



9-14.09.2018

**BGCI's 10th International
Congress on Education
in Botanic Gardens
WARSAW | POLAND**

Sylvia Scholarship Report

2019



BGCI

BGCI would like to thank the Sylvia Scholarship Fund for facilitating the attendance of seven delegates at the 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens.

Introduction

The 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens took place at the University of Warsaw Botanic Gardens, Poland between 9th and 14th September 2018. As an urban botanic garden celebrating its 200th anniversary at the time of the event, the Congress theme was 'Bringing nature to the city' and allowed for delegates from across the globe to share their experience and thoughts on the challenges of a growing urban population and how we can deliver effective environmental education and public engagement, especially in an urban context.

The congress boasted a varied and inspiring programme that brought together botanic garden professionals, including horticulturalists, educators and directors, as well as others from related fields, from all over the world. The event was a great success with ~300 registered delegates from 50 countries.

Of the professionals present seven were there thanks to scholarships provided by the Sylvia Scholarship fund. The following report is a short account of the selection process of the scholars, the scholars themselves and their experience of the congress including their subsequent plans for the future in their institutions as a consequence of attending.

Selecting the scholars

The scholarships were advertised on the BGCI website and through BGCI mailing lists, publications and social media several months before the conference. The advertisement asked for applicants to complete an application form detailing their interest in attending and how they would utilise the experience in their own institutions. They were also asked to submit a short abstract of either an oral presentation, poster or workshop that was to be part of the congress programme. 32 applications were received, each of which was considered by BGCI. The successful applicants were chosen based on: their age and location (scholarship places were open to individuals under 35 years of age, from developing countries); whether they had previously received BGCI funding, their position within a botanic garden and the impact of attending on both themselves and their organisation. In total seven successful applicants were selected for partial or full sponsorship.

The scholars

Name	Garden	Country	Scholarship awarded (£)
Alexey Filin	Botanical Garden of M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University	Russia	Part
Benjamin Ong	Rimba Ilmu Botanic Garden	Malaysia	Full
Yalong Qin	Nanjing Botanical Garden Mem. Sun Yat-Sen	China	Part
Gonzalo Salas	Botanical Garden Horco Molle	Argentina	Full
Vanina Salgado	Carlos Thays Botanical Garden	Argentina	Full

Purity Wanjohi	Friends of Nairobi Arboretum	Kenya	Full
Viktoriia Zhelikhovska	Kamianets-Podilskyi Botanical Garden	Ukraine	Full

Benefits of the congress

As with each international conference, the event provided an excellent opportunity for the scholar's to present their work on an international platform, not only benefiting them with experience of presenting but also by allowing them to showcase their work and their institution. Another key benefit of the conference was the opportunity to network and share contacts and ideas, which to many of these relatively isolated institutions is essential. On the return of the scholars to their home countries and institutions they were asked to complete a brief summary of their experience at the conference (see appendix for individual reports). Each participant reported enthusiastic, positive experiences with numerous benefits including:

- *"I was interested to learn how the staff of the gardens, located in large cities in different countries, solve the problems facing the Botanical gardens in our time. It was extremely pleasant to feel like a part of a multinational team engaged in one work."* – **Alexey Filin, Russia**
- *"From Kyrgyztan to Mexico City, I was inspired by how botanic gardens are influencing and impacting their communities, and was led to reflect on the social roles of my own botanic garden."* – **Benjamin Ong, Malaysia**
- *"Through the congress, I studied the education experience of other botanical gardens, strengthened the communication and exchanged with other botanical garden workers, broadened my horizons of popular science education, and learned advanced educational concepts and methods"* - **Yalong Qin, China**
- *"My experience during the congress was totally enriching, where I learned a lot about the work and experience of professionals who work in botanical gardens around the world, to know problems that have different gardens that are often the same as in my garden and for know how each of them addresses these problems."* - **Salas Gonzalo Matias, Argentina**
- *"During the congress I also had the chance to present my program "A year at the Botanical Garden", It was exciting to share my work with so many people from different countries (I counted 70 people in my session). Receiving their comments afterwards and e-mails after the congress telling me how my presentation inspired new ideas has been amazing."* - **Vanina Gabriela Salgado, Argentina**
- *"This was the first time attending the Congress. It more than surpassed my expectations. Other than the experience of being surrounded by experts in the field, being in a totally new environment made the experience even better because it brought in a new perspective."*
Purity Wanjohi, Kenya
- *"The opportunity to listen to interesting presentations, meet with colleagues, and share experiences was very useful and important."* - **Viktoriia Zhelikhovska, Ukraine**

Outcomes

As well as detailing the benefits they found from the conference, attendees were also asked what they planned to do with the experience and knowledge they had gained from their time in Warsaw:

