



Saving the plants of Europe

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Welcome to the first issue of the Planta Europa newsletter!

After an initiative on the 7th Planta Europa conference in Crete in May this year, we decided on our meeting with the new Steering Committee to restart a newsletter. The intention is to produce the Planta Europa newsletter twice a year, in December and May. Deadline for next issue will be 1st April 2015. News should be short, maximum 500 letters. If there is a picture or an illustration, it is very welcomed. If possible, please include web links to more information. Send contributions to mora.aronsson@slu.se



From the Steering Committee

In Crete in May 2014 a new Steering Committee for Planta Europa was elected. After many years of hard work our chair Jan Willem Sneepp stepped back and was succeeded by Mora Aronsson. New in the Committee is Erika Péntzesné Kónya from Hungary and Thomas Hövelmann from Germany. On our first Meeting in Eger, Hungary in September this autumn we decided, beside to start the newsletter, to expand our arrangements with excursions and workshops for the members of the PE network. See articles in the newsletter.

New fees for 2015

Last year's fewer and fewer organisations could afford to pay the fee for Planta Europa due to the economic situation in Europe among other reasons. It is also many different levels of fees that we decided to simplify. So for 2015 we just have three different fees: Non-Governmental Organisations 50 €, Governmental organisations and Private Companies 100 € and Private Persons 20 €. More news is that we have a PayPal possibility for payment of fees on Planta Europa. PayPal could also be used for donations, which are very welcomed.



Join the Planta Europa field trip to Armenia 1-7 July 2015!

A one-week excursion to Armenia is proposed to bring Planta Europa network representatives together in one place for joint field trips, explorations and experience exchange in one of the botanically most attractive countries of the Northern Hemisphere. Armenia is notable for its rich flora and high diversity of habitats. This small mountainous country with territory of less than 30,000 sq. km is a home to 3,800 vascular plant species from 900 genera and 160 families. Flora of Armenia forms almost a half of the flora of the Caucasus - one of the most biologically rich regions on Earth.

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Save rare aquatic ferns in Ukraine

There are three rare aquatic ferns species in Ukraine: *Marsilea quadrifolia*, *Pilularia globulifera* and *Salvinia natans*. These plants are protected on the local (Red Data Book of Ukraine, 2009) and international (the European Red List and the IUCN Red List) levels. Research of the modern spreading of these species was one of objectives of the scientific project «Conservation of rare aquatic ferns' natural habitats in Ukraine» which are running under support of the Rufford Small Grant Foundation.

Salvinia natans is widely spread in Ukraine and isn't threatened. *Pilularia globulifera* was known only from the one locality in Ukraine. We have inspected this habitat and haven't found *Pilularia globulifera* there. Also this species hasn't been found in the other investigated localities, therefore it can be considered as disappeared in Ukraine. *Marsilea quadrifolia* during the last hundred years was found in the 7 regions of the current territory of Ukraine. But now, because of climatic changes and mismanagement, most of the species habitats were lost and have been found only in Transcarpathian region and predictably some localities remained on the floodplain of Danube (Odessa region).

Planta Europa Wild Orchid Conservation Workshop

1-6 June, 2015, Eger, Hungary

The programme of the workshop includes lectures of invited speakers about the species conservation programmes of wild orchid species in Europe and laboratory programmes on mycorrhiza isolation and seed germination practices. Field trip to special habitats of wild orchid species in the Bükk Mountains is also the part of the workshop.

More information will be announced on the website of [Planta Europa](#) and on the website of the [Botanical garden of Károly Eszterházy College](#):



A modern reference book: Flora of the Mediterranean French mainland

Achievement of more than ten years of cooperation with Jean Marc Tison, Philippe Jauzein and Henri Michaud, the latter being part of the National Mediterranean Botanical Conservatory of Porquerolles, this work constitutes the first modern synthesis about the Mediterranean flora of the French mainland.

This Flora deals with all the vascular plants of this area, including every native, naturalized, and widely planted taxa, as well as recent and historical self-propagating ones. Each of the 4131 species growing there can be identified through dichotomous keys following the most recent taxonomical approach (APG III Angiosperm Phylogeny Group). A rich corpus of foot notes explains the taxonomical choices.

More than 6000 drawings of the species can help with the identification. Difficult groups are pictured with color photographs. This important review is of key importance to professional botanists and specialists as well as people fond of nature and willing to know more of the Mediterranean flora.

