



Plants for the Planet

The work of Botanic Gardens Conservation International in 2007

20
YEARS
1987-2007



Message from the Chair



The passion and commitment shown by botanic gardens in conserving and celebrating the world's flora is remarkable. Attending the 3rd Global Botanic Gardens Congress in Wuhan in April 2007 demonstrated to me yet again how strong a force for good botanic gardens are and how powerful when working together as a global network. I am proud that BGCI plays a key role – as it has over the past 20 years – in building and facilitating this global network.

BGCI is advised on its strategic direction by an International Advisory Council with members from 22 countries. They all play a key role in guiding our work and I thank them for their personal contributions to BGCI. Special mention should be made of Professor Huang Hongwen for his tireless work for BGCI alongside his key roles in the Chinese Academy of Sciences Botanic Garden Committee, and directing the Wuhan Botanical Garden and more recently the South China Botanical Garden in Guangzhou. The success of the 3rd Global Congress was in no small part due to Professor Huang Hongwen.

For plant conservation to be a success story in every country, botanic gardens need to work in partnership with many other agencies – as indeed they generally do. Botanic gardens are not only repositories for rare and endangered species but act as hubs

for local, regional and global plant conservation action. Likewise BGCI acts in partnership with a wide range of organisations to effect change, for example by providing the secretariat for the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation mandated by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Increasingly it is being recognised that growing plants and conserving plant diversity is vitally important in caring for our fragile and damaged planet. From maintaining urban food plots through to managing the national parks of the world a wide spectrum of botanical and horticultural skills is needed – all nurtured by botanic gardens. BGCI will continue to facilitate networking, partnerships and capacity building as well as taking direct conservation action to save the world's most threatened plants. Building on 20 years experience, we look forward to increasing the scope and scale of our work as we move towards the plant conservation components of the CBD's 2010 Biodiversity Target and beyond. Thank you to all who inspire and support us in our work.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joan M. Walmsley".

Baroness Joan Walmsley,
Chair, BGCI Board of Directors

"Kew was closely involved in the development of BGCI and is proud to have supported the organisation for 20 years as a patron member. Botanic gardens need the coordinating and convening powers of BGCI to link vital conservation work around the world."

Steve Hopper, Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

"The global interactions between botanic gardens are enhanced and strengthened by BGCI, leading to positive environmental gains for all. The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh is committed to the success of BGCI now and in the future."

Stephen Blackmore, Regius Keeper, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh



BGCI in 2007

2007 was an important year for BGCI. Not only did we celebrate our 20th anniversary with a number of high-profile events, but we also launched a series of exciting and relevant new initiatives – several of which are highlighted in this report.

Our anniversary celebrations started with an inspiring lecture delivered by Professor Wangari Maathai at an event in London. Founder of the Green Belt Movement and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Professor Maathai is a notable women's rights and environmental campaigner. Her talk in London served to highlight the importance of individual actions in tackling global environmental issues, a theme echoed in our educational work in 2007.

During 2007, we worked closely with partners in China to develop a robust national response to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

To facilitate our growing programme of work in China, we opened an office at the South China Botanical Garden.

2007 also saw the relocation of BGCI's office in the USA to Chicago Botanic Garden, and the recruitment of a new Executive Director for BGCI (US). We were delighted to welcome Chicago as a new Patron Member of BGCI. The new office is helping BGCI to extend its membership in the USA, support the delivery of the North American Botanic Garden Strategy for Plant Conservation and promote international partnerships between botanic gardens.

The BGCI (US) office is also helping to access funding from US-based trusts and foundations. In this respect a successful application was made to

the JRS Biodiversity Foundation, allowing a new bioinformatics project to be initiated in East Africa. This project is focused on gathering and making available key data on the flora of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, including information on plant taxonomy, conservation status and sustainable use.

The 3rd Global Botanic Gardens Congress was a major highlight of 2007 focusing on the results and challenges of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. We used the Congress to launch our new Plants and Climate Change initiative. The Congress included important workshops and symposia, such as a workshop on medicinal plants which contributed to our *Safety Nets for Medicinal Plants* project which was completed in 2007. We also held a meeting of the Global Trees Campaign, which BGCI runs in partnership with Fauna & Flora International. All these initiatives are set to grow as we communicate our ambitions and diversify our support base to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of the world's imperilled flora.

