

# Where Knowledge Grows.

Strategy 2021–2030

Botanischer Garten  
Berlin

**Bo**

#BoBerlin  
International  
Knowledge Hub  
for Botany

Freie Universität



Berlin



Get a glimpse into  
our 300 years of rich  
botanical history

# Vision.

## WHAT WE STAND FOR

Helping people reconnect  
with nature and discover a passion  
for preserving the abundance of life.

# Mission.

## WHAT WE DO

We preserve, research, and explain  
the diversity of plants, fungi, and algae.

# Purpose.

## WHO WE ARE

The Botanic Garden.  
International Knowledge Hub for Botany.  
Rooted in Berlin, connected with the world.



Prof. Dr Thomas Borsch  
General Director of the Botanic Garden Berlin

### What do you imagine the future will look like?

We hope that the future will see us inhabiting a green Earth rich in biodiversity – a planet that we have learned to care for. Yet only a universal understanding of the value of our green Earth will make this possible.

This is why we are starting a new chapter in the Botanic Garden's history as an International Knowledge Hub for Botany. Our aim is to preserve, multiply, and share botanical knowledge with the world. After all, plants, fungi, and algae are crucial for our survival. Our life depends on them. And the more we know about how they came about, how diverse they are, and how to preserve them, the more likely we will be able to preserve a piece of our future together.

Our new brand identity, BO Berlin – International Knowledge Hub for Botany, not

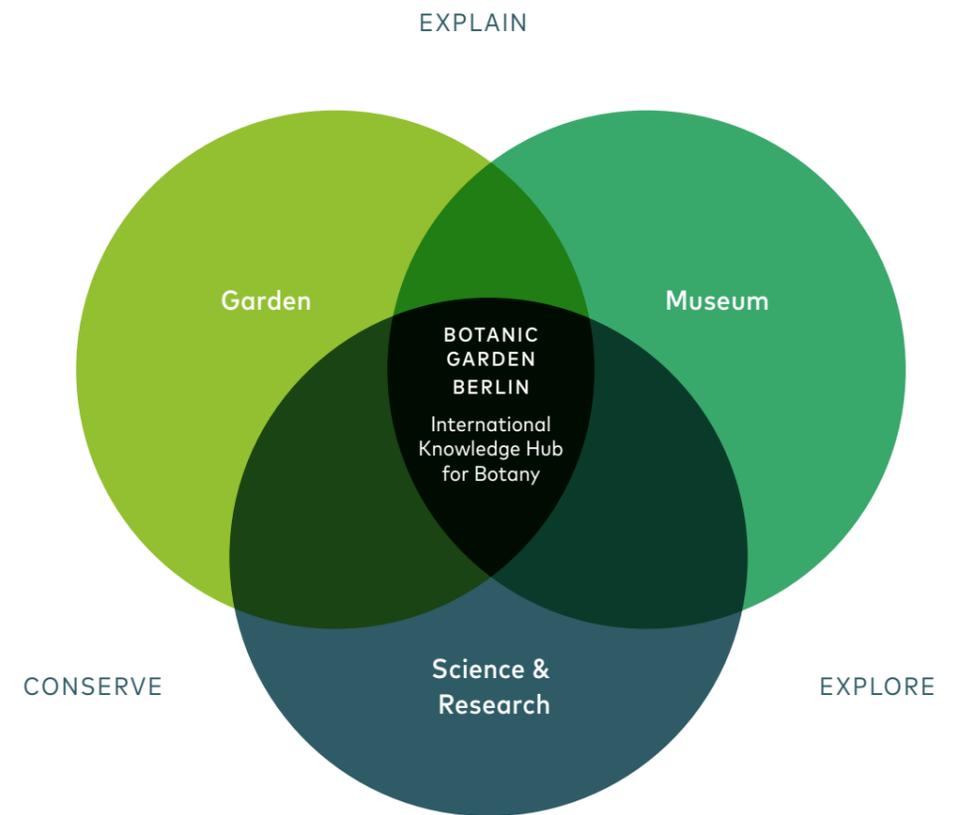
only reflects a change in image, it reflects an obligation to put our passion and our expertise to use in the name of preserving global biodiversity. Today more than ever, we find ourselves at a critical turning point. If we want to stop biodiversity loss and take a stand against climate change, we need to start making decisions based on sound knowledge and science.

I invite you to join us in rediscovering the world of botany. By putting this knowledge to use we can combat the challenges currently facing us as a global community.

Prof. Dr Thomas Borsch

# Preserving Nature

Earth's biodiversity is as fragile as it is unique. Every day, we are losing more and more of our planet's plant diversity. This means that we have an obligation to nature – not just as human beings, but as researchers and scientists.



## Our Three Core Objectives

Our actions are led by one overarching goal: to stop biodiversity loss and create a world in which the inherent value of nature is no longer under debate. We have translated this vision into three core objectives that guide our decisions and actions:

### EXPLORE

Comprehending biological diversity  
We use research to discover how certain species came about, as well as to develop future scenarios for ensuring their protection and sustainable use. In international networks we help to preserve biodiversity, work to answer global questions about the future, and introduce a political and ethical framework for decision-making.

### CONSERVE

Developing scientific collections  
Our collections document the global diversity of plants, fungi, and algae. Our work serves

as a basis on which to continually expand and strategically develop these collections further. By digitally networking and connecting our collections, we are able to open up new areas of knowledge, providing a valuable resource for researchers and scientists around the world.

### EXPLAIN

Promoting a passion for botany  
The Botanic Garden Berlin is a place that brings people and nature together. Experience and discover botany first-hand with our gardens, educational programmes, tours, and museum exhibitions. We offer our guests the chance to experience nature anew, highlighting the importance of science and ensuring that the preservation of species and the protection of biodiversity remain socially relevant.

# Global thinking, international networks, and scientific excellence – the work of the Botanic Garden Berlin is helping the International Network University concept take root.



Prof. Dr Günter M. Ziegler,  
President of Freie Universität Berlin,  
International Network University

## BO: Botanical Knowledge<sup>2</sup>

BO Berlin is a place like no other. As an international knowledge hub for botany, it helps people experience the diversity of botany for themselves.

