

# Exhibition of native plants at the Botanics

A major new international arts initiative highlighting the intricate beauty and biodiversity of plant life opened in Edinburgh today.

'Flora Scotia' at the Royal Botanic Gardens showcases Scotland's native plants in a new light, with contemporary paintings raising awareness about different species and landscapes.

Organised by The Scottish Botanical Art Collective (SBAC), it features 56 pieces of work by 34 artists in the John Hope Gateway.



The Edinburgh display forms part of an international collaboration, which involves artists and researchers from more than 25 countries in six continents celebrating different native plant life in various exhibitions and cities around the world, including Australia, Bermuda, China, Colombia, New

Zealand and Russia.

Councillor Donald Wilson, Culture and Communities Convener, said: “Flora experts and artists from all over the world have collaborated to put this fascinating new exhibition together. It is a major coup for the city to stage this display here in Edinburgh, and testament to the leading research and international standing of our Royal Botanic Gardens. Skies may still be grey this April, but a visit to this exhibition is sure to put a spring in your step. From stunning illustrations of plants and flowers, to watercolours of beautiful and endangered landscapes, the power of this display is that it combines the beauty of the Botanic with enjoyment of art and education about the natural world.”

Councillor Amy McNeese-Mechan, Vice Culture and Communities Convener, added: “People from all over the city and country visit the Royal Botanic Gardens to enjoy a relaxing stroll amongst some of the most beautiful and interesting plantlife growing in Britain. The positive mental health benefits of getting outside and enjoying nature are well proven, but the experience of taking time out to enjoy art is also a fantastic way to unwind. Congratulations to the many talented artists and societies involved, and I hope the project successfully raises global awareness about biodiversity.”

Digital slide shows are being created for the inaugural Worldwide Day of Botanical Art [on Friday 18 May](#).

The Flora Scotia show, featuring 25 slides will be shown at RBGE and around the world.

Senior Lecturer in Botany at RBGE, Dr Greg Kenicer explained: “Flora Scotia has been a wonderful exhibition to be involved in – it is a privilege to be part of this global collaboration among artists and botanists. The exhibition uses a series of beautiful pieces – watercolours and other works – to explain the story of Scotland’s plants – from the rarest threatened

species to everyday 'weeds'. The sheer range of styles and subjects is stunning, so it really showcases the diversity of botanical illustration in Scotland, the skill of the artists and the emotive power of their work.''

He added: "The work of RBGE weaves a thread through the whole exhibition. Conserving the rare species, understanding how our landscape and plants may respond to modern rapid environmental change, and the fundamental importance of plants to Scottish society through the ages all crop up as themes. For me, this was an added delight, to see just how many places our work touches on the Scottish Flora."

Find out more at [sbac.org.uk](http://sbac.org.uk).