Sara Oldfield

Sara Oldfield,
BGCI Secretary General



Responding to climate change – conserving tree species



Trees and the forests they make up are vitally important in the climate change debate. Living forests absorb carbon dioxide and store it as biomass and in the soil. Unfortunately the survival of many tree species in the wild is threatened by rapid habitat loss, the spread of invasive species and over-exploitation of both forests and individual tree species. These threats often combine in different orders of magnitude in different geographical locations with varying impact on species and the people who depend on them. Global climate change adds to the range of threats faced by tree species.

Around 10 percent of all tree species are currently threatened with extinction, with over 1,000 species considered to be Critically Endangered (subject to the most severe degree of threat) using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria. Some of these species are already reduced to less than 50 individuals in the wild. Conservation in botanic gardens and arboreta is an urgent priority as an insurance policy.

Setting priorities

BGCI is committed to supporting the conservation assessment of tree species as a precursor to on-the-ground conservation action. In 2007, we co-published with Fauna & Flora International (FFI), Red List reports for Magnolia and Oaks (*Quercus*) – copies are available for download on our website. We also held a very successful Acer red listing workshop at the University of British Columbia Botanic Garden, in September 2007. This brought together experts from China, North America and Europe, with the aim of finalising the Acer report in 2008. At the regional level, we also held a workshop in the Philippines to investigate the conservation status of palms (Arecaceae) and ebonies (Ebenaceae) in Southeast Asia.

Focusing on magnolias

The publication of the *Red List of Magnolias* received considerable media attention and served to raise awareness of the plight of this group of well-loved garden plants. The report highlighted that around 131 magnolia species and subspecies are threatened with extinction in the wild, over half the

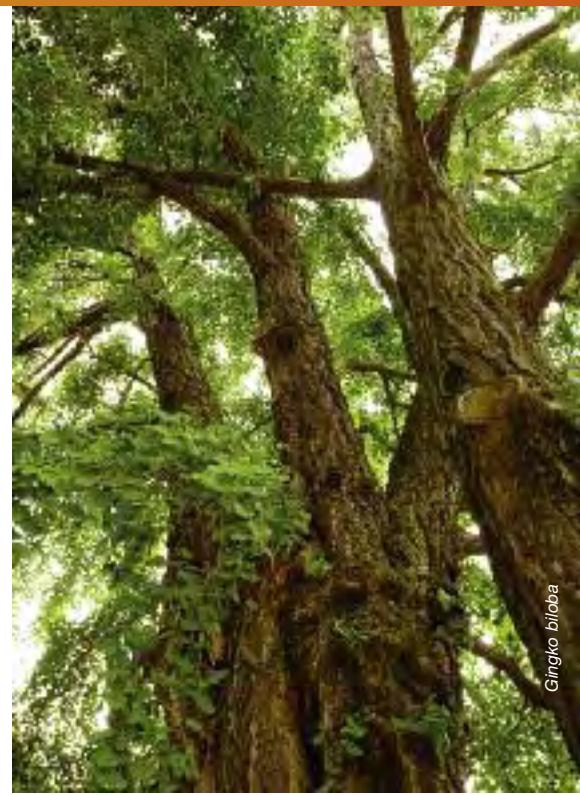
known species within the family. Having identified the most endangered species, we continued to work on magnolias, carrying out a comprehensive assessment of managed (*ex situ*) collections of these species, using our PlantSearch database of plants held in botanic gardens as a starting point. We also worked closely with the University of Bournemouth on the production of maps for all species of magnolia on the red list. These maps will provide an excellent basis for monitoring the impacts of climate change on magnolias and their habitats in the future.

We commit to continued support for the conservation and restoration of threatened magnolias, using the Red List as a basis for planning activities which will be focused in China and Colombia, the present-day centres of diversity of the family.



Magnolia coriacea

BGCI is a lead partner in the Global Trees Campaign - working to conserve and restore the most threatened tree species.



Other species of concern

Our work in 2007 also focused on the conservation of oaks. There are over 500 species of oak mainly in the northern hemisphere, with the greatest diversity of species found in Mexico and China. Oaks are of great symbolic value and of global ecological and economic importance. They are well represented in botanic gardens and arboreta. The recent assessment of oaks - using the IUCN Red List categories and criteria - recorded 78 species of global conservation concern. For many other species insufficient information was available to undertake the assessments. As with magnolias, we initiated a survey of *ex situ* collections of oaks to provide a basis for further conservation action.

