



## What is Plant Heritage?

According to eionet site plant heritage is the “sum of the earth or a particular region’s herb, vegetable, shrub, and tree life viewed as the inheritance of the present generation, especially plant species deemed worthy of preservation and protection from extinction (GEMET, n.d.)

## Conserving Garden Plants

Plant Heritage formerly known as the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens, is a botanical conservation organisation in the United Kingdom and a registered charity. Founded in 1988.

Plant Heritage is the accreditation body for the National Plant Collection, responsible for cultivated plant conservation. It is responsible for the Threatened Plants Project, which is the only research project investigating the availability of cultivated plants in the UK (Charity Commission, n.d.).

There are numerous charities worldwide supporting the conservation of natural plants. Plant Heritage is unique in its aims of conserving and cherishing garden plants.

Garden plants are selected and bred for various reasons. The breeding of these plants involves some human efforts and innovations.

A myriad of ills has affected the growth of garden plants such as changes in the advancement of pests and diseases, climate, loss of gardens, a diminishing nursery trade, and lack of knowledge in the general population all conspire to reduce the diversity of our garden flora (Plant Heritage, 2023).

If plants are not cared for and protected, they will diminish and be lost over time. The heritage contained in these living organisms can only be preserved by active gardeners in living collections (Plant Heritage, 2023).

There are over 700 National Plant Collections in the UK, Ireland, and Channels Islands. As part of the mechanism to counter the threats of cultivated plants, the Plant Heritage started the Threatened Plants Programme in 2009.

### **Threatened Plant Programme**

Data are gathered from the RHS Plant Finder, which

(Shows availability of plants through hundreds of UK nurseries, from 1987 – present) with records from the National Collections, Plant Exchange, and Plant Guardian schemes and cultivar lists from more than 2000 botanic and historic gardens in the UK and Ireland (Plant Heritage, 2023).

Once the cultivar has been grown or sold in the UK or Ireland more than ten years ago, but is no longer consistently for sale through nurseries then it is considered **Threatened in cultivation**. Threatened plants may be **Critical in cultivation** (not found alive), **Endangered in cultivation** (grown in only one or two locations), or **Vulnerable in cultivation** (three or more sites). Consultation is also sort with experts in the plant field who may provide information to highlight which plants are most in need of conservation action.

Actions include propagation and sharing by Collection Holders and Plant Guardians and through the Plant Exchange and local Groups' rare plant sales.

Information from the Threatened Plant Programme helps collections holders to prioritise their sourcing and propagation efforts.

Plants serve many valuable and historical purposes whether for their beauty, edibility, medicinal, or other useful properties (Plant Heritage, 2023).

According to the Plant Heritage site (2023), the conservation of a diverse range of plants underpins our resilience to a changing world, while meeting challenges such as climate change, pests and diseases, and biodiversity loss as mentioned previously.



## Conservation Strategies

Plant conservation is carried out through various means. The Plant Heritage promulgates this process by use of a five-year strategic plan that adheres to the highest conservation standards which are delivered through working with National Plant Collections holders, volunteers, and supporters.

### Plant Heritage Conservation Strategy

The Plant Heritage conservation strategy aims to achieve the following:

- increase the number of cultivated plants conserved
- develop and maintain good standards of curation
- inform and engage others with our conservation work
- influence global thinking on issues around plant conservation



Source: *Cercidiphyllum* collection, Sir Harold Hillier Gardens. <https://www.plantheritage.org.uk/conservation/why-protect-garden-plants/>





Source: *Delphinium* Collection at Temple Newsam, Leeds City Council. <https://www.plantheritage.org.uk/conservation/why-serve-garden-plants/>

The Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDDT), an overarching body in Jamaica with a mandate to conserve Jamaica's natural environment was established in 1988 (Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust, 2023). The JCDDT activities centre on the 41,198 hectares (101, 313 acres) of rain and cloud forest that make up the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park including its core, Preservation Zone which covers 26,251 hectares (65,000 acres) and is inscribed as a World Heritage Site. In addition, JCDDT's work focuses on the approximately 28,494 hectares of land around the protected area called the Community Buffer Zone (JCDDT, 2023).



As far as national plant heritage goes over half the flowering plants in the national parks are found only in Jamaica and about one-third are endemic to the national park (JCDT, 2023).