As a place for science, education, and recreation, the Botanic Garden Berlin not only houses unique gardens, greenhouses, and the Botanical Museum, it is also a gathering point for the international biodiversity research community. With approximately 4 million herbarium specimens and almost 20,000 species of plants across its gardens and greenhouses, the Dahlem Seed Bank, and the DNA Bank, BO Berlin is home to Germany's largest university-based

research collection for the natural world – an invaluable scientific resource. Located in Dahlem, our site comprises high-end scientific facilities and laboratories, as well as the largest specialist library for botany in the German-speaking world. This means that botanical expertise and infrastructure naturally come together in one place as a hub where botanical knowledge is created and shared. This is expressed through our new brand identity:

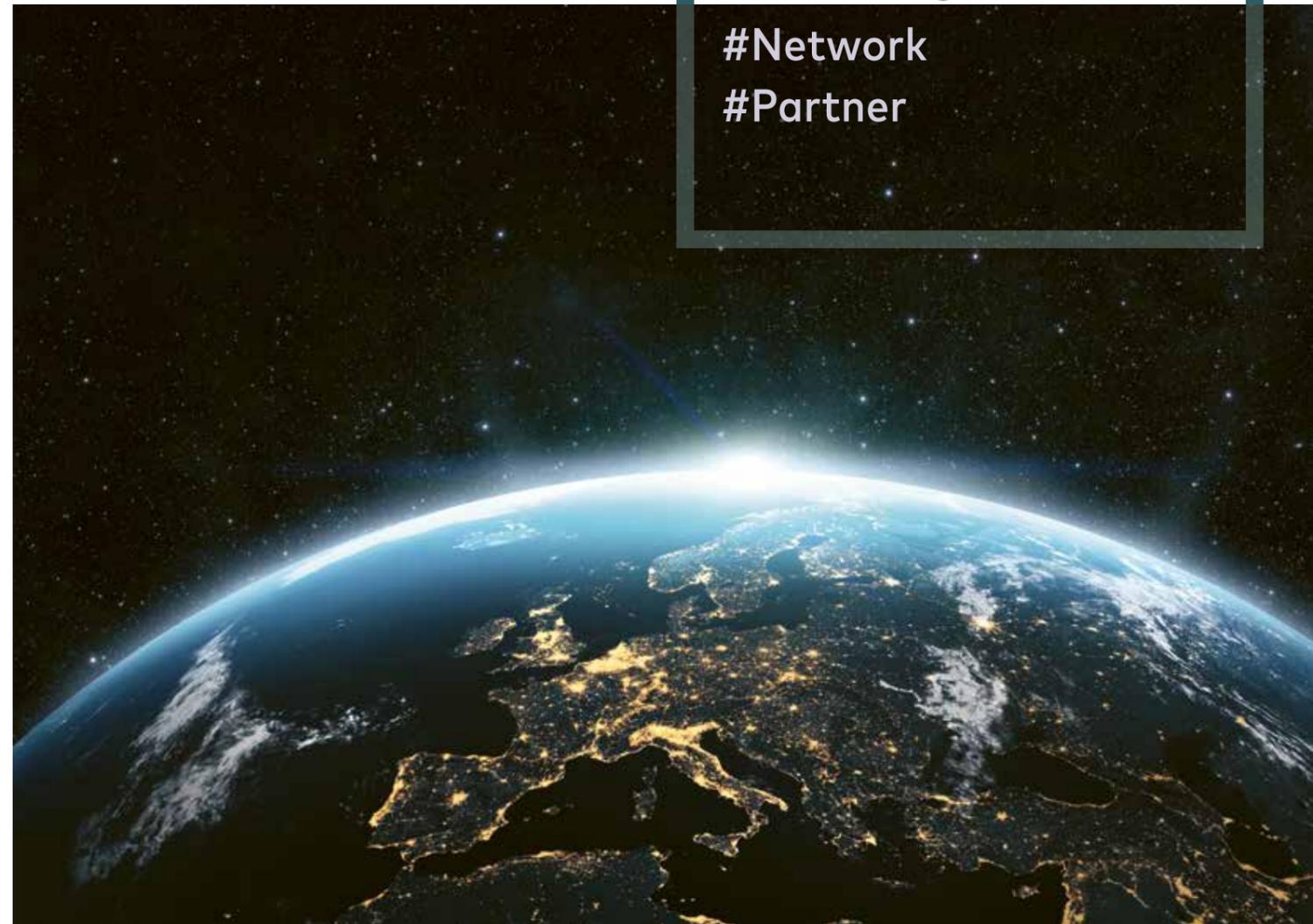
We preserve knowledge, we multiply knowledge, and we make knowledge available to a global audience. BO Berlin, the International Knowledge Hub for Botany.

## A "Nature Network" for Biodiversity

As an institution affiliated with Freie Universität Berlin, an International Network University, we carry out both basic and application-based research. We analyse and record global biodiversity with the aim of preserving it. We also manage scientific information about plants, fungi, and algae and make this knowledge digitally available to others.