Given the importance of trees in efforts to both mitigate and adapt to climate change, we are committed to continue to work with botanic gardens and other partners to identify and conserve critically endangered and other important tree species. We will focus on developing complementary conservation programmes, combining both *ex situ* and *in situ* methods as appropriate, and always working closely with local communities.

Conservation in mega-diverse China



China's vast flora includes more than 10% of all the known plant species, some 30,000 native species, 50% of which are to be found nowhere else on Earth. Included in this natural wealth are some of the most prized ornamental species, vital food crops and plants which form the basis of Chinese traditional medicine.

In recognition of the key role that China can play in advancing plant conservation in a global context, Wuhan, Hubei Province was chosen as the location for the 3rd Global Botanic Gardens Congress in April 2007.

3rd Global Botanic Gardens Congress

Hosted by the Wuhan Botanical Garden and co-organised by BGCI in conjunction with Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Hubei Provincial Government, the Wuhan Municiple Government and the State Forestry Association, the Congress attracted nearly 1,000 delegates from botanic gardens in 67 countries, representing one of the world's greatest plant conservation-focused gatherings.

The garden was a hive of activity for the five days of the Congress and a powerhouse for scientific discovery and conservation knowledge-sharing, with delegates identifying and capitalising on different approaches to conservation, environmental education and sustainability.

The conclusions of the Congress point the way for future conservation action and the role to be played by the world's botanic gardens. The key recommendations included the need to increase information on the range of endangered plants held in botanic garden collections; the need for botanic gardens to forge new conservation partnerships; the desire to link with local communities to support sustainable practices; and the need to enhance the role of gardens in raising awareness of the importance of plants in supporting all life.

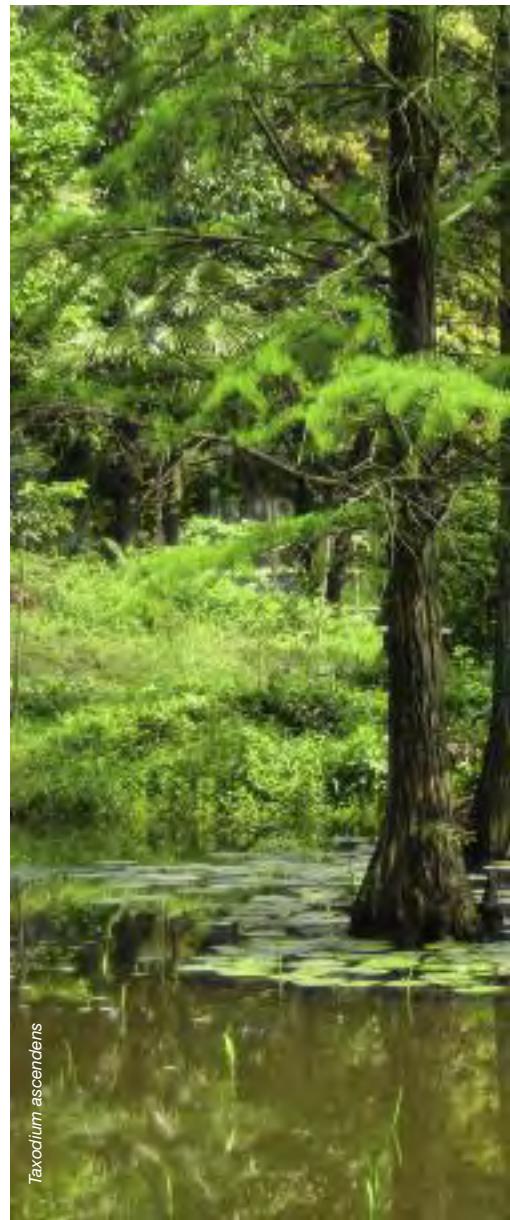
The key themes, discussions and conclusions of the Wuhan gathering are at the core of our mission to ensure that plants are protected and support all life. We commit to maintain and enhance our activities in the areas agreed at the Congress.

