

Tropical Plants Pavilion

In this pavilion you will not notice any seasonal changes or their impact on plants development. The species gathered here do not go through dormancy. In their natural tropical environment they have the same weather conditions for the whole year round. The air is very humid here and the temperature does not drop below 18°C. Just at the entrance to the pavilion you can familiarize yourselves with the bamboo's growing process and learn about its structure. There are different types of bamboo contrasted here: the ones that produce very thin stems as well as those that have stalks 10 cm thick. The plants grown in this pavilion create so-called 'layers' which are a distinctive feature of the tropical rainforest. In the lowest layer, where very little sunshine and rainfall reach, there are among others begonias and peperomia plants. Their leaves are capable of not only accumulating water but also of adapting to the best possible use of sunrays. It is possible thanks to a dark bottom of leaf blades that captures the sunlight. Their dark colour and fleshy leaves with an intricate design caught the gardeners' eye. As a result new interesting mixed species have been developed which decorate now our flats, balconies and gardens. The pavilion features also plants of a stronger growth ability and these include representatives of *Alocasia* and *Xanthosoma* genuses. They cope with the light shortage in the low parts of the forest in a different way. They have developed leaf blades of large surfaces. The upper layer of the jungle is made up of *Pritchardia* palms (Fiji Fan Palms) and *Chrysalidocarpus* (Areca palms). There are also liana plants – vines whose annual growth measures a dozen or so metres. The most impressive is *Tetrastigma* which unfolds on the eastern wall of the pavilion and reaches up to its roof. Some plants have conquered all layers of the jungle. These are well-known *Bromelia* plants and Orchids. The plants include ground species but the vast majority are epifits growing on tree trunks and tree crowns. The pavilion features also ferns. The most interesting are tree ferns that develop false trunks. For instance, the tree ferns of *Dicsonia* and *Alsophila* genuses create a trunk-like structure made of the elevated rhizome with numerous adventitious roots and endings of dry leaves entwined around it. During the Carboniferous Period they dominated land plants. Nowadays tree ferns can be found in their natural environment only in the tropical and sub-tropical zones. One more thing that makes this pavilion so special is a water cascade and a small pond in which you can spot piranhas, oscar tropical fish and African catfish.