



Australian Government
Australian National Botanic Gardens

MEDIA RELEASE

9 May 2011

Friends launch new educational experiences at Gardens

New environmental monitoring systems to be launched today at the Australian National Botanic Gardens will offer visitors new insights into the microclimates Australian native plants need to thrive.

The monitoring stations have been installed in the Rainforest Gully and the Eucalypt Woodland so that visitors can compare the very different weather and soil conditions of each ecosystem.

In addition, a new interactive kiosk at the Visitors Centre will allow visitors to explore data from the two sites for the day, week, month, or even the year.

Gardens Executive Director Judy West said the new computer displays and the hands on interactive displays would help schoolchildren and other visitors better understand the extremes of the Australian environment.

“While temperatures and humidity remain relatively constant within the rainforest, they can fluctuate quite dramatically in an open woodland — where the ground might be covered in frost during an early morning winter and then baked by a scorching sun in the middle of a summer’s day,” Dr West said.

“Woodland plants have evolved to cope with these harsher conditions, whereas the unique microclimate of the rainforest helps fragile plants survive.”

Associate Professor of Climatology from the Australian National University Dr Janette Lindesay will today switch on the monitors, which have been funded by the Friends Public Fund.

In addition, Dr Lindesay will switch on an extension to rainforest gully fogging system, funded by The Friends of the Gardens. This cool, misty oasis is a major attraction for visitors to the Gardens during hot Canberra summers.

The Australian National Botanic Gardens is the world’s most comprehensive display of living Australian native plants.

MEDIA ALERT:

Where: Rainforest Gully , Australian National Botanic Gardens

When: 11 am, Monday 9 May 2011.

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