

The Education Program of Taipei Botanic Garden (TPBG)

Wen-Liang Chiou
Taiwan Forestry Research Institute, Taipei, Taiwan
E-mail: chiou@tfri.gov.tw



[INTRODUCTION] Taipei Botanic Garden, built in 1896, is situated in Taipei City, occupies 8 ha, grows ca. 2000 species of plants, and is the most important center of environmental education for Taipei citizens. Every year, more than 2 millions people enter the TPBG. About 30% of them affirm that studying biology and nature is their goal of visiting the TPBG.



[GUIDED TOURS] On average, 30,000 elementary students request volunteers' guide every year. Regular tours are guided in the morning and afternoon every Sunday. Every month, an interpretative subject, such as ethnobotany, bamboos, ferns, etc. is defined and focused on.



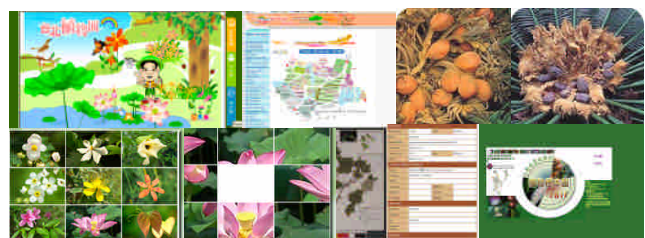
[INTERPRETATIVE PANELS] Visitors can learn by themselves through reading different kinds of placards which explain a general conservation concept, a subject of a section, or names of individual plants. Braille boards, on which plant information is punched, have also been set for blind people.



[PDA & 2D BARCODE] A program of Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) is being designed. Using PDA, visitors will be able to obtain information more detailed than from the placards in the TPBG. Another program, 2D barcode, is also being proposed to enable visitors to record what they learn in the Garden through wireless telecommunication.



[VOLUNTEER & TRAINING] Volunteers, giving innovative and knowledgeable interpretation to visitors, are the most popular teachers in the TPBG. More than 200 volunteers have been well trained herein. To enhance their biodiversity awareness and interpretative skill, speeches given by specialists are arranged every 2 weeks. In addition, 3-year academic classes are scheduled covering taxonomy, ecology, conservation of biodiversity, and silviculture.



[WEBSITE] Detail information is available on the website (<http://tpbg.tfri.gov.tw>) of the TPBG. Introduction, maps, events, descriptions and pictures of plants cultivated are accessible although plant descriptions are mostly in Mandarin. Specimen information can be acquired through either the Garden's website or herbarium's own database (<http://taif.tfri.gov.tw>).