China's Strategy for Plant Conservation

BGCI was instrumental in bringing together three leading state agencies to create the Chinese Strategy for Plant Conservation (CSPC). Taking a unique 'whole country' approach to conservation, the strategy balances the development needs of China with its conservation imperatives. The agreed goals of the strategy are closely aligned to the targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) but also designed to meet the specific requirements of China.

The key focus areas of the strategy are listed below:

- Giving priority to documenting the status of China's plants both in the wild, and in managed (*ex situ*) botanical collections.
- Adopting a dual approach to conserving native plants by conserving species both in their natural habitats and, in order to provide an insurance against current and future threats, in managed collections, for example in botanic gardens.



Taxodium ascendens

BGCI has opened an office in China to support the conservation and education work of botanic gardens throughout the country.

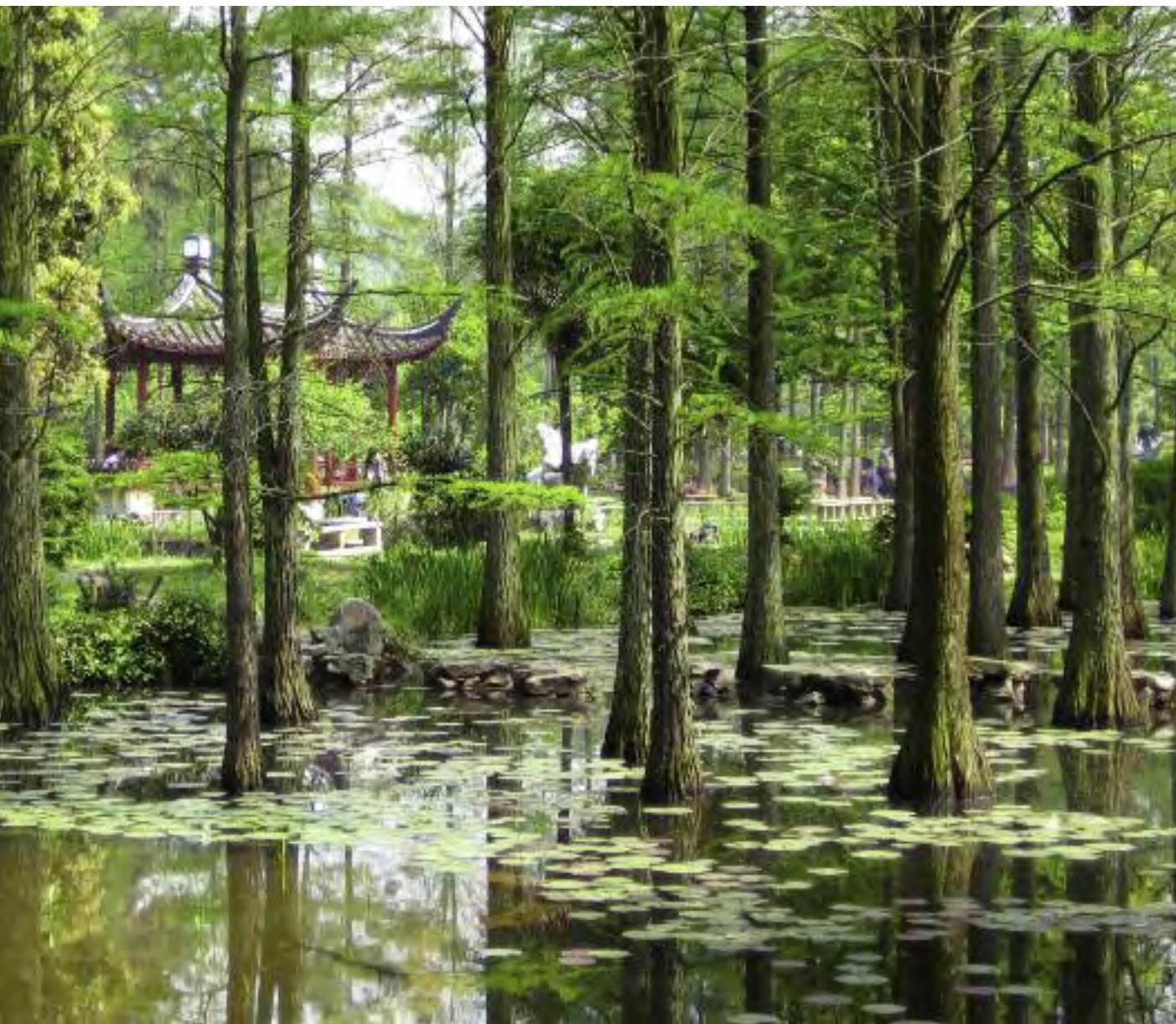
- Ensuring the sustainable use of wild plants by seeking to eliminate the over-exploitation of threatened species.
- Encouraging grass-roots level enthusiasm and support for conservation by raising awareness of the environmental issues connected to wild plant diversity.

