EPSO members

**1084 followers** on Twitter, 1782 tweets

**697 likes** and **1023 postings** on facebook

**689 institutions** signed up for FoPD

**1032 events** at FoPD

227 research institutes and universities represented by EPSO

205 Polish events up for FoPD

150 Italian events announced for FoPD

100 Portuguese events announced for FoPD

28 Australian institutions organize events on FoPD

27 Japanese events on FoPD

23 Chilean events on FoPD

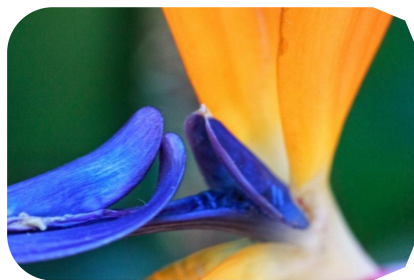
**4 National patronages:** Czech Minister for Agriculture Petr Bendl; Norwegian Minister for Agriculture and Food Trygve Slagsvold Vedum; Slovakian Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development; German Minister for Food, Agriculture & Consumer Relations, Ilse Aigner; and for Science & Education, Johanna Wanka

[Horticultural Science](#) (ISHS); [Plant Conservation Day](#).

Furthermore, a big thank you to all the national coordinators and everyone who contributed to make this happen! **Contact** the global coordinators [Trine Hvoslief-Eide](#); [Karin Metzloff](#) .

In **Argentina**, several institutions in Cordoba and La Plata took part in the FoPD. Activities in Córdoba, ranging from stands, exhibits, experiments, and a photography contest, were held all over the city, and attended by over 700 students, senior citizens, and general public. Lectures at the National Academy of Sciences took place throughout the day and attracted students, school children and by-passers. The Catholic University offered lectures and exhibits of native plants and their products and tours through the botanical garden. In La Plata over 300 visitors were welcomed at INFIVE (Institute for Plant

Physiology). High school students attended lab demonstrations, and lectures about possible future careers in the fields of plant biology and agronomy. School children of all ages transplanted lettuce and chard plants and received instructions on plant care and feeding. They were delighted with a guided tour through the Botanical Gardens. Furthermore, there was an open lecture about the importance of plants in our nutrition and modern lifestyle, and the need for agricultural sustainability. **Contact:** [Edith Taleisnik](#); [Nacira Muñoz](#)



14 organisations throughout **Australia** took part in the FoPD celebrations and many of them guided Tours of Herbariums, Arboretums, native Australian gardens and Botanical Gardens, with an emphasis on plants throughout history and how plants sustain and enrich our lives. Furthermore, there were art–science competitions; talks about the history of Arboretums; biotechnology workshops focusing on the role plants play in food production, and several digital photo competitions (*one of the winning pictures above*). For example, the Australian Network for Plant Conservation launched a slide show of some of Australia's most threatened plants. At the Waite Arboretum, University of Adelaide, volunteer Arboretum guides took walks on 18 May. Each walk lasted 90 minutes and guides highlighted different aspects of the ways that trees sustain and enrich our lives. The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide, in collaboration with RiAus, ran a full day of activities. The morning kicked off with guided tours of the State Herbarium of South Australia, where visitors were given a behind the scenes look at their dried plant specimens. Taking advantage of the nice weather, a morning tour of the Adelaide Botanic Garden exposed the impact of plants throughout history, both in medicine and as commodities, while an afternoon tour explored photosynthesis and featured a visiting scientist. There was something for the kids too, with a great art–science activity in the afternoon that explored patterns in nature. Over 80 participants enjoyed the opportunity to step into the garden, while learning some science along the way! **Contact:** [Monica Ogierman](#)

In **Brazil** 15 institutions were involved in organizing 22 events.