- *“A very important point that I have learned for myself, the Botanical garden should be one of the centers of education and training of rational use of resources, so I will try to develop this activity in our garden. In our country, the issue of respect for nature is very acute, so I hope that our garden will be a role model in the field of caring for nature” - Alexey Filin, Russia*
- *“We engaged in our first in-depth strategy planning since 2014. One of our constraints is financial security: funded by an annual grant, we cannot safely make plans beyond one year. This year, we shifted our mindset from “What can we do if we receive this or that amount of funding?” to “Where do we want to end up, and how can we get there with or without our current channels of funding?” Theory of Change [workshop attended], as a tool, has given us a way to overcome our fear of resource uncertainty.” – Benjamin Ong, Malaysia*
- *“After the meeting, I summarized the knowledge and skills I learned in the congress and shared them with my colleagues through PPT. After that, combined with the actual situation of our botanical garden, we discussed the contents that need to be improved in our work...We redesigned the content and ways of our environmental education activities, which has made a positive impact at present. I think the environmental education activities of my own botanical garden should be more innovative, deeper and meaningful in the future.” – Yalong Qin, China*
- *“The congress allowed me to gather contacts that will allow me to interact with people specialized in different topics which could help the development of the institution. During 2019 the course of Botanical Gardens is planned, where foreign professionals will be invited to share their knowledge. Finally, I proposed changes for the guided tours and the birding outings that are performed periodically in the Botanical Garden.” - Salas Gonzalo Matias, Argentina*
- *During the summer...we are planning to have a two-day capacitation for all the garden’s staff in which we will not only share our impressions of the congress with all the personnel but also replicate the workshops that focused on the visitor’s experience: Visitor experience mapping, Clip for biodiversity and we will emphasize specially the word café U.N. Sustainable Development goals and Botanic Gardens, to define priorities for our garden and for each area in particular. - Vanina Gabriela Salgado, Argentina*
- *“From the congress, I shared the knowledge gained with the team at the Arboretum very briefly during a meeting. I did however share extensively with the Forest Manager...” Purity Wanjohi, Kenya*
- *“Thanks to our introduction to EarthCorps...one of our employees from the Education Department...will be able to participate in their 6-month exchange program. It will provide an opportunity to conduct educational work with all categories of people, including people with disabilities...In order to disseminate the information I obtained during the congress among my colleagues, I will write an article in the most popular resource “Ukrainian Botanical Journal,” which is one of the main sources that provides comprehensive coverage of all branches of plant sciences.” - Viktoriia Zhelikhovska, Ukraine*

Conclusions

Education congresses are essential for the development and implementation of successful educational programmes in botanic gardens. The opportunity for early career educators to attend a global event such as this, to share ideas and experience and network with the botanic garden community is exceptionally important. BGCI is extremely grateful to the Sylvia Scholarship fund for supporting the attendees, who otherwise would not have been able to participate. It is clear from their reports that they have all benefitted from the experience and have taken that positivity and enthusiasm back to their institutions.

Photos



BGCi's Liliana Derewnicka with some of the scholarship recipients



Alexey Filin at the Congress Welcome Party event



Viktoriiia Zhelikhovska and colleagues



Purity Wanjohi, Benjamin Ong with the fellow presenters of their session



Yalong Qin and colleagues



Vanina Salgado presenting her work at the



The attendees of the 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens

Photos ©BGCI, Alexey Filin, Viktoriia Zhelikhovska, Benjamin Ong, Yalong Qin, Vanina Salgado

Appendix

Individual scholarship reports



Scholars' report on their participation at BGCI's 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens

Name	Filin Alexey
Title (Prof/Dr/Mrs/Mr/Ms/Miss)	Mr
Name of Institution	Botanical garden of M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University «Apothecaries' garden»
Tell us about your experience of attending the Congress (500 words) <i>What sessions did you attend, which aspects did you enjoy most?</i>	
<p>I visited first of all the panel session. During the Congress, I have heard numerous reports. First of all, as an employee of the Botanical garden, located in the heart of Moscow, I was interested in the exchange of experience with the same city gardens. I was interested in reports from the city gardens (CG) session. In this session, I was interested to learn how the staff of the gardens, located in large cities in different countries, solve the problems facing the Botanical gardens in our time. It was extremely pleasant to feel like a part of a multinational team engaged in one work. I am in addition to curating collections engaged in Informatization of the garden space; I was particularly interested in a session of New educational tools (NET) from the reports in which I learned many new ideas. It was very pleasant and convenient that after the reports it was possible to discuss more fully with the speakers their ideas in the use of QR codes, as well as the development of applications for visitors.</p> <p>In addition, during the Congress I visited the following panel sessions: Supporting formal education examples (SFE) — a lot of ideas for the development of educational programs on the basis of the Botanical garden; Working together (WT) — my report was in this session, and it was interesting to learn about how Botanical gardens cooperate with other gardens and with educational institutions in other countries; Reaching new audience (RNA) — this session was very relevant because in now Botanical gardens can change their focus and</p>	

work to engage a new audience. I also attended several reports from the Measuring impact (MI) session; however, this topic is somewhat far from me. However, at some point it is still necessary to assess the impact of the garden on society, at least now I know about how other gardens do it. Apart from the panel session, I have participated in several Workshop from session (NET).