## Evidence of Plant Heritage Events – Jamaica

Calling 4-H Gardening Programmes

### TEACHING CLIMATE JUSTICE AND RESILIENCE THROUGH ANCESTRAL PLANT HERITAGE IN JAMAICA

Jamaica's National 4-H Gardening Programme, in partnership with Jamaican Hummingbird Taino and Maroon Peoples (JHTMP) and the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN), invites you to our Upcoming Workshops:

**DAY 1** THURS 13TH OCTOBER 2022  
ROSE HALL LINSTAD 4H OFFICE, ST. CATHERINE (In-person & Zoom)  
09:00 - 17:00

**DAY 2** FRI 14TH OCTOBER 2022  
LAURISTON SHILOH APOSTOLIC CHURCH, ST. CATHERINE (Zoom)  
09:00 - 13:00  
Followed by Community Tree planting Ceremony & Reception

**WHY JOIN US?**  
Indigenous and Afrodescendant plant varieties have been displaced and are now in danger of extinction. This project will explore the power of plants to connect young people to their ancestors while ensuring climate justice.

**HOW TO REACH US**  
+44 7913 802999 / +1 876-545-2646  
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SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER!

Event by the Caribbean Youth Environment Network in Jamaica

Article written by Rochelle Clayton in the Jamaica Observer, March 23, 2023, in support of plant heritage in regards to plant-based foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, peas, nuts, and lentils – generally use less energy, land, and water and have lower greenhouse gas intensities than animal-based foods.



# Clayton, R. (2023). Foods and the Environment's Diminishing Health:

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## Foods and the environment's diminishing health

Rochelle Clayton


FOODS we consume daily, according to an article by the United Nations, have been directly linked to the diminishing health of the environment as “the climate impact of food is measured in terms of greenhouse gas emissions intensity”.

“The emissions intensity is expressed in kilograms of ‘carbon dioxide equivalents’ — which includes not only CO2 but all

greenhouse gases — per kilogram of food, per gram of protein or calorie,” the UN says.

It is said that animal-based food, “especially red meat, dairy, and farmed shrimp, are generally associated with the highest greenhouse gas emissions”, and the report went on to state the reasons for this.

However, “Plant-based foods —



**Plant-based foods — such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans, peas, nuts, and lentils — generally use less energy, land, and water, and have lower greenhouse gas intensities than animal-based foods.**

such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans, peas, nuts, and lentils — generally use less

energy, land, and water, and have lower greenhouse gas intensities than animal-based

foods,” the UN explained.

This report helps to bring per-



spective to the work being done in Jamaica by the National 4H Gardening Programme, the Jamaican Hummingbird Taino and Maroon Peoples, and the Caribbean Youth Environment Network, who have held several workshops titled ‘Teaching Climate Justice and Resilience

Through Ancestral Plant Heritage In Jamaica’.

Their fight against climate change and for climate justice has seen them advocating more plant-based foods to be added to the diets of all Jamaicans.

Kasikeiani Ronalda, a member of the Jamaican Hummingbird Taino and Maroon Peoples, notes that food consumption and production have changed in Jamaica as more people are looking to get their nutritional benefits and satisfaction from unethically produced food. She says that while plant-based foods are easily accessible in the local markets,

they are being pushed to the side for other food items.

“The food that we consume has changed, and a lot of our foods like cassava, dasheen, and some types of yams and sweet potatoes are being slowly but surely wiped from our plates,” Ronalda says.

Climate justice advocates have also sounded major alarms against agricultural monoculture and its effects on the lands. Agricultural monoculture can be defined as a form of farming that is based on growing only one type of crop, at one time, on a specific field. Ronalda says that in

her Taino community, food items are planted with the lands in mind as different seeds are sowed at a specific time to ensure that nutrients are always given back.

“We work with the land and the cycles of the land, and that assists us in keeping our diverse plant heritage intact to this day. As indigenous people we look at our plants as an extension of who we are, so the same way we treat each other in our community is the same respect that we have for the plants and the land,” she explains.

Senior Researcher Dr Marisa

Wilson believes that the effects of agricultural monoculture are far too great to be ignored by the larger countries who, she says, are the main ones participating in this method of production.

“A part of climate justice for us is about diverting palates, food systems, and the ways that foods are produced and consumed away from those industrial models of production and towards locally produced foods. But also, the justice element has a lot to do with the discredited, marginalised, and dispossession of resources and land from indigenous peoples and Maroon communities who have not been



given the resources to build up their food production systems in such a way that they could feed their communities and beyond," Dr Wilson explains.

"What we're trying to get across is the fact that it's time for people in power and those who are teaching youth to remember the importance of these foods, because they have been also disregarded as peasant foods across the world. Plus, a part of the issue with the mass monocultures is that it is creating climate change, so one third of CO2 emissions that are affecting the Earth is due to agriculture and our industrial food systems," says Dr

Wilson.

She notes that these "very climate-destructive" actions are usually beneficial to the larger countries in the global north as they are the ones who mostly earn from the agricultural industry. She says that there is a disproportionate use of global atmospheric commons by these companies as, though there are many other ways of producing food, they have chosen to rubbish them as "post-colonial forms of knowledge and production systems".