**Cameroon** was happy to have the Plant Day in their country as well. There were presentations and exhibitions of plants and plant products at the University of Buea in South West Cameroon. It was a great pleasure to see students coming to the institute to enjoy and learn about plants. Thank you have much for the oppor-

tunity. **Contact:** [Okolle Justin](#)

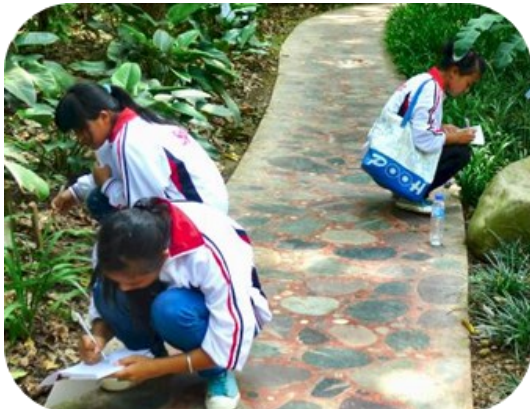
In **Canada**, one of the events was held on 16 May at St. Joan of Arc Catholic Secondary School in Mississauga, Ontario. This high school outreach celebrated the beauty and fascinating world of plant cells at the microscopic level through an image exhibition followed by the multimedia presentation 'Cellscapes: The Art and Science behind Plant Cell Biotechnology and Imaging' by Jaideep Mathur and his Laboratory of Plant Development and Interactions from the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology, University of Guelph. Teacher Eva Bruni and the Science Department at St. Joan of Arc Catholic Secondary School were instrumental in hosting the event which was very well received by students and teachers alike. The hundred or so science students in attendance asked very good questions following the presentation, regarding both scientific details as well as study and career opportunities in plant sciences. View Cellscapes catalog [here](#). **Contact:** [Shahrokh Khanizadeh](#)



**Chile** turned out to be the Latin American country where the greatest number of organisations held celebrations, to the immense satisfaction of the Agriaquaculture Nutritional Genomics Center or CGNA, which coordinated the event in Chile. This was the second year the annual event was held, and Chile brought together 23 organising institutions that formed a network of organisations and participants carrying out various activities – from academic lectures, tree-planting in schools and preschools, art exhibits, photography contests, as well as special activities in the main botanical gardens of the country, museums, universities and scientific research centers. In the cities of La Serena, Coquimbo, Quillota, Valparaíso, Viña del Mar, Santiago, Rengo, Talca, Los Angeles, Temuco, Valdivia and Punta Arenas, activities and various events were held to promote knowledge of plants. Have a look at the pictures to the left to get some impressions of FoPD activities in Chile, and view more of them [here](#). **Contact:** [Loreto Moya](#)



The opening ceremony of the FoPD in China was held at the Shanghai Chen Shan Botanical Garden, and included an award ceremony for a



FoPD composition contest for National Elementary-High School students. The CSPB, the activity coordinator, organised activities whose theme was to promote the relationship between plant science and everyday life. During the following two weeks, many botanical gardens, universities and more than 20 other organisations hosted a series of popular science lectures and exhibitions on botanical life. The activities featured topics ranging from plants and the environment, biofuel to nutrition, transgenic plants to food safety, combining science with colourful activities. **Contact:** [Peng Zhang](#)

**Estonia** celebrated FoPD all through the week with many different activities for all family members: visits to research centres, excursions to nature, practical workshops and lectures. Also two exhibitions about plants were opened and an organic vegetable garden was established in the city of Tartu for school and kindergarten children. Click [here](#) to view the pictures. **Contact:** [Elen Peetsmann](#)

In **Germany**, 10 events were held at as many institutions. A noteworthy remark was made by government officials to support the FoPD: Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Relations, Ilse Aigner, and Federal Minister for Science and Education, Johanna Wanka, agreed to be patrons for the Plant Day 2013. With this step both ministers express their high support “to intensify the perception of the public on the central role of plants for mankind and environment” and “to illustrate the importance of plants and plant sciences for the future - to the public and especially to young people”. **Contact:** [Joachim Schiemann](#), [Uli Schurr](#)

In **Greece** events were met with great success at all sites. At the Agricultural University of Athens, hundreds of pupils and young students visited fields and greenhouses and learned how to develop a garden. The older guests enjoyed a symposium of culturally oriented presentations, emphasizing the role of plants in our everyday life. Bonsai enthusiasts ran a show that fascinated the children.



