Babīte, University of Latvia Rhododendron Breeding and Experimental Nursery

''Rododendri'' Spilve, Babītes pagasts, Mārupes novads, LV-2101, Riga, Latvia

The University of Latvia Babīte Experimental Rhododendron Breeding Nursery is the only specialised rhododendron nursery in the Baltic States and prides itself on their unique open-air collection of rhododendrons.

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The 11.8ha-large nursery has a significant open-air collection of rhododendrons with 120 wild species and 415 created by breeders from the USA, Europe, China and Japan. The nursery's main task is to introduce and select rhododendrons to create ornamental and perennial rhododendron varieties suitable to the Baltic climate. The new cultivars are then registered with the Royal Horticultural Society in the UK who are the international cultivar registration authority for the genus Rhododendron. In total, the University of Latvia has internationally registered 158 outdoor rhododendron varieties.

Along with the introduction and selection of rhododendrons, the nursery popularises rhododendrons by publishing books and brochures, organising tours and seminars, as well as teaching rhododendron care, propagation techniques and their practical use in laying out parks to gardeners and anyone with an interest. Students use the nursery to study, or undergo their placements.

The best way to explore this unique collection of outdoor rhododendrons is to walk along the 1.5km-long paved road through the nursery. A typical visit might last 1–1.5 hours. Most rhododendrons bloom in late May and early June, but some species and varieties bloom as early as April. Many plants have reached a height of 4–5m in the last 40 years. Every year the plants are sold in spring and autumn when you can buy rhododendrons cultivated in the nursery.

Features

- Plants for purchase
- Accessibility for disabled
- Restrooms for customers
- Picnic or resting places
- Coffee
- Shelter in case of rain or sun

- Playground for children

Styles

- Collection garden

Themes

- Woodland garden

Opening Hours

May-June open daily from 9:00 to 21:00.

April and July-October open daily from 9:00 to 18:00.

November-March open daily from 9:00 to 16:00.

Group Visits

Guide services (by prior arrangement) - 30 EUR (in Latvian), 40 EUR (in a foreign language).

Parking

Plenty of parking space.

Tickets

In May and June - 7 EUR (for adults), 6 EUR (for students, retirees), 5 EUR (for schoolchildren).
In April and July-October - 2 EUR.
November-March – Free of charge.
Preschool children and people with disabilities of groups 1 and 2 - free entry.
Guide services (by prior arrangement) - 30 EUR (in Latvian), 40 EUR (in a foreign language).

Contact Information

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Garden Plan