[Naturalia publications »](#)



Vegetal local, a seal of local origin for French plants and trees

Until recently, wild plants and trees marketed in France had no indication about their geographical provenance. With the seal of origin "Vegetal local", it is now possible to certify local provenance of plants on the market, based on a map of eleven bio-geographical regions for mainland France (see the map below). The system of certification also includes guidelines to preserve biodiversity during collection and propagation. It should contribute to the emergence of local seed and tree nurseries, and thus to the preservation of local genetic adaptations. This project was initiated within the French strategy for biodiversity and involved more than 150 people interested in the production or in the use of such local plants. It also leads to the design of another seal of origin, "Vraies messicoles", dedicated to arable weeds.

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The NATive Seed Science, TEchnology and Conservation Initial Training Network (NASSTEC)

The NATive Seed Science, TEchnology and Conservation Initial Training Network (NASSTEC) is a European project funded under FP7 as a Marie Curie action aiming to train 11 PhD students in native seed conservation and use, through a partnership between private seed companies (Scotia Seeds in the UK, Semillas Silvestres in Spain and Syngenta Seedss in the Netherlands) and academic institutions (Trento Science Museum and Pavia University in Italy, Kew Gardens and the Hutton Institute in the UK). The goal of NASSTEC is to promote the development of a sustainable and a dynamic European native seed industry to stimulate a wider use of native seeds in grassland restoration at European scale.

For further news and updates check out www.nasstec.eu



The PAULIS project international symposium

15-17 April, Sassari, Italy

"PAULIS" is the vernacular name of Mediterranean Temporary Ponds in Sardinia (Italy). The aim of the project is to investigate on the biodiversity of these endangered habitats with the aim of promoting their effective conservation and improving public awareness.

The project will offer an opportunity to researchers, students, practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders for exchanging experiences and information on the ecology, the biodiversity and the management of these habitats at the International Symposium on Mediterranean Temporary Ponds 15-17 April in Sassari, Italy.

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Environmental awareness project: Precious Greek Plants

The last five years, Balkan Botanic Garden of Kroussia has organized more than 40 seminars and workshops, due to the great demand from farmers and citizens, interested about cultivation of Aromatic and Medicinal Plants. In the context of the course "International Diploma in Botanic Garden Education" co-organized by RBG, Kew and BGCI, a consultancy study of an educational project, was developed. The aim was to create evaluated educational material for sustainable development, with focus on plant diversity conservation of native aromatic and medicinal plants.

We used a participant-centered teaching method, based on outcomes and inquiry-based science education as technique. Educational material was consulted and evaluated (questionnaire and recording in video) by farmers interested in cultivation of MAP's, as a focus group. Qualitative results reveal that the project can change attitudes in plant diversity conservation and stimulate professional guidance or community engagement in sustainable plant exploitation. The educational material-protocol will be applied in the following year.



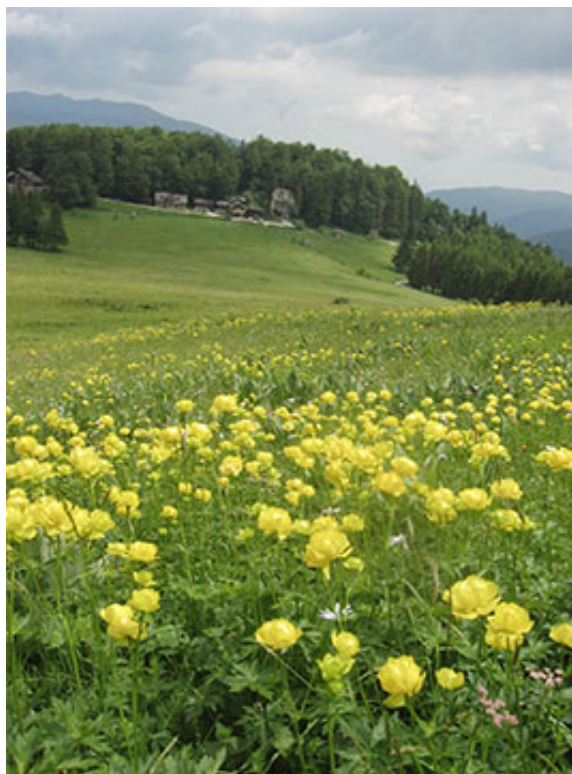
National Biodiversity Strategy for Italy

In Italy the mainstreaming approach, that guided the [National Biodiversity Strategy](#), was also applied for the integration of the 16 targets concerning GSPC 2011-2020 and EPSC 2008-2014, as showed in the technical background document for the mid-term review of the GSPC (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/18/INF/10). In particular, as reported in the [Italian Fifth National Report of CBD](#), GSPC and EPSC are in the NBS a pivotal reference tool useful to spread a better knowledge on the value and the extent of ecosystem services provided by plant diversity, to promote plant sustainable use in various sectors, sharing this information with researchers, decision makers, citizens and stakeholders. The participation of the Italian botanists to initiatives and projects of international importance, inter alia the adhesion to Planta Europa, allows Italy to actively contribute to the implementation and