From my participation in the Congress, it was my first international Congress, I made the following conclusion: perhaps it is the possibility of live communication and discussion of ideas, as well as the variety of topics discussed and options for presenting the material are the best aspects of this Congress.

What knowledge and skills did you gain from the Congress? (500 words)

How is this being put into practice and what steps have been taken to disseminate this knowledge to colleagues within your home country

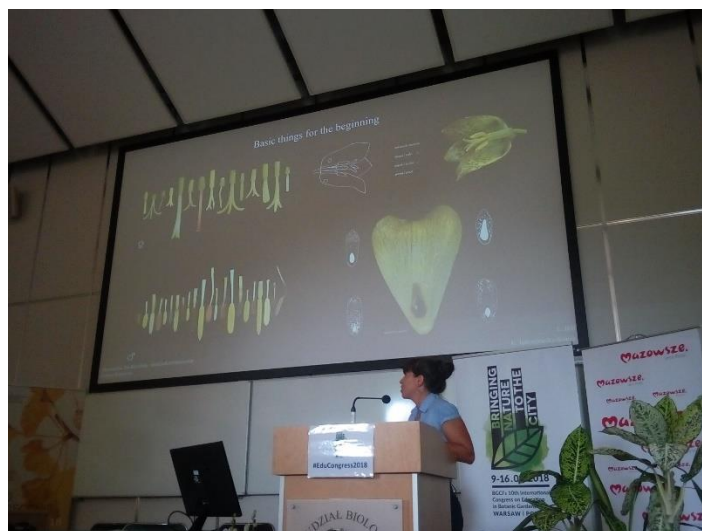
First of all, I was interested in how other Botanical gardens conduct Informatization of their collections. From the reports and subsequent discussions, I studied the experience of using QR codes on plant tablets, as well as ways of displaying information for visitors. In addition, I learned the experience in creating apps for visitors, on the basis of which I plan to seriously engage in the idea of creating an application with information about the garden for visitors and supplying plant tablets with QR codes. In addition, I liked the idea of composting and more ecological agro techniques. I even decided to carry out experiments on collecting fallen leaves and processing and in fertilizers for collections of an open ground. The experience of educational activities of other Botanical gardens will be very useful for our colleagues, as we try to develop this activity in our garden. Perhaps we will try to implement some ideas in the future. A very important point that I have learned for myself, the Botanical garden should be one of the centers of education and training of rational use of resources, so I will try to develop this activity in our garden. In our country, the issue of respect for nature is very acute, so I hope that our garden will be a role model in the field of caring for nature. Moreover, because we are in the center of such a huge city as Moscow and we are visited by hundreds of thousands of people. Since I visited the Congress together with my colleagues, we tried to cover all aspects of its work to the maximum, so that together we will bring more ideas to our garden. In addition, of course I really liked the level of this event for what I want to thank the Director of the Botanical garden of Warsaw University Mrs. Hanna and her team, as well as your Foundation for the opportunity to participate in such a great event.



A very nice tour of the garden was held after registration



My colleague Alla Andreeva talked about educational programs in our garden.



I really liked the project of Katarzyna Roguz (chair of WT section). It's great that she presented results of her work in the form of a beautiful and informative exhibition.



It was my first report in English. I hope everything was fine



I took part with pleasure in congratulating the Botanical garden of Warsaw University.

Once again, I thank all those who took part in this wonderful Congress. I hope that I will be able to take part in your next events

Best Regards, Alexey



Scholars' report on their participation at BGCI's 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens

Name	Benjamin Ong
Title (Prof/Dr/Mrs/Mr/Ms/Miss)	Mr
Name of Institution	Rimba Ilmu Botanic Garden
Tell us about your experience of attending the Congress (500 words) <i>What sessions did you attend, which aspects did you enjoy most?</i>	
<p>I attended all Plenary sessions, the poster session, and these:</p> <p>Monday 10.09</p> <p>Panel session (CG): City gardens (I presented during this session)</p> <p>Panel session (NET): New education tools</p> <p>Panel session (WT): Education from experience—adapting values, culture and personal history in building educational programs</p> <p>Tuesday 11.09</p> <p>Workshop (WT): Asian Mountain Garden: dialogue between townspeople and plants</p> <p>Workshop (double) (MI): Theories of Change: learn how to design programs with impact</p> <p>Wednesday 12.09</p> <p>Roundtable (WT): The missing piece: developing and maintaining stakeholder relationships through sponsorship and endorsing organizations</p> <p>Tour to Kampinos National Park</p>	

Thursday 13.09

200th anniversary of the University of Warsaw Botanic Garden

Workshop (SFE): Explorers of nature

Panel session (RNA): Pondering new social roles, diversity, and inclusion at botanical gardens

Workshop (NET): LearnToEngage multiplier event

Friday 14.09

Workshop (RNA): Fruitful discussion

BigPicnic Marketplace

Exploring the Botanic Garden and its partners: Jazdów City Garden – Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art and Open Jazdów Initiative

Above all, I enjoyed meeting and interacting with the diverse pool of delegates from botanic gardens worldwide. This was my first Congress and prior to this, I had only visited a few botanic gardens in Malaysia, Singapore and the UK. It helped me see my garden, Rimba Ilmu, in better context and perspective: to understand that gardens range from the very large to the very small, from the formal to the informal, from the wealthy to the cash-strapped, and to appreciate the range of strategies designed and utilised by gardens to overcome constraints and achieve goals. From Kyrgyzstan to Mexico City, I was inspired by how botanic gardens are influencing and impacting their communities, and was led to reflect on the social roles of my own botanic garden.