We will continue our efforts to encompass the goals of the Chinese strategy in our on-going work. We will assess the status of plant populations in both *in* and *ex situ* collections. We will work with communities to build participation in and awareness of conservation efforts that enable the sustainable use of threatened species, working closely with botanic gardens in China and elsewhere.

A permanent presence in China

Our commitment to conservation in China is commensurate with the challenge to protect this vast country's unique flora. We demonstrated this commitment in 2007 by opening BGCI's first national office in China, led by our new China Programme Coordinator, Xiangying Wen. The new office is hosted by the South China Botanical Garden of the South China Institute of Botany in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. Xiangying will lead BGCI's efforts to support the implementation of the CSPC.

We will use our permanent presence in China to provide focus for our conservation efforts and to exploit new on-the-ground opportunities for raising awareness of plant conservation.



Saving the plants that save us

Echinacea purpurea



Medicinal plants have been used by human kind for millennia and today they remain of importance for the well-being of millions of people around the world. Over 70,000 plant species are thought to have medicinal qualities and it is estimated by the World Health Organisation that some 80% of people worldwide rely on traditional medicine for their primary healthcare. Unsustainable levels of harvesting add to the pressures of habitat degradation, agricultural expansion and climate change that already threaten the survival of many medicinal plant species in the wild. Despite declining supplies, many of the world's poorest people continue to rely on the collecting and selling of medicinal plants for income generation.

In 2007 BGCI successfully raised funding for medicinal plant conservation linked to improving livelihoods in a number of developing countries.

Providing a safety net

Medicinal plant cultivation and study was the original purpose of the earliest European botanic gardens and the tradition of cultivating and displaying medicinal plants has been retained by many

gardens. In order to support and enhance the work of botanic gardens in conserving medicinal plants, we undertook a new project 'Safety nets for medicinal plants' in 2007, funded by the Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation. This project aimed to maximise the potential for skills sharing within the medicinal plant conservation community and assist botanic gardens by identifying those medicinal plants most at risk of extinction.

Working closely with the medicinal plant community, a list of 3,000 key medicinal plant species was prepared and linked to our PlantSearch database - which provides information on plants in cultivation in botanic gardens around the world. Through this link, botanic gardens are now able to identify important medicinal plants in their own collections, and, importantly in those of other gardens, thus facilitating the development of partnerships between gardens growing the same species.

A second stage in the consultation process resulted in the development, for the first time, of a list of medicinal plant species in most need of conservation. This list of priority species will help to ensure that

conservation actions can be focused where they are most needed. The results of the consultation and survey carried out by BGCI were published at the end of 2007 in a report: *Plants for life: medicinal plant conservation and botanic gardens*.

Taking action where it's needed

Several other projects implemented in 2007 included a focus on medicinal plants. In partnership with IUCN (the International Union for the Conservation of Nature) and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), preliminary plant conservation needs assessments were completed in six countries (Cameroon, Costa Rica, Madagascar, Morocco, Philippines and Sri Lanka). On the basis of these assessments, important areas for plant conservation, especially those important for medicinal plants, were identified and these will provide the focus for future work.

Aquilaria crassna



Catharanthus roseus

BGCI's medicinal plants programme links the conservation of medicinal plants with the livelihoods of rural communities.



Seedlings of *Aquilaria crassna*

Meanwhile, in East Africa, the conservation status of medicinal plants is being recorded in collaboration with partners in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, as part of a project funded by the JRS Biodiversity Foundation.