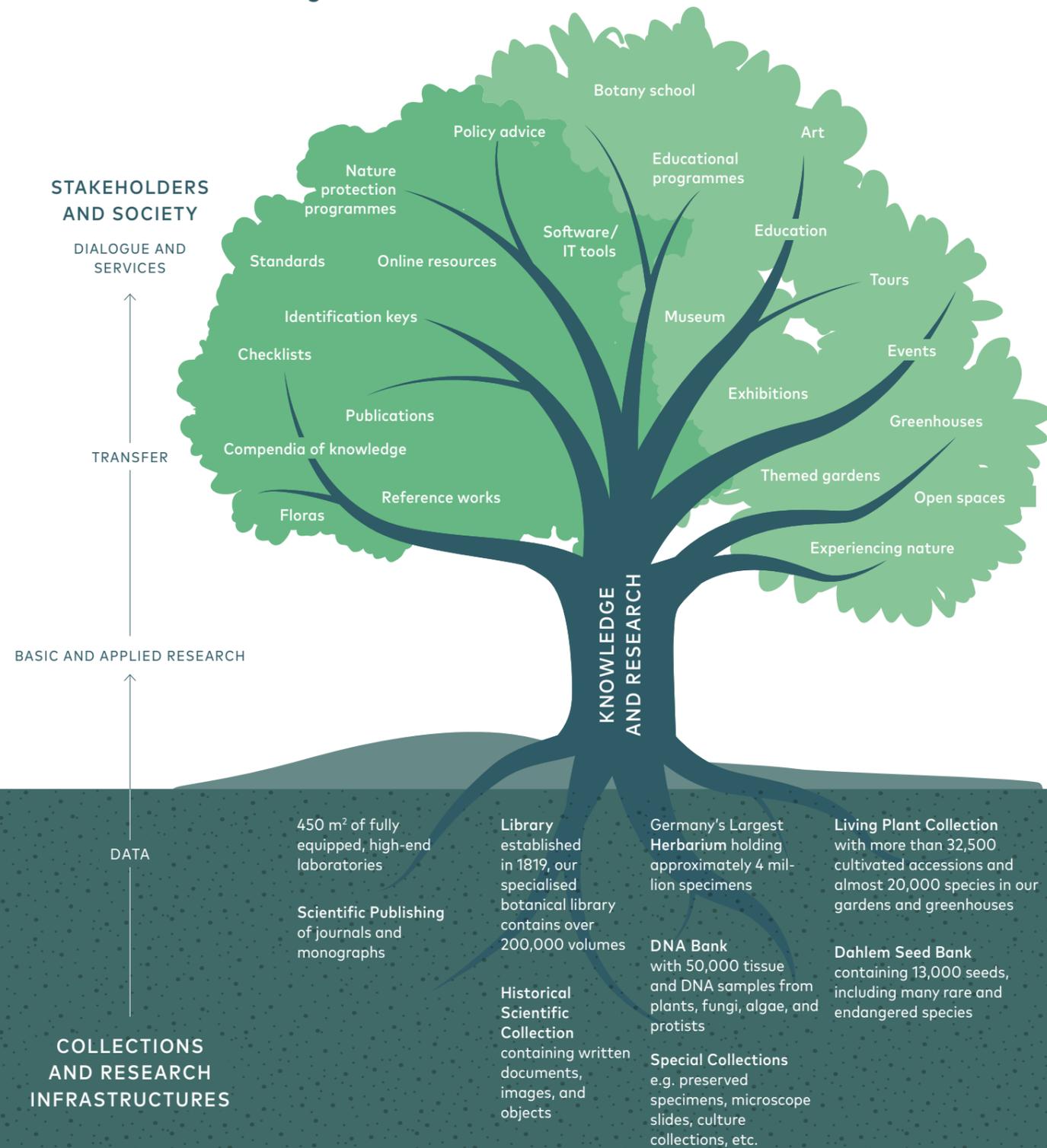
In doing so, we contribute toward the development and expansion of a global network of expertise in biodiversity. Our cooperation with international partners and stakeholders is an essential part of this effort. Through these connections, we are represented in a variety of projects in biodiversity hotspots around the world and play an active role in many international groups and alliances.

#BoBerlin  
#KnowledgeHub  
#Biodiversity  
#International  
#GatheringPoint  
#Network  
#Partner



# International Knowledge Hub for Botany

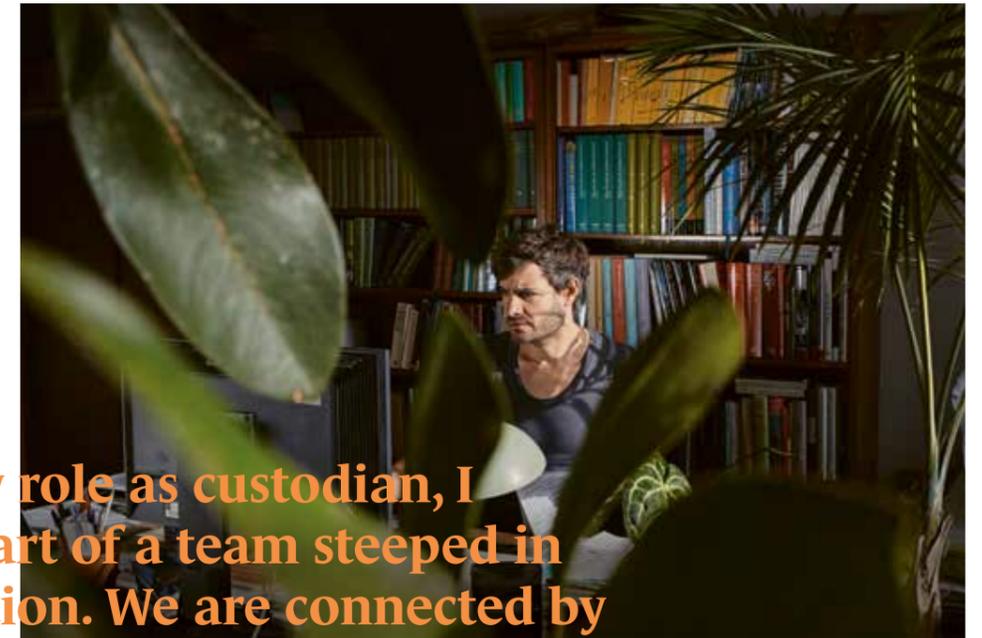
At BO Berlin, science is at the root of all knowledge



BO 2021–2030 | SCIENCE &amp; RESEARCH

# Understanding Biological Diversity

We are an international gathering point for biodiversity research. By contributing toward the creation of a common base of knowledge, we support Berlin and Germany's biodiversity strategies and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. By extension, we are also working toward the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Within our main research areas of integrative taxonomy and biodiversity informatics, we investigate the evolution and diversity of plants, fungi, and algae, connecting results and data for the global exchange of knowledge.