The variety and depth of content was great. I found the Theories of Change and Explorers of Nature workshops very instructive for my own botanic garden's work. I particularly enjoyed Monday afternoon's session on 'Education from experience', conducted by the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens. Education staffers Tzvia Adler and Ayat Idrees described how their respective methods and approaches to education draw heavily from their cultural backgrounds and personal childhood experiences. This was a valuable insight in an age where programmes and processes in science education are often formalised and impersonalised so as to exclude the personality—the unique strengths, weaknesses, quirks and traits—of instructors.

Outside of the formal sessions, the excursions were fabulous. Visiting Kampinos National Park (Wednesday) and Jazdów (Friday) provided good contrast between conservation initiatives in the large city-outskirts and in a small city-centre area. The Jazdów visit, in particular, provided insights on narrative and place making in urban nature/greenspace conservation, themes very relevant to Rimba Ilmu's work. It provided some real-life context to ideas discussed at the LearnToEngage multiplier event.

Pacing was on point; sessions never felt too long, and each day never felt too heavy. Food was fantastic! Welcome reception, mid-Congress tour dinner, farewell barbecue, not to mention the sumptuous lunches—at times I wondered if I were attending a Food Congress instead!

What knowledge and skills did you gain from the Congress? (500 words)

How is this being put into practice and what steps have been taken to disseminate this knowledge to colleagues within your home country

My experience at the Congress has been a great encouragement to my colleagues at the Rimba Project (Rimba Ilmu's de facto education team), rekindling hope at a time when circumstances have led us to consider shutting down the education programme. We have embarked on three very bold innovations:

1. Strategy planning based on context and Theory of Change

We engaged in our first in-depth strategy planning since 2014. One of our constraints is financial security: funded by an annual grant, we cannot safely make plans beyond one year. This year, we shifted our mindset from "What can we do if we receive this or that amount of funding?" to "Where do we want to end up, and how can we get there with or without our current channels of funding?" Theory of Change, as a tool, has given us a way to overcome our fear of resource uncertainty.

We have also decided to start comparing ourselves to botanic gardens in our "class"—that is, community-based rather than corporate botanic gardens. It is tempting to aspire towards the famous "big" gardens, partly because they're the ones getting the most publicity. Interacting with smaller gardens at the Congress, such as those from developing countries and small universities, has shown us creative alternative ways of "doing" botany, education and conservation.

2. Rethinking the way we work with partners

The 'Working Together' sessions at the Congress showed me various ways of working effectively with partners. As a small garden, we function very informally. However, there is considerable growing interest in our work and we often struggle with high-commitment partnerships that risk burnout. Partly as a result of the Congress, we are incorporating policies for strategic partnership, which can be summarised thus: learning how to get people to say yes, and learning how to say no. For example, using the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum's strategy of enlisting "endorsing organisations"—low commitment partnerships that result in high visibility in both partners' networks.

3. Developing a new, structured and integrated community education programme

We have designed a new programme called Backyard Explorers, now in the pilot stage, which aims to provide an integrated platform for volunteers and the general public to contribute to the garden's work, e.g., herbarium management and biodiversity documentation. This "outdoor classroom" programme will help us support formal education by bridging the worlds of "professional scientific practice" and "public science education," better integrating the general public with Rimba Ilmu's work

It was inspired by initiatives at the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens (the value of instructors' personal journeys/stories), Hortus Botanicus Leiden (classroom activity planning) and the

University of Warsaw's Botanic Garden (syllabus design). Backyard Explorers will focus significantly on science communication and place making. In order to reach new audiences, we are breaking from convention and partnering with museums, environmental activists and researchers in the social sciences and humanities. While initiatives like this may be a lot more common in wealthier, more developed nations, we're really hoping to get it off the ground in the coming year!

Photos (including credits)

- Unless otherwise indicated, all photographs by Benjamin Ong.



Fellow panellists: Purity Wanjohi, Rasa Ryliškienė, me, Barbara Werner, and Costantino Bonomi (chair). [Photographer uncertain; photo courtesy of Benjamin Ong]



Working lunch with colleagues at which I shared my Congress experience.



Team strategy planning using the Theory of Change framework.



Scenes from the Backyard Explorers pilot, our new community-centred environmental education programme incorporating learnings from the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens, Hortus Botanicus Leiden, the University of Warsaw's Nature Explorers workshop. In this montage, participants are collecting, pressing and mounting wildflowers.