At the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania, Crete, an open day was held, allowing visitors to explore sites such as the Botanic Garden of endemic and rare plants of Crete, and the Seed Bank of MAICh. Students were taken on a guided tour through the Forest Botanical Garden of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, while lectures dealt with magical notions of Hellenic biodiversity in antiquity and present. The Science Day reception ended with a warm reception featuring a very interesting plant product, wine, that became the main highlight! **Contact:** [George Skaracis](#)

“Biodiversity and discovery of plants” was the theme of the FoPD celebrations at the Institute of Biodiversity and Protected Areas, in the Natural Park of Tarrafes de Cacheu, **Guinée-Bissau**. 280 children and juveniles from the National Scouts Association eagerly participated in the event (*picture to the left*). **Contact:** [Bucar Indjai](#)



In **Hungary** 38 institutions helped organize 60 events.

Events in **India** started off with a lecture by S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor of JNU, which was absolutely fabulous. About 120 school children from the campus and outside listened very carefully to the lecture and asked several questions. They were taken around various laboratories, plant tissue culture labs, and glass houses to show them the normal and transgenic plants with improved traits such as insect pest resistance and salt, heavy metal and drought tolerance. Journalists from the Times of India were present and a local JNU photographer and videographer took lots of pictures; part of them can be viewed at the [Plant Day website](#). **Contact:** [Neeta Sarin](#)



The FoPD 2013 in **Italy** was very well received and got a lot of attention from the media. In 36 cities, 70 events included more than 150 activities. These events were organized by Universities, research institutes and botanical gardens and were sponsored by local governments, foundations, societies and companies. An Italian Fascination of Plants Day [website](#) was launched that provided (and still does) detailed information about the various initiatives that were undertaken. The opening ceremony was organized at the headquarters of the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche in Rome where the national press was abundantly present. The activities organized all over the Italian territory included seminars, exhibitions, guided tours through parks and gardens, laboratories where people could do experiments, watch through microscopes, or take part in drawing contests for children. Contact: [Martin Kater](#)

lished who managed the maintenance of the web site and the printing of fliers. Contact: [Nozomu Koizumi](#)



**Lebanon** participated for the first time in the activities of the Fascination of Plants Day 2013. Five activities were held in four universities. Notre Dame University-Louaize organised a conference entitled “Plants in Our Life” under the patronage of the Minister of Agriculture, and an exhibition entitled “Capsules of Life: Seeds from around the world”. The American University of Beirut organized “Wild Plants Nature Walks for Young Children”. Beirut Arab University invited the public to ‘Exploring the RECD Herbal Garden’. Finally, the Saint Joseph University set up an activity related to seed dispersal. All the activities were a tremendous success and were covered by the media. Contact: [Tanos G Hage](#)



In **Lithuania** 23 institutions took part in 15 events. **Gintaras Brazauskas** from the Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry of Lithuania commented “It was very good, we had groups from schools, from other institutes, it was a wonderful way to show our research”.



In **Ireland**, NUI Galway-based activities were organized by Z Popper and D Stengel. The ‘Our Fascinating Flora’ photography competition for instance drew over 340 individual

entries of such high standard that the judges had a very difficult time selecting the most fascinating! Posters of the winning photographs as well as composite posters (e.g. Fig. 2) including all submitted photographs were displayed in the foyer of the Orbsen building. On 18 May, an Art Workshop, led by G D’Arcy, highlighting the ecological importance of plants was attended by 35 children of 6 years of age upwards. D’Arcy had the children (and their parents) captivated and busily drawing; as one parent noted in an e-mail afterwards ‘the children were star artists!’ Furthermore, the Waterford Institute of Technology in South-East Ireland had a number of highly successful events led by Cara Daly (see picture above), which included beach art, photography and botanical drawing. For more details check out [Facebook](#) and this [webpage](#). Contact: [Zoe Popper](#)