We also initiated an ambitious programme to conserve *Aquilaria* species in Southeast Asia. Trees in the genus *Aquilaria* produce resinous, highly fragrant heartwood, commonly known as agarwood. This valuable wood has been used for thousands

of years, especially as incense in religious ceremonies and as a significant component of traditional medicine. Today the demand for agarwood far exceeds supply and unsustainable harvesting has resulted in a dramatic decline in populations of wild *Aquilaria* species throughout its range in Southeast Asia.

Through a joint project with the Research Institute of Science in Vientiane, Lao PDR, a national survey of wild populations of *Aquilaria* has been carried out and six species

have been successfully propagated. A public exhibition has been instrumental in raising awareness of the conservation status of agarwood and the need for sustainable management of this valuable natural resource.

We will capitalise on our experiences in Lao PDR and pursue efforts to secure and conserve remaining wild populations of *Aquilaria* and other threatened agarwood-producing plants in Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Summary of accounts



Summary of accounts

During the year BGCI received £604,000 from HSBC Holdings PLC by way of a donation as part of the Investing in Nature partnership and their annual 'GreenSale'. The Investing in Nature partnership was a five year programme running from 2002 to 2007. During 2007 BGCI completed all outstanding projects for the programme.

BGCI actively continued to diversify and build its income base throughout the year, resulting in £293,000 from new and established partners. Income from membership subscriptions increased to £73,000.

Expenditure for the year included staff costs of £634,000, other direct project and project implementation costs of £1.2m and management and administration costs of £16,000.

The full Financial Statements are available on written request from BGCI Headquarters.

Extracts from Financial Statements Year ended 31 December 2007		Extracted from BGCI Limited accounts		For illustrative purposes converted at rate of 2007 \$1.99:£1 2006 \$1.95:£1	
		2007 £000	2006 £000	2007 \$000	2006 \$000
Income and Expenditure					
Income					
Grants	900	1,332	1,791	2,957	
Membership subscriptions	73	65	145	127	
Other income	135	124	269	242	
	1,108	1,521	2,205	2,966	
Expenditure					
Staff costs	634	567	1,262	1,106	
Direct project and other project implementation costs	1,199	1,633	2,386	3,184	
Management and administration costs	16	9	32	17	
	1,849	2,209	3,680	4,307	
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		(741)	(688)	(1,475)	(1,341)
Balance Sheet		2007 £000	2006 £000	2007 \$000	2006 \$000
Fixed Assets		21	15	42	29
Current assets/(liabilities)					
Debtors	89	116	177	226	
Cash at bank and in hand	1,440	2,289	2,866	4,464	
Creditors due within one year	(110)	(240)	(219)	(468)	
	1,419	2,165	2,824	4,221	
Total assets less current liabilities		1,440	2,180	2,866	4,251
Funds					
Restricted funds	1,043	1,895	2,076	3,695	
Unrestricted funds	397	285	790	556	
	1,440	2,180	2,866	4,251	



BGCI's Patron Members

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Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, UK
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK



Staff List

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Sara Oldfield - Secretary General
Per Bogstad - Communications & Partnerships Manager
Barbara Bridge - P.A. to the Secretary General
Chris Cockel - European Redlist Compiler (until March 2008)
Sarah Dixon - Web Editor (until March 2008)
Lauren Evans - Development Officer (from January 2008)
Douglas Gibbs - Conservation Initiatives Manager
Mark Giles - Office Assistant (until March 2007)
Joachim Gratzfeld - Director, Regional Programmes
Belinda Hawkins - Communications and Research Officer
Vivien Isaac - Accounts Officer
Bruce Jamieson - Head of Finance and Administration
Laura Jones - Development Manager (until August 2007)
Meirion Jones - Head of Information Management (from January 2008)
Sarah Kneebone - Education Officer (until January 2008)
Etelka Leadlay - Head of Research and Membership Services (retired September 2007)
Sue Malin - Membership Secretary
Miles Maynard - Web Editor (from March to June 2007)
Suzanne Sharrack - Director, Global Programmes
Mima Taylor - Research Assistant (until March 2007)
Julia Willison - Head of Education
James Wong - Media Relations Officer (until May 2008)
Diane Wyse Jackson - Head of Computer Systems and Database Development (until December 2007)
Christopher Hobson (Volunteer)
Fiona Holland (Volunteer)
Mark Jacob (Volunteer)
Annalie Melin (Volunteer)
Robert Orr (Volunteer)
Jill Skilton (Volunteer)
Sheila Whitehead (Volunteer)