Scholars' report on their participation at BGCI's 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens

Name	Yalong Qin
Title (Prof/Dr/Mrs/Mr/Ms/Miss)	Educator
Name of Institution	Nanjing Botanical Garden Mem. Sun Yat-Sen (NBG)
Tell us about your experience of attending the Congress (500 words) <i>What sessions did you attend, which aspects did you enjoy most?</i>	
<p>During the 9th - 14th September 2018, to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the university of Warsaw Botanic Garden, the BGCI's 10th International congress on education in botanic gardens was held in the university of Warsaw botanic garden, the congress motto was bringing nature to the city.</p> <p>The international botanical garden education conference is a grand gathering of botanical garden environment education. More than 300 representatives from botanical gardens and related institutions from all over the world participated in this conference, which focused on 7 topics including "city botanical garden", "new tools for environment education" and "cooperation together".</p> <p>During the 9th - 13th September 2018, I and other 3 participators of my botanical garden attended the 10th international conference on education, and submitted 4 conference papers, displayed in the form of wall newspaper, and introduced 3 papers about the popular science education "Flowers and the Youngsters' - A special subproject of 'Flower Watch' Program", "Plant Museum- a New Facility for Public Education in NBG", and "Cooperate with Other Organizations to Enhance Environmental Education In NBG". I made a panel session on "The Journey of Aromatic Plants', A Most Popular Activity of the Summer Camp of Botanical Garden" and won the conference scholarship offered by BGCI.</p>	

During the congress, I listened to a number of conference reports and participated in a workshop sponsored by Morton botanical garden of the United States to explore how to find the needs of education object in a compassionate way. In addition, it also discussed the future relevant exchanges and cooperation with other botanical garden participators.

During the congress, we visited the university of Warsaw botanic garden. Although the botanical garden is small in size, it collects a large number of plants, including native plants and plants from other countries. What makes sense is that workers have produced some insect survival models and sets the commentary cards next to some endemic species that allow visitors to better grasp the plants and the insects associated with them. In addition, I saw the workers make interesting shapes by using some plant materials. In the process of attracting tourists, it is also a beautiful landscape to ask tourists to carefully observe the plant materials.

On September 12, we visited the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów first. Apart from the magnificent buildings, the most fascinating thing is the spectacular European garden. The plants were planted in a very neat way, which was totally different from the way in China. Under the guidance of the worker, we visited their small activity classroom and saw many interesting plant and activity materials in the room, especially these small insects they made using plant materials.

After that, we visited the PAS Botanical Garden in Powsin. In this botanical garden, we have seen a large number of apple varieties. Through collect and research these varieties, new apple varieties will be developed to meet people's needs. In the botanical garden, we also see special gardens include a variety of vegetables, where visitors can personally feel various vegetable varieties, especially those rarely seen in life.

What knowledge and skills did you gain from the Congress? (500 words)

How is this being put into practice and what steps have been taken to disseminate this knowledge to colleagues within your home country

I'm an educator in Nanjing Botanical Garden Men. Sun Yat-set. I have a lot of work should to do, such as planning and developing popular science education activities, spreading plant-related scientific knowledge or sharing experience by Sina Micro-Blog, WeChat, official website, newspapers, TV stations and other medias, Guiding the public, especially youth, to be close to nature, recognize the nature and protect the nature. Although I have abundant knowledge of natural science, I lacks working experience and external exchange. Therefore, I have carried out a variety of activities, but the activities lack of theme and can't form a good system.

By attending the BGCI 10th international congress on education, I shared my experience in organizing activities to other participators. Through wonderful conference reports and in-depth exchanged with other botanical garden workers, I realized that my activities have been very rich, and youth can learn some scientific knowledge in my activities. Of course, they have also participated in multiple active parts. In the process of the activities, I mostly guided the youth to participate in activities, and arranged rich contents in the process of activities. However, my activities lack the time for youth to independently think and enjoy gaining life experiences outside. After the activities, there are still many follow-up work not done well.

At the conference, botanical garden workers from all over the world gave many wonderful reports. In some conference reports, I saw some botanical garden workers make lots of dynamic plants and activities videos, vividly demonstrate the activities they have carried out. This form of presentation makes it easier for viewers to learn and master activity information. Some workers use scenario n to tell people how to protect a plant, how to recognize the value of plants and how to make some plant models to carry out education activities. I think these are more vivid than simple pictures and text display. Of course, the most important thing is that they carefully stat and analyse the participants' evaluation of the activities. The conclusion is beneficial for them to design more perfect activities to guide the public to participate in.