Natural networks of places and people – a pilot project in Romania

During 2012 an European project, part of the Europe for Citizens Programme 2007-2013 was implemented simultaneously in Romania, Bulgaria and Macedonia, with the support of United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The project aimed to increase the citizens responsibility around safeguarding the important natural sites in Europe with a focus on plants, by: i) giving the opportunity to increase understanding of European policies for nature conservation, ii) creating volunteer networks of local community groups, to support conservation on Important Plant Areas/Natura 2000 sites, iii) promoting training to learn more about the value of the protected sites in their area and the importance for the neighbouring communities.

The project combines informal learning and sharing skills at regional events in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands with implementation of actions and learning through events, at local communities from the neighbourhood of important areas for plant conservation.



German PlantRace in Münster

160 species in only two hours on one square kilometer in the species-poor northwestern part of Germany! The team around geobotany Emeritus Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Wittig was unbeatable at the 1st German PlantRace that took place in June 2014 near Münster.

Teams consisting of three persons competed against each other in a limited time and a given study area. The participants were allowed to use determination books, smartphones and – of course – their knowledge. Rules were as follows: the teams had to stay together in sight; any noted species had to be confirmed by at least two team members; and it was not allowed to look outside the study area. A jury strictly monitored the procedure, and finally evaluated the results to determine the winner.

The PlantRace idea came from Dr. Thomas Hövelmann, head of the department of botany in NABU Germany and member of Planta Europe steering committee, to get younger people interested in botany. The idea of "Plant Race" was copied from the annual "Bird Race" of ornithologists, carried out successfully for years all over Europe. Hövelmann hope to implement this idea nationwide in the coming years.





7th Planta Europa Conference (7PEC) 'Plants for People, People for Plants'

The 7th Planta Europa Conference (7PEC) 'Plants for People, People for Plants' took place at the Orthodox Academy of Crete, Chania, Greece in May 2014. The usual three-year rhythm of the events was intentionally modified here to account for the rich programme of the International Year of Biodiversity declared in 2010. Planning the conference in the following year allows, on the one hand, to avoid an excessive accumulation of biodiversity conservation-related events and, on the other, makes it possible to have an overview of the IYB outcomes.

The 7PEC meeting was successfully organized by the institute of Theology and Ecology & Museum of Cretan Flora at the Orthodox Academy of Crete. The venue was in a beautiful place, close to the sea at the foot of a hill populated with diverse wild plants of Crete. The conference focused on the major issues of the wild plant conservation at the European, country and regional levels. The main axis of the conference was based on the targets of the European Strategy for Plant Conservation (ESPC) published by Planta Europa in 2008 and its outcome was the updated framework and directions for plant conservation in Europe.

Many participants from different countries of Europe, North America, Africa and Asia have joined the conference. It is the first time that Planta Europa conference gathered biologists from all over the world and an official Cretan declaration on plant conservation was formulated. The 7PEC declaration will be forwarded to all institutions and international political bodies to promote plant conservation. The official book of proceedings from the 7PEC will be published by the Orthodox Academy publications and it is expected to be available for the public in the first semester of 2015.

More details on the 7th Planta Europa conference are available on www.plantaeuropa.net.

4th International ECOTHEE 2015 on Crete, Greece, 1-5 June

The institute of Theology and Ecology and Museum of Cretan Flora will organize the 4th International Conference on Ecological Theology and Environmental Ethics (ECOTHEE 2015), which will take place at the Orthodox Academy of Crete in 1-5 June 2015.

This conference seeks to engage theology on key ecological concerns from a variety of perspectives. We are interested in multi-disciplinary exchanges and insights, with a focus on religious-based and scientific approaches of sustainable development. ECOTHEE conferences are always supported by Planta Europa which gives first importance to the promotion of plant ethics worldwide

To read the full call for papers or participation, please visit [the Ecothee conference website at http://ithe.webs.com/](http://ithe.webs.com/).

Planta Europa

Planta Europa is a network of independent persons and organisations, non-governmental and governmental, working together to conserve European wild plants and fungi. Today Planta Europa brings together more than 80 member organisations from 35 European countries. The joint goal of is to halt the loss of wild-plant diversity in Europe.

From January 2014 the Swedish Species Information Centre (ArtDatabanken) at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) is hosting the Planta Europa Secretariat.



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