**In my role as custodian, I am part of a team steeped in tradition. We are connected by our passion for collecting and promoting the plant diversity of this world.**

Dr Nils Köster,  
Custodian of the  
Tropical and Subtropical  
Collections

## BO 2021–2030 – Our Future Strategy for Knowledge and Research

In the future, we will continue to research the biosphere to gain an even better understanding of it. We will also continue our search for scientifically backed solutions with which to combat the global biodiversity crisis. Our strategy for 2021–2030 outlines the main areas that we will be focusing on for the next ten years.

### Digitising Our Collections

Bo Berlin is surging ahead with the complete digitisation of its herbarium, from 20 percent at present to 100 percent over the next ten years. – we plan to fully digitise our herbarium, increasing its digital content from 20 to 100 percent. Our intention is to make one of the largest and richest botanical collections in the world accessible for scientists and the public – in the form of a global open knowledge space. The objects in our collections are the result of more than three centuries of work. And we're not stopping now – thousands of new samples continue to be added every year. Cataloging

biodiversity continues to be one of our most important tasks.

One of our aims is to understand how biodiversity changes and why – both in historical and contemporary terms. Why do some species disappear while others thrive? What factors play a role in these processes? Are we seeing an increase in species that are a threat to our health and food supply, and how can we affect these developments? This is why we are working with our partners to completely digitise German herbaria – to be able to provide scientifically sound answers to these questions. By 2030, we aim to have created a data infrastructure for botany that comprises objects, data, images, and research findings and makes these accessible across institutions. This will enable us to generate new knowledge about how the plant world came to be, as well as about how biodiversity develops throughout space and time.



#### Our Collections

Our collections are the cornerstone of our work. And with just under 4 million specimens, our herbarium in Berlin is one of the biggest in the world.

Highlights include the 3000+ objects that Alexander von Humboldt brought back from his various expeditions around the world. With around 20,000 species across our gardens and greenhouses, our living plants collection is both an experience and a valuable knowledge resource.

The Dahlem Seed Bank is home to around 13,000 samples, including many rare and endangered species. We also maintain a DNA bank containing genetic material from wild plants as well as other special collections.

## Unraveling the Mystery of Biodiversity

How did the biological diversity of our planet come about? And what types of plants, fungi, and algae are even out there? Another reason why we research the evolution and diversity of species is to learn how to preserve them. Our collections are the decisive data source here. Nowadays, DNA sequencing and modern methods from the field of evolutionary biology are providing completely new insights into how species are related or differentiated. In integrative taxonomy, we use the data and knowledge gained as a basis for the scientifically correct description and naming of species. In the process, we discover numerous new species every year. Results are also used to create checklists and floras – for example the Flora of Cuba, the Flora of

Greece, or the World Flora Online, which in 2020 united the world's plant species in a web-based resource for the first time.

Over the next ten years, we will expand our collaborative research programmes to broaden these knowledge resources and keep them up to date. We will also be implementing comparative genomic methods on a larger scale in order to reconstruct the precise relationships that exist between representative groups of flowering plants, lichens, fungi, and algae in detail. With these results, we hope to develop a more accurate impression of how biodiversity evolved.



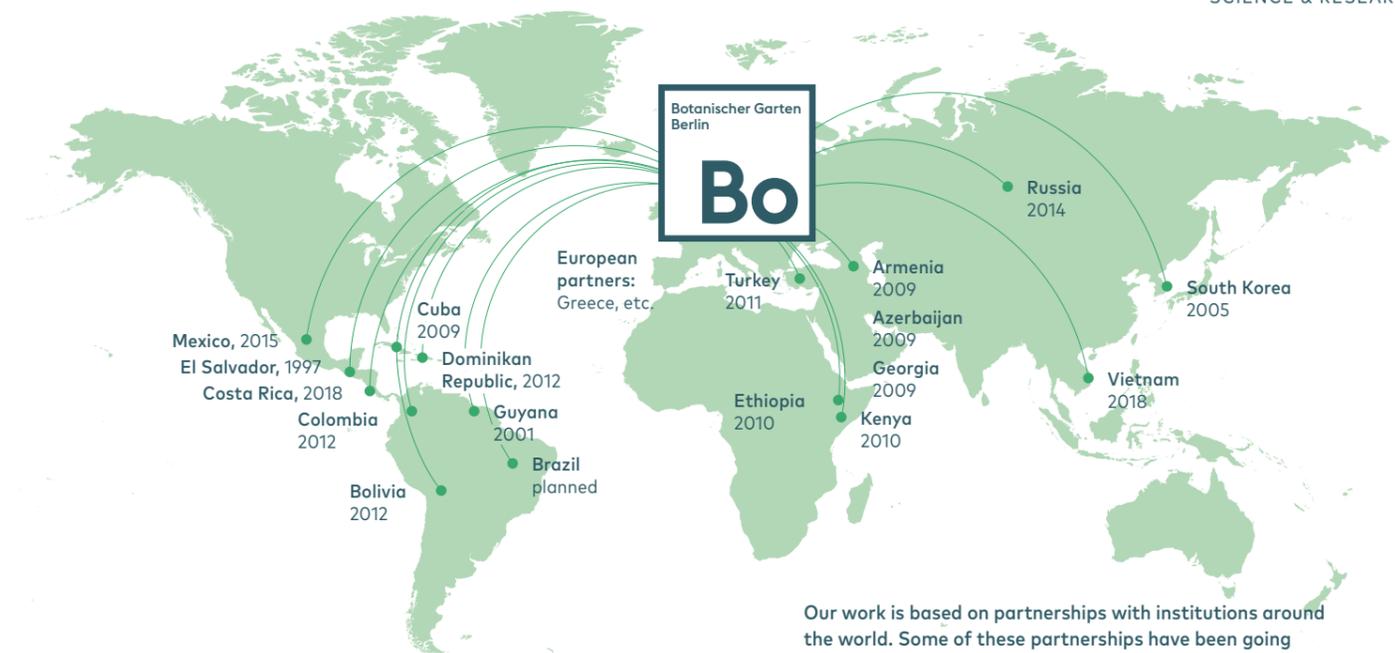
## Tackling the Biodiversity Crisis – Protecting Species through Knowledge

We have a wide scope of activities at the Botanic Garden – from generating knowledge to developing specific measures for protecting species. We use red lists to record just how endangered rare and threatened species are. We provide the taxonomical knowledge required for biomonitoring. And we are involved in projects for the protection of endangered species and habitats around the world. Furthermore, we use the Dahlem Seed Bank for wild plants to store genetic material, making it available for reintroducing and

reinforcing populations of endangered species in the wild, as well as for research projects. Using modern methods from the field of molecular biology, we can learn more about the status of threatened species and their genetic diversity. Over the next ten years, we want to establish a genomic monitoring that will systematically reveal the gradual and invisible loss of diversity. This knowledge will then bolster specific recommendations for action.