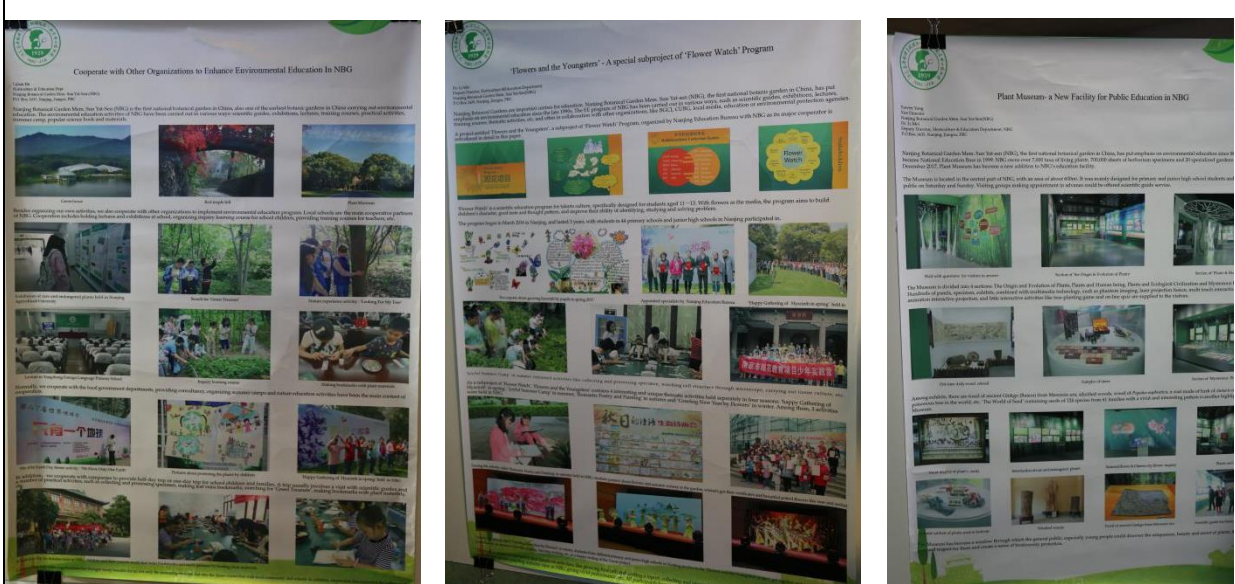
I think it is beneficial for me and my botanical garden to attend the conference. Through the congress, I studied the education experience of other botanical gardens, strengthened the communication and exchanged with other botanical garden workers, broadened my horizons of popular science education, and learned advanced educational concepts and methods.

After the meeting, I summarized the knowledge and skills I learned in the congress and shared them with my colleagues through PPT. After that, combined with the actual situation of our botanical garden, we discussed the contents that need to be improved in our work for many times in the form of a group. Through the communication with colleagues, I shared what I learned during the congress with them. We redesigned the content and ways of our environmental education activities, which has made a positive impact at present. I think the environmental education activities of my own botanical garden should be more innovative, deeper and meaningful In the future.

Photos (including credits)



The group photo of my delegation



The posters of my delegation



I made a panel session on "The Journey of Aromatic Plants', A Most Popular Activity of the Summer Camp of Botanical Garden"



Scholars' report on their participation at BGCI's 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens

Name	Salas Gonzalo Matias
Title (Prof/Dr/Mrs/Mr/Ms/Miss)	Mr
Name of Institution	Horco Molle Botanical Garden
Tell us about your experience of attending the Congress (500 words) <i>What sessions did you attend, which aspects did you enjoy most?</i>	
<p>My experience during the congress was totally enriching, where I learned a lot about the work and experience of professionals who work in botanical gardens around the world, to know problems that have different gardens that are often the same as in my garden and for know how each of them addresses these problems. Participate in the following presentations:</p> <p>Keynote: Education in city gardens: what do you want to change and how do you get there?</p> <p>Panel session (CG) City gardens</p> <p>Panel session (NET) New educational tools</p> <p>Panel session (SFE) Supporting formal education examples</p> <p>Keynote (CG) Bringing nature to the city, a designer's perspective</p> <p>Keynote (WT) Kew in the 21st Century, how do we engage the public with biodiversity?</p> <p>Panel session (SFE) Addressing the role of botanic gardens in formal education</p> <p>Panel session (WT) Working together</p> <p>Panel session (RNA) Working with different audiences</p>	

Plenary Keynote (NET) Animating the inanimate: engaging new audiences with plants

Keynote (SFE) Formal learning in botanic gardens: from communicating knowledge on plants to developing scientific literacy

Panel session (RNA) The role of public gardens in revitalizing communities

Plenary session 200th anniversary of the University of Warsaw Botanic Garden

World Café (RNA) Reaching new audiences through nature-based learning experiences

World Café (MI) U.N. Sustainable Development Goals and botanic gardens: our global role!

World Café (WT) Developing partnerships to reach learning objectives and new audiences

Plenary (RNA)

Workshop (NET) Bird Garden

From these I could learn how to take advantage of different resources from different points of view and according to the realities of each botanical garden and how to apply them in my work.