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Brian Johnson - Education Programme

Will Rogowski - Consultant Director Corporate Relations (until September 2007)
Stella Simiyu - BGCI/CBD Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Officer

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Marcela Sánchez - Argentina Programme Consultant (until March 2007)

Brazil

Dr Tania Sampaio Pereira - Brazil Programme Consultant (until September 2007)

Maria Lucia Nova da Costa - Brazil Programme Consultant (until September 2007)

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Laurel McIvor - Canadian Education Co-ordinator (until March 2007)

China

Dr Anle Tieu - China Programme Coordinator (until April 2007)

Xiangying Wen - China Programme Co-ordinator

Japan

Dr Junko Oikawa - Japan Programme Co-ordinator

Mexico

Maite Lascurain - Mexico Programme Consultant (until March 2007)

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Mark Richardson - Middle East Programme Co-ordinator

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Nikita Mergelov - Programme Assistant

Southeast Asia

Bian Tan - South-East Asian Programme Coordinator

U.S.A.

Andrea Kramer - Executive Director, BGCI-US (from January 2008)

Katie Everson (Volunteer)

Mary Collins (Volunteer)

New members in 2007

Jardin Botanique du Nouveau-Brunswick	CANADA
Jardin Roger-Van Den Hende	CANADA
Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society	CANADA
Jardin Botánico de la Universidad de Talca	CHILE
The Botanical Garden of Teplice	CZECH REPUBLIC
Dennenlohe Rhododendron Parc	GERMANY
Dharma Vana Arboretum	INDIA
Kashmir University Botanical Garden	INDIA
Setsunan University Medicinal Plants Garden	JAPAN
Pyongyang International Information Centre	KOREA, PAKISTAN
University of Peshawar Botanical Garden	PAKISTAN
Al-Quds University - Botanic Garden	PALESTINE
The Orchidarium and Butterfly Pavilion	PHILIPPINES
Jardín Botánico Atlántico de Gijón, S.A.	SPAIN
Zurich University Botanical Gardens	SWITZERLAND
Peninsular Botanic Garden (Thung Khai)	THAILAND
Phyto-Logic	UNITED KINGDOM
Alaska Botanical Garden	UNITED STATES
Marjorie McNeely Conservatory at Como Park	UNITED STATES
Regenerations International Botanical Garden	UNITED STATES
Rio Grande Botanic Garden	UNITED STATES
The Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden	UNITED STATES

Acknowledgements:

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- Aveda Japan
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- Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, UK
- Global Environment Facility
- HSBC Holdings plc
- IUCN – The World Conservation Union
- JRS Biodiversity Foundation
- Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation
- Stanley Smith Foundation
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- Mr and Mrs S.M. Trafford
- The Hon. Baroness Walmsley

In-Country support:

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- Red Argentina de Jardines Botánicos

Brazil

- Dacio Roberto Matheus and the staff of the São Paulo Botanic Garden

Canada

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- Peter Wharton (deceased)

China (including Hong Kong SAR)

- Dr Hongwen Huang, South China Botanical Garden, CAS
- Dr Jingping Liao, South China Botanical Garden, CAS
- Mr Houquan Jiang, South China Botanical Garden, CAS
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- Dr Hai Ren, South China Botanical Garden, CAS
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- Mr Xiaomin Xia, Hunan Forestry Botanical Garden

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- Prof. Jung Oh Hyun (KABGA)
- Prof. Yong Shik Kim (KABGA)
- Korean Association of Botanic Gardens and Arboreta(KABGA)

USA

- Association of Zoological Horticulture
- Brooklyn Botanic Garden
- Dan Stark, American Public Gardens Association
- Holly Shimizu, United States Botanic Garden
- Kathryn Kennedy, Center for Plant Conservation
- Kayri Havens, Chicago Botanic Garden
- Ken Schutz, Desert Botanical Garden
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- Peggy Orlow, Plant Conservation Alliance, Bureau of Land Management
- Sophia Siskel, Chicago Botanic Garden
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Our vision: A world in which plant diversity is valued, secure and supporting all life.

Our mission: To mobilise botanic gardens and engage partners in securing plant diversity for the well-being of people and the planet.

BGCI's patron is HRH the Prince of Wales

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