**Our very existence depends on the diversity of plants. The need to preserve this diversity in all of its complexity is something which motivates me every day.**

Dr Elke Zippel, Custodian of the Dahlem Seed Bank &  
Member of the *Wildpflanzenschutz Deutschland* Project



Our work is based on partnerships with institutions around the world. Some of these partnerships have been going strong for decades.

One of the ways in which we are committing to the preservation of plant diversity is through our involvement in the collaborative project *Wildpflanzenschutz Deutschland (WIPs-De)*<sup>1</sup>, where five botanic gardens across Germany have come together with the aim of preserving and reintroducing threatened species. Samples of approximately one thousand rare regional plants species have been added to the Dahlem Seed Bank since the project began in 2013. We also work closely with the relevant authorities to reintroduce and restock local populations of rare species. This enabled us to rebuild the last Berlin occurrences of fragrant scabious into a vital population.

We will continue to dedicate ourselves to preserving plant diversity in Germany and Europe – we are planning to establish a range of long-term partnerships for the protection of species with governmental and volunteer organisations by 2030. The aim is to incorporate scientific findings into nature conservation projects directly, thereby responding to the need for knowledge within practical nature conservation. Additionally, we would like to take a more active role in public discourse surrounding the topic – through educational projects, public relations work, and publicity campaigns.

### Our Global Aim: One World, One Team

We think, research, and work globally. After all, nature doesn't stop at national borders. That's why our scientific projects are based in biodiversity hotspots around the world – for example, in the Mediterranean, the Caucasus, or the Caribbean. The relationships we have with our partners around the world are based on trust; our collaborations encompass joint projects, academic exchange, and the advancement of our partners' scientific capacities. Over the years, this has led to the development of a network that values academic excellence, expertise, team spirit, and fairness.

One of our primary objectives for the next ten years is the strategic expansion of our existing international network. In particular, we would like to involve more partners in Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Caucasus so as to make headway with the *Euro+Med Plantbase*, a complete inventory of the flora of Europe and its neighbouring regions – an important cornerstone for European strategies such as the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the European Green Deal.

<sup>1</sup> The *WIPs-De* project receives funding as part of the *Biologische Vielfalt* (Biological Diversity) federal programme, organised by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection.



High resolution field emission scanning electron microscopes allow scientists to see structures in minute detail. This can often make all the difference when distinguishing between species – for example, between two types of diatom, as shown in the image here. Diatoms are important indicator species for water quality.



**Why I love my job: I may work in tiny, microscopic worlds, but I still play my part in answering the big, global questions of our time.**

### Open Data Management in the Name of Biodiversity – A New Centre Offers New Opportunities

Sharing and combining data creates new areas of knowledge – which allows us to pursue entirely new avenues of research. For example, as part of the *Botany Pilot* project, coordinated by the Botanic Garden, data are taken from European herbaria and combined with data from other, interdisciplinary sources. This enables the biographies of naturalists to be reconstructed automatically based on their collections.

As pioneers in biodiversity informatics, we already offer outstanding data services that benefit scientists and researchers around the world. We play a leading role in many national and international projects. These include National Research Data Infrastructure Germany (NFDI), the Global Genome Biodiversity Network (GGBN), and the Global Biodiversity Information Facility

(GBIF) – in this last network, we coordinate the node for Germany.

By 2030, we aim to have established a unique digital knowledge hub through a range of strategic flagship projects. This ties in with the founding of a new *Center for Biodiversity Informatics and Collection Data Integration*, which will also enable data modelling projects in the future. Over the next ten years, we will work to combine different types of data in such a way as to promote new discoveries. To do so, we are creating innovative processes to semantically link data across disciplines. This will allow for global developments to be modelled in the future, for example, to provide projections surrounding global change and biodiversity.

Dr Jonas Zimmermann,  
Head of the Research Group  
for Diatoms



BO 2021-2030 | GARDEN &amp; COMMUNITY

# Promoting a Passion for Botany



## The World in a Garden

A place where the whole world could be represented in the form of a garden, that was Adolf Engler's vision. Engler, the first director of the Botanic Garden Berlin, wished to order the plants of the world according to geographic and ecological principles and then present these as a cohesive garden in Dahlem. Though this was more than one hundred years ago, his vision paved the way for a botanic garden that remains unique to this day. Here, guests can discover plants from around the world in just a short walk – from the German alluvial forest across the Alps to the Caucasus and the Himalayas, and through the tropics (under glass) to America.

However, unlike our "world in a garden", the green diversity of our world cannot be so easily curated and preserved behind protective walls.

This is why we see our garden as a place where we can raise awareness – a place where people and the fascinating richness of the plant world are brought together.

Nestled in the vibrant scientific and cultural landscape of Berlin, the Botanic Garden is a unique space for experiencing and learning about nature. In the future, we wish to continue to expand our role as a cultural landmark, a place of recreation, a living exhibition, and a place for interacting with nature. In doing so, we hope to further promote public interest and appreciation for plants, fungi, and algae – particularly within the city of Berlin and in cooperation with our partners in environmental and nature education, schools, and artistic and cultural establishments.

## Bringing Botany Closer

The Botanic Garden is already a major attraction, drawing almost half a million guests every year. However, some big changes are planned for the next few years – all with the aim of creating a brand-new experience for our guests.

In particular, we will be enhancing the range of services we provide. For example, a new information system will soon ensure that visitors to the Botanic Garden take more knowledge home with them than ever before. We are planning to install new, informative exhibition boards across the gardens.

A useful plants garden is in the making, and new educational services aimed at families and groups of schoolchildren will also be provided.