In **Japan** at least eight events were held, including research facility open houses, 35 hands-on events or talks, one web campaign by a publishing company, and 20 school-related events. A coordinator team organizing FoPD-related events was estab-

Celebrations in **Nigeria** were held at the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB) on 20 May and were attended by 250 participants including scientists, farmers, teachers, nurserymen, students and pupils. Amongst the attendees were the Vice-Chancellor of FUNAAB, the programme manager of Ogun State Agricultural Development Programme, and the representative of the Ogun State Ministry of Forestry. During the opening ceremony, four lead papers on sustainable livelihoods and other projects were presented. The ceremony was followed by a 'See and buy' exhibition of more than 1000 plants, including food, spices, medicinal plants, dye plants, trees, ornamentals and endangered indigenous plants. It was a unique opportunity for the public to learn more about the diversity, value and virtue of plants. In addition, interest groups were discussing possible partnerships between farmers, processors, and scientists. The event was very well received by the participants, and the majority of them already planned to attend the third edition of FoPD! **Contact:** [Isaac Aiyelaagbe](#)



Tromsø, a city in Troms county, Norway, was the most northern point where FoPD 2013 took place. Furthermore, both on Campus Ås, and in Trondheim the events were a big hit. The most successful of the events were: Vegetable garden for demonstration for children, with people helping and guiding the children how they can grow their own plants;



Sale of bedding plants from students' course for charity – more than 30 000 NOK was raised; the Pecha Kucha competition in the Science Pub during the evening where 8 contestants were competing for the best presentation of 20 slides with 20 seconds each; etc. It was all great fun! **Contact:** [Trine Hvoslef-Eide](#)



The first FoPD in the **Philippines** was held on 23–24 May. On the first day, there was an opening program at the Camarines Norte State College. The presentation of a paper on "Rafflesia of Camarines Norte", by Rusty Abanto and Pastor Malabrigo was one of the highlights of the day. The second day, a "Nature

walk" was held to the Rafflesia site in Mt. Guinatungan, San Lorenzo Ruiz, Camarines Norte. The event was attended by many students, CNSC Faculty members, and other interested individuals. **Contact:** [Arlene C. Alegre](#)

In **Poland** more than 200 events were organised from 13 to 19 May. Universities, botanic gardens, research institutes and museums took up the challenge to fascinate people with plants. In all places, the numbers of the general public who turned up were great: a steady flow of people all through the days. In addition to the open days organised in several research institutions and universities, experimental and field demonstrations, excursions, virtual and real photo exhibitions, film projections, gardening sessions among many others were set up. The events were given attention both at the radio and television. **Contact:** [Małgorzata Garnczarska](#)



**Portugal** had the biggest worldwide involvement in FoPD 2013 with 65 national institutions organizing 99 events. Universities, research institutions, botanic gardens, museums, schools, science centres, city halls, biotech companies, several societies and non profit associations – all over the continent and islands, organized events of different types: seminars, workshops, field trips or promoting lab experiments. Some proposals were very "out of the box", crossing science and arts, music, drawing, writing and also crossing territories poorly explored in science communication in Portugal, such as shopping centres and street markets. The organisers invested in online presence, through the official website and a dedicated facebook page; this proved to be an excellent communication tool. The commitment of Plant Scientists was an essential part of the project. This is not always easy, as scientists seem distant from society, but when the barrier is broken, people usually feel comfortable upon the realization that a scientist is in fact "one of us". It was greatly due to the commitment and passion for Plant Sciences from researchers, teachers, communicators, farmers, ecologists, botanists, both amateur and professionals, that the hundreds of people that have celebrated May 18<sup>th</sup> in Portugal got to be themselves fascinated by plants. **Contact:** [Nelson Saibo](#) and [Ana Sanchez](#)