What knowledge and skills did you gain from the Congress? (500 words)

How is this being put into practice and what steps have been taken to disseminate this knowledge to colleagues within your home country

The knowledge I acquired was mainly how to bring the work done in the botanical garden closer to the community. One of the measures we are implementing is to offer schools a program with proposed activities that adapt to the requirements that the Ministry of Education applies. the minimum knowledge that should be provided to students during their school years, we are also encouraging that educational establishments in the province of Tucumán, Argentina, have educational outings mainly to spaces such as a Botanical Garden where students can better incorporate what they have learned in the classroom, trying to make them feel sensitized by the care and protection of nature and all the organisms that inhabit it.

I also acquired knowledge about how the use of technology, including QR codes or social networks, helps the work that one does reach more people and bring them closer to the institution.

Since I returned, I gave lectures to the Horco Molle Botanical Garden staff, students of the Biology Degree course at the University of Tucumán, and for next year I have scheduled more talks for the staff of other gardens about my experience in the congress.

Being able to get to know other Botanical Gardens also allowed me to get new ideas about plant collections that I could implement in my work, thanks to this experience, a greenhouse with a collection of xerophytic plants, among others, is planned.

The congress allowed me to gather contacts that will allow me to interact with people specialized in different topics which could help the development of the institution.

During 2019 the course of Botanical Gardens is planned, where foreign professionals will be invited to share their knowledge.

Finally I proposed changes for the guided tours and the birding outings that he performs periodically in the Botanical Garden.





Scholars' report on their participation at BGCI's 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens

Name	Purity Nyawira Wanjohi
Title (Prof/Dr/Mrs/Mr/Ms/Miss)	Miss
Name of Institution	Friends of Nairobi Arboretum
Tell us about your experience of attending the Congress (500 words) <i>What sessions did you attend, which aspects did you enjoy most?</i>	
<p>This was the first time attending the Congress. It more than surpassed my expectations. Other than the experience of being surrounded by experts in the field, being in a totally new environment made the experience even better because it brought in a new perspective.</p> <p>The aspects I enjoyed most about the presentations were how it was arranged. The panels and then the variety of the breakout sessions were great. The panels set pace of the day and the breakout sessions allowed us to focus on what really mattered to us as individual educators. I also enjoyed the practical bits of the conference. It is okay to learn but when you do, you master it best.</p> <p>I enjoyed all the plenary sessions but especially the one on titled "Reaching new audiences - How to reach new audiences and why this matters." The session to me was informative because it is something that FONA wants to do come the next year. I also enjoyed the speaker from Kew Gardens- who's name I unfortunately don't remember- who spoke about the use of social media and how they use it to attract new audiences.</p> <p>There was also a talk on "Plant Blindness". For a person who works in a forest, I had never heard of the concept before. It introduced a paradigm shift in the way I will be designing environmental education program. Before learning about plant blindness, I thought everyone</p>	

knew about plants and would admire the green in a picture. I know understand that not everybody does. The animals and the litter on the green are more attractive and therefore I have to be innovative in the way I bring out plants so that the audience can pay attention to them too as an important part of the environment.

I attended several workshops but my favourite three were: City Gardens, Theories of Change and the main lecture theatre on The role of public gardens in revitalizing communities. They were not only practical but very key to the work I do as an educator.

Finally, the extra activities like the dinner and tours, free transport offered me an opportunity to network with other people, experience and tour the city of Warsaw as well as see the best of what it has to offer.

What knowledge and skills did you gain from the Congress? (500 words)

How is this being put into practice and what steps have been taken to disseminate this knowledge to colleagues within your home country

From the congress, I shared the knowledge gained with the team at the Arboretum very briefly during a meeting. I did however share extensively with the Forest Manager.

Knowledge and skills gained:

- i. I learnt new concepts like plant blindness, school gardens, etc. This knowledge is being used and will be used in the designing of future programs at the Arboretum.
- ii. During the tour of the University of Warsaw gardens, I saw how the trees were labeled, how the garden was designed under different themes and the strength of their education programs and how rich in knowledge the tour guide was. The arboretum is not designed into themes because it is maintained as a natural forest. However, with the knowledge I shared, I suggested that we have small gardens of plants that we get asked information a lot specifically the succulent plants. I also insisted that when we label trees, we used the format I saw in the garden of using brightly coloured labels stuck on the ground. Not only won't they be stolen because the material they are made of is of little value, but when it rains, the labels won't be destroyed as they are now since we use laminated paper labels. The Arboretum also lacks enough signs. I have put forward this to the board and hopefully, something will be done.
- iii. I also learnt how to conduct an education program in a school from the "Supporting formal education examples" by Hong Wu of Shanghai Botanical Garden. Her use of case studies with ways in which they conducted the program in the garden as well as the results was very informative. I will put this in practice in my own personal project as well on environmental education.
- iv. From the Theories of Change workshop, I had an opportunity to learn more on theories of change. What it is, why it is important, how it is used and how I can develop one for the Arboretum since we don't have one at the moment.
- v. I got valuable material for later reading. Important to mention is a manual from Naples Botanic Gardens. I will use it to see if we can design a program in the Arboretum for kids.

- vi. Finally, I was also able to share the work we do at the Arboretum. The preparing of the presentation and presenting it was an opportunity to use my skills.