The entire infrastructure of the Botanic Garden is being renewed to ensure that it is fit for the future. This includes the sanitary facilities and footpaths, as well as the Italian Garden at the heart of the premises and the colourful ornamental beds at the eastern entrance. Plans for these renovations were made in 2015, and construction began in early 2020.

Today I am just as impressed by the exceptional design of the gardens, with their diverse plants from all over the world, as I was on my very first day at work here.

Thorsten Laute,  
Head of Horticulture



Our greenhouses showcase the diverse plant life of the tropics and subtropics. The centrepiece of our greenhouse complex is the Main Tropical Greenhouse. Each greenhouse is dedicated to a specific group of plants, for example, bromeliads, orchids, cacti, and tropical ferns. What's more, as the greenhouses are all connected, it is possible to visit fourteen of them in a single circuit without ever going outside. Located just beyond the main greenhouse complex is the Mediterranean House. With its ornate, art nouveau style, this greenhouse is primarily home to plants from the Mediterranean region.

By 2024, we will be investing over 21 million euros in developing our services for tourists, improving infrastructure, and upgrading the gardens through funds granted as part of the German government's regional aid scheme known as "Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftsstruktur (GRW)".

### For Future Generations – the Greenhouse Complex in Berlin's Back Yard

With their large glass facades and impressive architecture, the greenhouse complex and separate *Mediterranean House* on the northern side of the garden are a breathtaking sight. These are listed historical buildings and among the highlights of any visit to the gardens.

By 2030, BO Berlin aims to guarantee their preservation through securing long-term funding.

This plan was already put into action in 2009 with the complete renovation of the *Main Tropical Greenhouse* and the energy-efficient renovation of the *Victoria House*, which was completed in 2018<sup>1</sup>. Another important milestone is just around the corner: renovation works on the spectacular art nouveau *Mediterranean House* will be carried out from 2024–2026. Built in 1904 (pre-dating the main greenhouse complex), this renovation will restore the *Mediterranean House* to its former glory.

<sup>1</sup> The complete renovation was funded by the State of Berlin, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the *Umweltentlastungsprogramm Berlin* (UEP II) initiative, and Freie Universität Berlin.

**My work combines the diversity of the flora with the uniqueness of each plant – the fundamentals for a healthy understanding of nature.**

Annika Cory, Gardener in the Cacti and Succulents Section



#### Active Encounters with Botany

The new useful plants garden, located in the former aquatic and marsh plant garden, will focus on the relationship between humans and plants in particular. It will contain a wide range of plants – modern and historic – that humans have cultivated for multiple reasons: as food, dyes, fibers, or as a source of fuel. The aim is to examine topics such as resource management, food system transformation, and sustainability. We will provide facilities and spaces for gardening and experimentation designed to inspire collaborative projects, in particular for schools and families, and there will also be interactive and sensory areas.



#### Off the Beaten Path

With almost 20,000 types of plants spread across forty-three hectares of land, the Botanic Garden Berlin is just waiting to be discovered. Twenty-three kilometers of paths wind their way through the gardens, meandering up hills and into hollows. If you take the time to explore, you are guaranteed to encounter something new every time you visit. For the comfort of our guests and to ensure that these paths remain accessible even in bad weather, we are currently resurfacing ten kilometres of these paths. Along the main paths, the lighting will also be improved and the garden amenities updated.



### Better Service for Our Guests

With a new visitor centre and courtyard garden connecting it with the Botanical Museum, the entrance at Königin-Luise-Platz will become a lively hotspot for information and exchange, where guests are welcome to linger. In addition to a shop, a number of culinary offerings are also planned. These will be open to everyone, without an entrance fee, not only to ticketed guests of the garden. The opening is scheduled for 2024 – an event that we will celebrate with our guests and the city as a whole.

We will continue to grow as a place for interacting with nature and as a cultural institution – playing an active role in the field of international tourism, within the city of Berlin, and on the global stage as a unique hub of botanical knowledge: vibrant, internationally networked and dedicated to preserving our green Earth.

**#GreenSpace**  
**#CulturalInstitution**  
**#ExperienceNature**  
**#UrbanCommunity**  
**#Timeout**  
**#Education**  
**#Information**



BO 2021–2030 | MUSEUM, EDUCATION &amp; CITIZEN SCIENCE

# Planting the Seeds of Knowledge



The Botanical Museum Berlin is home to a valuable collection of models. In addition to our collections of living and preserved plants, the museum provides guests with the chance to see organisms and phenomena that, elsewhere, can only be seen on rare occasions or not at all. Created by a number of talented artists between 1959–2002, the collection contains more than 600 one-of-a-kind pieces. Many of these show natural features at high magnification, allowing viewers to marvel at their attention to detail and scientific precision.

## Always Growing: The Botanical Museum Berlin

Nowhere else in Berlin are knowledge and growth so closely intertwined: the Botanical Museum is a rare specimen itself – it is the only museum in Western Europe dedicated to the world of plants and how this has been depicted over the course of history. Work on its current redesign and renovation is expected to be concluded in 2025. In the future, the museum aims to encourage its guests to see themselves as part of the social discourse surrounding biodiversity and the conservation of nature. In doing so, we hope to raise awareness of the close ties between humanity and nature and promote a deeper understanding for the importance of diversity.

From the first pioneers of botany to an international hub for biodiversity research, the story of the Botanic Garden Berlin will form the basis of a new permanent exhibition at the Botanical Museum. The exhibition will also depict how plants, algae, and fungi evolved over time, tracing their history from the beginnings of time to the modern day, and provide insights into current research. The new museum design also aims to stimulate debate

on the big questions of our time – from sustainability, consumption, and how we interact with nature, to how to solve the global biodiversity crisis. It will also include a “Keimzelle” (nucleus) where guests can reflect on and share their personal views and individual associations. A room featuring “botany up close” will invite guests to leisurely browse and actively participate as they deepen their knowledge. What’s more, we will also be exhibiting spectacular botanical findings from Ancient Egypt as part of a never-before-seen special attraction.

