



As part of the celebration of its Golden Jubilee, The Institute of Biology of Ireland invites you to a keynote Public Lecture*
in

**The National Botanic Gardens (Lecture Theatre),
Botanic Rd., Dublin 9**

**Friday, October 17th 2014, at 7:30pm.
Admission: Free**

Theories, Facts and Mind Games
- *Enthusing young minds to delight in understanding how lively plants really are*

**Presenter: Dr. Matthew Jebb,
Director of the National Botanic Gardens**

In this lecture Dr Jebb will explore how some of our greatest understandings of the world have come about through simple thought experiments. Not only are these highly informative ways of examining Nature, they are also highly appealing ways of teaching the application of logic in science. Newton, Einstein and Darwin were masters of such clear thinking. Zoology is often seen as easier to teach than Botany because animals are often thought of as more 'alive'. He will also explore some of the fundamental differences between animals and plants, with such questions as '*Why aren't animals photosynthetic?*', and '*Do plants have senses?*', and will explain why many of these are merely problems of our perception of the world being naturally more animal-centric and trapped in a particular time paradigm. He will use both classic as well as a few new thought experiments to show how the origin of life, the 'intelligence' of plants and the classification of living things are all concepts that can be debated in a logical and lively manner.

***Participants will be enabled to engage in discussion and debate with Dr. Jebb during the question and answer session.**



In collaboration with NCE-MSTL and The National Botanic Gardens, Dublin



About the Speaker

Dr. Matthew Jebb is the Director of the National Botanic Gardens since 2010. Matthew gained his primary degree in Botany at Oxford University, where he also pursued his PhD on the *Tuber morphology and taxonomy of the rubiaceous Ant-Plants*. Following this Matthew returned to Papua New Guinea, where he had conducted his research for his PhD, and was made Director of the Christensen Research Institute from 1987 to 1993. He continued his taxonomic interests on a range of tropical plant groups from South east Asia, including the Pitcher plants (*Nepenthes*), Screw-pines (*Pandanus*) and ant-plants (*Myrmecodia*, *Hydnophytum* and *Anthorrhiza*) as well as publishing articles on coral reef ecology, fish taxonomy, climatic history of the south pacific and wasp predation of spiders.



Before joining the staff of the National Botanic Gardens in 1996, he was a post-doctoral researcher at Trinity College, working on the Ivy family (Araliaceae) of Thailand. Matthew was the Keeper of the Herbarium and Taxonomist (Ainmneoir Plandai) at the Gardens since 1998. In 2005 Matthew was nominated by Ireland as the European vice-president on the bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. This role culminated at the Eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Curitiba, Brazil in March 2006. The Convention is one of the United Nations Environment Program's most significant bodies for the conservation of nature at a global scale, and has been ratified by more countries than any other international convention.

Matthew is currently Chairman of PlantNetwork, the Plant Collections Network of Britain and Ireland, which represents nearly 100 of the leading plant collections in these islands and provides training and collaborative activities. He is also chair of the Praeger Committee of the Royal Irish Academy, which promotes the noble tradition of field natural history by non-professionals through representation at the Academy and the provision of annual grants in support of fieldwork.

His current research interests are varied, and include the Irish flora - its origins and conservation, the flora of Clare Island, and other small island floras, as well as taxonomic revisions of the genus *Hydnophytum* and studies on the phylogeny and biogeography of *Nepenthes*.

For further information please contact:

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Getting there

- Bus No 4; Harristown, Ballymun, Botanic Ave., Phibsboro Shopping Centre, O'Connell St., Pembroke Rd., Blackrock, Stradbroom)
- Bus No 9; Limekiln Ave. South Circular Rd., O'Connell St., Botanic Rd., Beneavin Rd., Charlestown)
- Bus No 83; Kimmage, Sundrive Rd., Rathmines / Harristown {Ballygall Road East}

GPS users: Either use the Garmin loc8 system with this code: **NP7-57-F53** or input the following latitude, **53.3717**, and longitude, **-6.2696**.

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