The conference was valuable in me knowing how to ensure how our garden will stay open and relevant in this changing world!

Photos (including credits)



Both by Purity Wanjohi



By Benjamin Ong



Scholars' report on their participation at BGCI's 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens

Name	Viktoriia Zhelikhovska
Title (Prof/Dr/Mrs/Mr/Ms/Miss)	Ms
Name of Institution	Kamianets-Podilskyi Botanical Garden, State Agrarian and Engineering University in Podilya
Tell us about your experience of attending the Congress (500 words) <i>What sessions did you attend, which aspects did you enjoy most?</i>	
<p>The organization of the ecological congress in Warsaw was at the highest level; the organizers made it as comfortable as possible for all participants, taking into account their needs for rest, transport logistics, and nutrition. Most importantly, they created a rich weeklong program with lectures, master classes and excursions, provided an opportunity for comfortable communication, and created an overall atmosphere of a family-friendly holiday. Here are some of the highlights:</p> <p>The workshop conducted by representatives from the Geneva Botanical Garden featuring the game "Trivial Evolution: Plants" was an amazing example of an unconventional approach to learning. We were divided into teams and moved along an evolutionary tree, answering questions on genetics and botany. This was an example of how difficult things can be explained by a simple method.</p> <p>It was also interesting to learn more about US-Russia cooperation in terms of environmental exchange. Anthony Allison and delegates from botanical gardens in Russia talked about the benefits and challenges of the exchange.</p> <p>As a result of the experience, we have already issued an application for one of our employees to participate in the International Corps Program (EarthCorps), which lasts for 6 months and aims to provide participants with new skills in the field of environmental education, community building, and leadership.</p> <p>The workshop presented by our colleagues from Argentina was interesting because of their creative approach to the organization of self-guided tour for visitors, using a low budget. We had the opportunity to play a little bit, come up with a plot and a route for our own botanical gardens.</p> <p>Nico Wissing's lecture on his various projects and his vision for the development of future cities and new professions was also particularly memorable.</p> <p>I especially liked Justyna Wiland-Szymańska's presentation about an educational program for people with disabilities at the Adam Mickiewicz University Botanical Garden. In Ukraine, there is a problem</p>	

of integrating such people into public life and education, therefore examples of solving such problems are very valuable.

The program of the excursion congress-tour was excellent. The Palace Complex of King Jan III's was impressive, but what I liked most was how our Polish colleagues use it for educational activities. The rich educational program includes non-standard history lessons, workshops, concerts of classical music, exhibitions and, of course, naturalistic lessons for different age groups.

The laboratory in the water tower and the pavilion in the park are equipped with everything you need for a comfortable stay and training. I was also glad to see people with special needs (people with disabilities, such as autism) there. There are even specially developed educational-cognitive programs designed for them.

It was useful for me to compare the ornithological excursions that take place at the Kamianets-Podilskyi Botanical Garden and the National Nature Park «Podilski Tovtry» with the excursions at the University of Warsaw Botanic Garden. Paweł invited us to take part in a game where we not only listened to the excursion, but were active participants in a quest-game.

What knowledge and skills did you gain from the Congress? (500 words)

How is this being put into practice and what steps have been taken to disseminate this knowledge to colleagues within your home country

The opportunity to listen to interesting presentations, meet with colleagues, and share experiences was very useful and important.

My continued communication with these new acquaintances will enable us to get advice or solutions to common problems in botanical gardens of other countries, if necessary.

Thanks to our introduction to EarthCorps and its representative, Anthony Allison, one of our employees from the Education Department of the Podilski Tovtry National Nature Park (Kamianets-Podilskyi) will be able to participate in their 6-month exchange program. Mr. Allison is a good communicator and helped advise us on educational policy issues. At the end of this year, Kamianets-Podilskyi began construction on an ecological education visitor center, funded by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine. It will provide an opportunity to conduct educational work with all categories of people, including people with disabilities. Tony and his colleague, Gary Cook (Earth Island), who helped representatives from nature reserves in Ukraine develop their visitor centers, agreed to advise us on the process of building and developing our center's educational programs.

After the educational congress in Warsaw I became more aware of the global goals of the entire botanical community, and now have a clearer understanding of the goals and objectives of some international projects such as the Big Picnic.

Direct participation in congress events, such as master classes, workshops, and excursions, allows you to test new tools in educational activities.

About seventeen posters further expanded my vision of what training programs work in botanical gardens in other countries and which techniques are most effective.

We live in the digital age, the time of widely available information, but participation in such international congresses provides a possibility to work qualitatively, concentrating on the "here and now."

In order to disseminate the information I obtained during the congress among my colleagues, I will write an article in the most popular resource "Ukrainian Botanical Journal," which is one of the main sources that provides comprehensive coverage of all branches of plant sciences. The article will be co-authored by Andriy Prokopov (Botanic Garden of Ivan Franko Lviv National University) and Lyudmyla Buyun (M.M. Gryshko National Botanic Garden, National Academy of Science of Ukraine), and is currently in the stage of editing and unification of materials.