Approx. 9 million euros have been invested in the redesign of the museum and its new exhibition thanks to a grant provided by the German government’s regional aid scheme “GRW”. In addition to the redesigned entrance hall, interactive areas and rest stops will invite guests to explore and experience the world of plants for themselves and at their own pace.

### BO Berlin: Educational Forum of the Future

In addition to the new museum experience, we will continue to develop our garden and museum educational services and expand our educational programme for students and teachers alike. We have been working together with the Berlin Senate Department for Education for more than thirty years, offering training sessions, teaching materials, and

courses for teachers at our on-site botany school. We also provide Berlin-based schools with support in teaching topics related to botany and sustainable development. By expanding our educational activities, we hope to contribute toward creating a wider base of knowledge and thus help solve the environmental and biodiversity crisis.

**My favourite moments are when we are able to open people's eyes to the fascinating world of botany.**

Yvonne Rieschl, Exhibition Designer



## Citizen Science – Generating Knowledge Together

*Herbonauts wanted!* This was the slogan for a citizen science project at Botanic Garden Berlin, launched in 2017, that invites citizens to dive into the depths of the digital herbarium. The mission? To decipher difficult herbarium specimens and unlock the knowledge they contain.

The Internet platform [www.herbonauten.de](http://www.herbonauten.de) provides participants in the project with access to the approximately four million specimens in Berlin's herbarium. Here, they can work their decoding magic – whether it's deciphering handwritten manuscripts from the nineteenth century, Cyrillic script, or difficult geographical locations on maps. The success of the project thus far has been staggering – according to the most recent scientific evaluation of the results, almost ninety-five percent of entries were correct. Thanks to this success rate, the project will now be entering a new phase, where herbarium specimens will be used to help answer current research questions at Botanic Garden Berlin. By 2030, we are aiming to increase our commitment to citizen science and offer even more projects, inviting people from Berlin and around the world to contribute to research work at BO Berlin and discover their own passion for studying botany. At the same time, we want to use public involvement to generate more knowledge, thus providing a sound basis for assessing the big societal

challenges of our time, such as climate change or biodiversity loss.

In autumn 2021, we also launched the *Pflanze KlimaKultur!* project, which focuses on the effects climate change has on plant phenology. How do plants react to changing temperature cycles? What does this mean for urban green spaces affected by climate change and what solutions can be identified for managing these spaces?

Specifically, the project involves cultivating a "climate bed" (or "climate plant pot") and making observations on how the plants develop – from the first shoots in early spring, through the flowering period, and until they begin to take on their autumn colours. The Botanic Garden provides participants with a starter package, training, and advice. Together with our project partners, Freie Universität Berlin's *Blühender Campus* initiative and the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg, we are also planning to expand the "Blooming Campus" campaign into additional public and semi-public spaces in order to reach even more people. The project will initially run until 2024 and is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

**There's hardly any other place on earth where I could carry out my research like I do here – the variety of plants is beyond compare.**

Birgit Nordt, Botanist and Phenologist,  
*Pflanze Klimakultur!* Project



#BoBerlin  
[www.bo.berlin](http://www.bo.berlin)

# Growing Knowledge for More Than 300 Years

**1679** Foundation of the Botanic Garden as a *court and apothecary* garden on an 11-hectare plot on Potsdamer Straße in Schöneberg, initiated by Friedrich Wilhelm, Elector of Brandenburg

**1744** Johann Gottlieb Gleditsch is made head of the Botanic Garden, and granted a professorship for herbolgy at the *Medizinisch-Chirurgisches Kolleg* in 1746

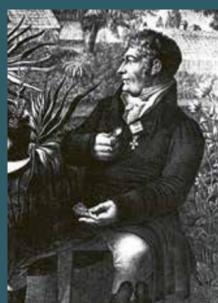
## The Botanical Garden as a Scientific Institution

**1815** Following Willdenow's untimely death, Heinrich Friedrich Link becomes director of the Botanic Garden

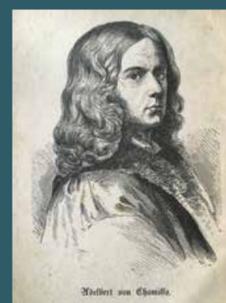
**1801** Carl Ludwig Willdenow becomes director and develops the Botanic Garden into a scientific institution. In 1810, Willdenow takes up a post as the first professor of botany at the *Universität zu Berlin*, founded in 1809

**1819** Link establishes the *Royal Prussian Herbarium* and library by order of Friedrich Wilhelm III, King of Prussia

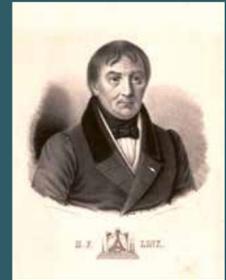
**1819** Adelbert von Chamisso becomes custodian of the herbarium



Carl Ludwig Willdenow 1765–1812



Adelbert von Chamisso 1781–1838



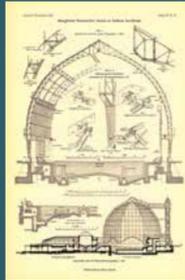
Johann Heinrich Friedrich Link 1767–1851



Ignatz Urban 1848–1931



Adolf Engler 1844–1930



Alfred Koerner 1849–1926

## Exploring the Tropics

**1883** Ignatz Urban becomes custodian of the botanical collections, extensive research work begins on South American and Caribbean plants

**1889** Adolf Engler is appointed director, Urban becomes vice director

**1890** The Botanic Garden offers its services in mushroom identification to the public for the first time

**1891** *Central Botanical Office for the German Colonies* established at the *Royal Botanic Garden*

**1915** Engler completes "*Die natürlichen Pflanzenfamilien*" ("*The Natural Plant Families*"), one of the most comprehensive monographic accounts of the world's plant diversity of the time, which he began in 1887 with Karl Anton Prantl



## The World in a Garden: Unique Greenhouses and Outdoor exhibits

## The Only Botanical Museum in Western Europe



Eva Potztal 1924–2000

## Head of the Botanical Museum Berlin

**1954** Eva Potztal joins the Botanic Garden as the first woman to officially be hired as a staff scientist, overseeing reconstruction work for the museum