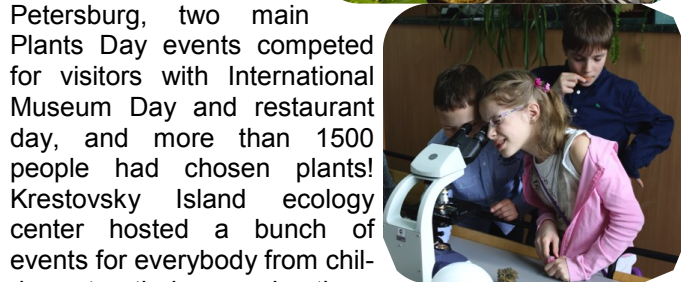




Plants Day week in **Russia** started with guided tours to Botanical garden of Southern Federal University in Rostov-on-Don on 14 May, followed by an open lecture about Extreme Plants in high Arctic region by Olga I. Sumina, head of Department of Plant Ecology in St.-Petersburg State University. In Rostov, a number of school pupils attended guided

tours through greenhouses and experimental plots of SFedU Botanical garden. They saw how diverse the plants were and studied how to compose flower bouquets, and learned why some plants in plots were in danger of 'green fire'. A number of local events followed next three days, mainly in schools. School students attended guided tours to spring flora of their local parks, took part in quests, quizzes, etc. Two more institutions held events on 16 May: Petrozavodsk State University in Petrozavodsk and Institute of Plant Physiology Russian Academy of Science in Moscow. In Saint-Petersburg and Tomsk, hundreds of visitors were attracted to open-air events. Over 700 people showed up for the guided tours about spring flora of Siberia. In Saint-Petersburg, two main Plants Day events competed for visitors with International Museum Day and restaurant day, and more than 1500 people had chosen plants! Krestovsky Island ecology center hosted a bunch of events for everybody from children to their grandmothers and grandfathers – park tours, drawing on asphalt contest, plant agriculture training, greenhouse tour were nice options to choose from. Colleagues from department of Geobotany and Plant Ecology of Saint-Petersburg State University organised a great event in Sosnovka park with a tour round the park full of revelations even for those who take walks every weekend! Even on Sunday there was a small event for hiking fans in the Oredezh river valley. And last but not least, participants finally saw Arabidopsis in the wild, which was awesome! At the same time, a special photography contest "Best plant photo on a smartphone screen" was held, to which Maxim Sudakov and Sergey Irkhin are two winners. Congratulations, guys!

**Contact:** [Gregory A. Pozhvanov](#)



**Contact:** [Gregory A. Pozhvanov](#)

**Slovakia** organised two events for students and teachers of the primary and secondary schools. On 13 May a professional botanical excursion "The spring flora of Zoborské Hills" was organised. The event was attended by students and teachers from elementary school in Travnica, with a total of 17 participants. An educational excursion "Plants around us" on 17 May was held at the Biological Centre of the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, for children and teachers of the elementary school in Golianovo. **Contact:** [Michaela Havrlentova](#)



In **South-Korea**, 10 events were held by 6 institutions: Ekokorea, PyungGang Botanical Garden, Hantaek Botanical Garden, Society of Children and plants in Seongnam, and Society of Children and plants in Incheon. The number of FoPD visitors in 6 cities in South Korea reached over 5,000 people! The events varied

from 'hands-on activities', 'making flower pots' and a 'sachet of wood chips', to 'guided tour' and 'session about herbal plants'. Visitors discovered how to manage and protect native plants in

our neighborhood and had an unforgettable experience by playing quizzes and winning prizes. **Contact:** [Choon-Hwan Lee](#)

