

## First Croatian Botanical Symposium 2004.

The First Croatian Botanical Symposium, with international participation (1. HBS 2004) (<http://hirc.botanic.hr/HBoD/1HBS/1HBS-home.htm>), was held in Zagreb from September 30<sup>th</sup> till October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2004. It was a central meeting of the botanists of Croatia and neighbouring countries, and was organised by the Croatian Botanical Society (HBoD). The Society was founded on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002, with the objective of promoting the advancement and improvement of botanical sciences at popular, practitioner, educational and scientific levels.

The guiding idea behind the First Croatian Botanical Symposium was the need for the development of cooperation and the exchange of information within the field of botany, primarily between botanists and practitioners in related fields, but also including potential users of botanical data from Croatia as well as from neighbouring European states and other countries.

The symposium lasted three days, including two working days and a field trip in the Pisarovina region (SW of Zagreb), on the third day. Also during the Symposium, a special lecture was held in honour of the 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Zagreb Botanical Garden, two books were launched and the S. Brusina Award was presented to Croatian scientists working abroad.

Although the main topic of the Symposium was the flora and vegetation of Croatia and neighbouring areas, it was exciting that there were several works from other botanical disciplines. The 131 participants presented their findings in seven sections, three plenary lectures, twenty-seven oral and seventy-two poster presentations, thoroughly justifying the organisation of such an event. This number greatly exceeded our expectations when we



first began the preparation work for the Symposium and it is particularly encouraging that, besides participants from Croatia, there were 41 conferees from the following countries: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Hungary, Macedonia, Germany, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Serbia and Montenegro and Great Britain. The exchange of ideas and experiences between the participants certainly enhanced co-operation among and the future progress of all botanical disciplines and we can say that 1<sup>st</sup> Croatian Botanical Symposium was a complete success.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Croatian Botanical Symposium was the first of its kind in the history of Croatian botany, and represents a significant step forward for the development of our botany. The Symposium highlighted the necessity for the use of data and achievements from the field of botany, particularly in the sense of the protection of biological diversity and the application of botany in the implementation of sustainable development projects in the Croatian economy. Judging by the number of abstracts and the broad thematic range, the conclusion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Croatian Botanical Symposium was that it should be called a congress in the future. And since we do plan that such gatherings should become a tradition, we will use the term »congress« in the future and have pleasure in announcing that the second Croatian Botanical Congress will take place in 2007.

The organising committee of the 1<sup>st</sup> Croatian Botanical Symposium would like to thank all the sponsors and other persons who in any way contributed to the organisation and realisation of this Congress.

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1<sup>st</sup> Croatian Botanical Symposium