## Cultural heritage, Education, Relaxation

**1902** Construction begins on the greenhouses in Dahlem, designed by Alfred Koerner

**1904** The outdoor gardens are opened to the public for the first time

**1910** Official inauguration of the Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum in Dahlem

**1943** The herbarium section of the museum is destroyed in an air raid, millions of specimens and the library go up in flames

**1948** *Berlin Blockade* (1948–1949): open spaces used to grow vegetables to provide food for the city

**1950** Giant water lilies and more from the tropics are on display at the Victoria House. Today, it is home to one of the most important collections of aquatic plants in the world

**1979** The Med-Checklist Project is launched, with the goal of inventorying all plant species from the Mediterranean region



## One of the Ten Largest Herbariums in the World

**1987** Opening of the reconstructed library wing and the new herbarium below the museum courtyard

**1987** The *XIV International Botanical Congress* is hosted by the Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum at the *ICC Berlin*

## Research & Teaching

Capital city garden and tourism highlight: Germany's most biodiverse botanic garden with around 450,000 visitors per year



**1995** Affiliation with *Freie Universität Berlin* as *Central Facility Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum Berlin*

**1997** Establishment of doctoral and scholarship programmes, promotion of international academic exchange

**2008** A research strategy defines organism-specific areas of focus (model groups of flowering plants, diatoms) and aims to establish and expand collaborations in biodiversity research in geographic centres of interest around the world (Europe, the Mediterranean, the Caucasus, the Caribbean and neighbouring Central and South America)

**2009** The *Main Tropical Greenhouse* is reopened following renovation works to improve its energy efficiency

**2012** A new laboratory wing in the Botanical Museum facilitates comprehensive molecular phylogenetic research

**2015** The *Dahlem Seed Bank* for wild plants opens a new building and expands its range of programmes for the protection of biological diversity

**2021** The Botanic Garden launches its new brand identity, *BO Berlin*, positioning itself as International Research Hub for Botany



## A Hub for International Biodiversity Research

**2021** Foundation of the *Center for Biodiversity Informatics and Collection Data Integration* at the Botanic Garden Berlin – further cementing its reputation as a unique, digital hub for knowledge

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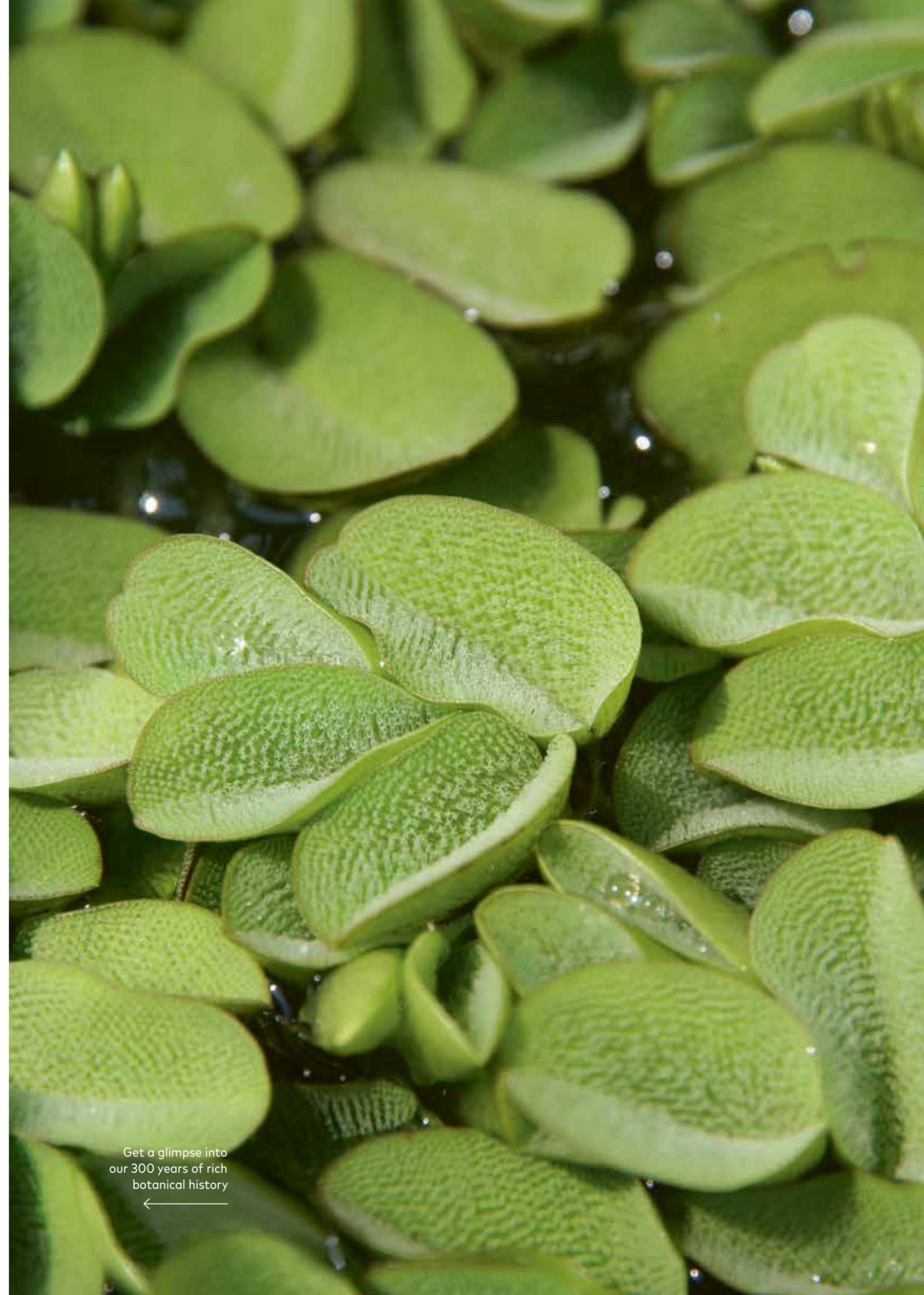
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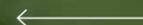
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