The National Research Council (CSIC) Office of the Region of Valencia, **Spain** led the 49 institutions that signed up for FoPD in Spain and hosted 67 different kinds of events with special focus in reaching the education community in order to develop future scientific vocations. As an example, 60 teachers enjoyed a day at the Institute for Plant Molecular and Cell Biology where they received lessons in plants science history presented as the game "Plants in our life"; participated in several workshops regarding biotechnology; and received a notebook with practices specifically developed to be performed at the schools. The game "Plants in our life" has been distributed among teachers and students all along Spain and can be downloaded (in three languages) from the website of the [CSIC Office of the Region of Valencia](#). **Contact:** [José Pío Beltrán](#)

**Contact:** [José Pío Beltrán](#)

In **Switzerland**, several events were organized on 17 and 18 May: 'The Evolution of Broccoli and other Brassicaceae' workshop for high school classes at the University of Basel; A guided tour at the Botanical Garden of Geneva; lab visits at the University of Geneva; Making Cyanotypes with plants in the botanical garden; Looking at the stomata with the Cellscope and the iPod; A lecture and a guided tour 'Old collections and modern research questions' at the Herbarium and Botanical Museum of the University of Zurich, etc. Altogether more than 150 participants joined the events on the two days. The workshop for the school classes was also a great success, there with excellent feedback from the teachers. Very good feedback was as well received from the other events in Zurich, Basel and Geneva. **Contact:** [Luca Wacker](#)



To mark the FoPD in **Tanzania** and to pique the interest of young students in science, the [International Institute of Tropical Agriculture](#) (IITA) – Tanzania, based in Dar es Salaam, opened its doors to students from surrounding elementary schools on 7 June 2013. The students visited the research facilities and interacted with researchers at the institute. They toured the laboratories and greenhouses and got a

chance to be young scientists for a morning. The event also included a plenary session where students and their teachers had the opportunity to discuss their experiences and reflections on the tour and the exciting new things they had learned. **Contact:** [Catherine Njuguna](#)

At the British Society for Plant Pathology (BSPP), **UK**, 17 May kicked off with an introductory talk, asking: 'why do you think plants are important?' and, 'do you think plants get sick?' During a 'Leafy Murder Mystery' walk, children were excited about becoming 'plant detectives', as they were told they'd be spotting signs of plant attackers. The children looked at their clues from the morning under microscopes and drew their findings, and at the end of the day prizes were awarded for the best pathogen model. The second day was open to the broad public for two 'Leafy Murder Mystery' walks and one 'Bug Hunt'. The promotion really paid off, with over 50 people turning up for the walks and around 120 people attending another event at Bristol Botanical Garden – read the Story of the event [here](#) and check out some [Flickr photos](#). Furthermore, two

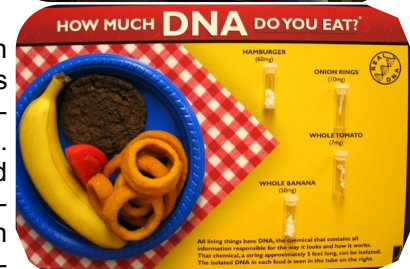
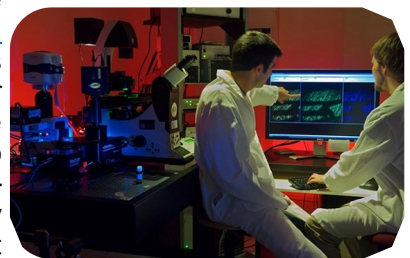


BSPP Outreach Officers were interviewed on [Bristol Community Radio](#) and featured in the [Bristol Evening Post](#) newspaper! At the same time, on 18 May the Aberystwyth University Botany Garden welcomed a steady trickle of visitors throughout the day. It provided the perfect environment for research and teaching staff to inform and entertain people with their knowledge of plants. Attendees saw for instance a gigantic lily that gave off a scent like rotting flesh, attracting flies to act as pollinators. At the Arts Centre Theatre Foyer, visitors got stuck into making their own pigments from fruit and vegetables. Superb tuition from artist Becky Knight helped children and adults to produce an incredible series of paintings. Images can be viewed [here](#) (see also picture to the right) **Contact:** [Mimi Tanimoto](#)