"You have mass landscapes in Canada, the US, and Europe

across the global north that are benefiting from the mass global emissions from monocultures. It is also not just monocultures; it is the shipping, production, and the different chemicals in the factory production that are used in trying to make the handful of ingredients that are produced in monocultures into a whole range of different, ultra-processed food products," she says.

Another researcher and climate justice advocate, Dr Sylvia Mitchell says that while agricultural monoculture affects the entire world, it does not affect all citizens in the same way. This, she says, is another reason for

their advocacy programmes seeking to encourage a plantbased diet.

"The part of climate justice you have to think about is that the climate is not disrupted for all people. So there's a part of justice that has to do with remembering everybody, remembering all voices, and letting all voices be part of the solution that needs to come for us to continue existing on this earth," says Dr Mitchell.

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This report helps to bring perspective to the work being done in Jamaica by the National 4-H Gardening Programme, the Jamaican Hummingbird Taino and Maroon Peoples, and the Caribbean Youth Environment Network, who have held several workshops titled "Teaching Climate Justice and Resilience Through Ancestral Plant Heritage in Jamaica".





## National Plant Gardens in Jamaica

Throughout the Island of Jamaica, there are several botanical gardens used mainly for recreational and educational purposes. Some of these parks are named after renowned individuals. The National Heroes Park in Kingston is of particular importance as it was established in honour of the nation's heroes (JNHT, 2011).

### Irwin Park, Montego Bay

Irwin Park Garden in Montego Bay, shows birds in a cage by a large pond and walking trail.



Source: National Library of Jamaica Digital  
[.nlj.gov.jm/items/browse?tags=Irwin+Park+%28St.+James%2C+Jamaica%29](http://n.lj.gov.jm/items/browse?tags=Irwin+Park+%28St.+James%2C+Jamaica%29)



## Royal Botanical Gardens, Kingston



Source: Royal Botanical Gardens, Kingston, Jamaica  
<https://www.experiencejamaique.com/blog/hope-gardens>

The Royal Botanical Gardens (commonly known as “Hope Gardens”), are quite easily accessible by public transport. Established in 1873 on a section of land owned by **Major Richard Hope**, the “gardens” occupy 200 acres of land in the Liguanea Plains of urban St. Andrew and today are known for being the largest public space in the Kingston metropolitan region.

There are many rare and beautiful species of tropical plants and trees to be found in Hope Gardens including the *Hibiscus elatus* (Blue Mahoe), Jamaica’s national tree. The specificity of this tree is that during the flowering season, its blossoms



change from a primrose colour in the morning to orange and deep red as the day progresses (Experience Jamaïque, 2016).



Source: Royal Botanical Gardens, Kingston, Jamaica  
<https://www.experiencejamaïque.com/blog/hope-gardens>



## Castleton Botanical Gardens, St. Mary



Castleton Botanical Garden. Source: JNHT, 2023

Located on either side of the Kingston to St. Mary main road, is Castleton Botanical Garden. It was established on the 19th of November 1862 as a result of dissatisfaction with the site at Bath, St. Thomas. Shortly afterward, Castleton Gardens became one of the great gardens of the Hemisphere with its rich variety of plants. In the past Castleton had over four (4000) thousand species of plants from the great English Garden at Kew. In 1897 there were one hundred and eighty (180) species of palm in the Palmetum. Many plants introduced to the island in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were planted here. These included the Poinciana, Bombay Mango, Spathodea, Navel Orange, and Tangerine (Jamaica National Heritage Trust (JNHT), 2011).





Castleton Botanical Garden. Source: JNHT, 2011

## Long Mountain, St. Andrew



Long Mountain dates back to the 18th Century and was a part of the Mona Estate, which then had 1072 acres. Sections of the Long Mountain are also referred to as "Wakieka Hills'.

Archaeological work on the Long Mountain has resulted in the finds of well-preserved no settlements from which many artefacts which give valuable information on the Tainos have been recovered.

The Long Mountain is a major watershed area for Kingston and St. Andrew and is responsible for sourcing water to four of its wells.

Development by Selective Homes on Long Mountain could lead to damage and to contamination of the Mona reservoir. This area is also one of the most important green spaces in Kingston and St. Andrew and as such should be preserved.

A large number of plant and animal species that occur only in Jamaica, reside on the Long Mountain, including at least one plant found nowhere else. The Long Mountain also serves as an important overwintering site for migratory birds (JNHT, 2011).



## Hollywell National Park, St. Andrew



Located in the hills of St. Andrew lies Hollywell National Forest Park about four thousand (4000) ft. above sea level. Because of the very cool temperature in this area, Hollywell National Park has a variety of ferns, flowers, and trees that are rarely seen in other parts of the island. The forest Park is a sanctuary for several species of birds. These include the Petchary, Woodpeckers, Hopping Dick, and Glasseye. Hollywell is a place for nature lovers to visit (JNHT, 2011).

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