FoPD-2013 celebration in **Ukraine** has shown the balance between indoor and outdoor activities offered by the new enthusiasts from different parts of the country: visitors joined the laboratory workshops and also enjoyed field trips. The scope of the events was broad: microscopy approaches, nitrates content detection, basics of topiary art, the principles of herbarisation; literature contest "Verbum di Plantis"; physiology of flowering, a forest quiz with the search of treasures in a unique protected area; an international conference; an educational cycle of interactive games offered for primary school children; and even the art of plant-derived dyeing! **Contact:** [Yuliya Kraslyenko](#)



In the **United States of America**, at the University of California, Davis, the renowned [Botanical Conservatory](#) opened its doors on 18 May for FoPD celebrations. The conservatory is home to the titan, or *Amorphophallus titanum*, a truly fascinating plant that takes 15 years to bloom, and has only been known to flower about 100 times around the world, including 7 times at UC-Davis. Visitors really enjoyed their time at the conservatory and engaged in many fascinating discussions about plants. At the Carnegie Institution for Science, middle school students were invited to explore the wonders of plants using advanced imaging stations (in picture above). Leeann Thornton, The College of New Jersey, adapted a lesson from the *DNA for Dinner* collection (<http://ucbiotech.org/dnafordinner/index.html>) for teaching first graders in Hopewell, NJ about plant classification and the importance of understanding how plants are related.



**Contacts:** Arsalan Daudi and [Pamela Ronald](#)

# Support the Fascination of Plants Day in 2015



## Fascination of Plants Day May 18<sup>th</sup> 2015

The third international "Fascination of Plants Day" 2015 will be launched under the umbrella of the European Plant Science Organisation (EPSO). The goal of this activity is to get as many people as possible around the world fascinated by plants and enthused about the importance of plant science for agriculture, in sustainably producing food, as well as for horticulture, forestry, and all of the non-food products such as paper, timber, chemicals, energy, and pharmaceuticals. The role of plants in environmental conservation will also be a key message.

### Plants are fascinating



From one little seed, planted into soil, many green lives can arise - from small herbs up to big trees, or from ornamental flowers to substantial crops which all animals and mankind need to survive on this planet. Plant biologists estimate the total number of plant species roughly to be about 250,000. On the back of this coordinated activity we hope to plant again many virtual and constantly germinating seeds in the collective mind of the European and World Public that plant science is of critical significance to the social and environmental landscape now and into the future.

### Everybody is welcome to join this initiative!

We invite you to organize for the 18th of May 2015, a fascinating activity related to plants attracting and interacting with the public. May 18th will be the very Fascination of Plants Day and most events will be organised for this day. In addition, where this is not suitable, events will be organised throughout the weeks of 3-31 May 2015. Just contact your national coordinator or the EPSO Coordinator [Trine Hvoslef-Eide](#) to discuss and get guidelines for using the Fascination of Plants Day. The Fascination of Plants Day corporate design can be downloaded for free at the "PR-toolbox" on the webpage to be used to prepare, hold and report on this day, see "Main Menu".



We invite many others to join in, ranging from schools to horticulture and anyone who feels to have a suited contribution to this initiative. Many plant science institutions, universities, botanical gardens, and museums, together with farmers and companies, have opened their doors at the Fascination of Plants Day 2012 and 2013 with a variety of plant-based events for all the family - just look at the "Success Story" links in this document or on the website by clicking on each country. Again, the media are invited to join in, and scientists, farmers, politicians and industrialists will discuss with them and present the latest state-of-the-art research and breakthroughs in the plant science world and explore all of the new potential applications plant science can offer.

The Fascination of Plants Day will be backed up by a range of events in public spaces, theatres, cafes, central city squares and parks designed to get everyone thinking about plants.

