



# L-Università ta' Malta

## Argotti Botanic Gardens & Resource Centre

### Invitation to Schools

The Argotti Botanic Gardens boasts a rich history spanning over 200 years. Argotti houses a wide collection of living plant specimens, organised by plant families and natural habitats. The Gardens are also home to the National Herbarium, a reference collection of preserved dried plant specimens. In addition, Argotti hosts a number of laboratories and a seed bank that support ongoing research and conservation initiatives.

### The Argotti Botanic Gardens and Resource Centre invites schools to explore nature with us!

We are opening our doors to students from year 1 to year 11 and beyond offering engaging visits designed to bring learning to life outside the classroom.

Each visit lasts about one to one and a half hours and is tailored to the students' age. Our tours encourage **observation**, **critical thinking**, and **hands-on** activities that make the natural world both accessible and exciting.

Some of the themes explored include:


- How flowers attract insects for pollination.
- How seeds are dispersed and grow into new plants.
- How plants survive in different habitats.
- How Maltese plants adapt to our dry Mediterranean climate.



Groups must be pre-booked, should not exceed 25 students and must be accompanied by teachers. Two or more groups from the same school may be accommodated during the same morning. The tours are held every week day from 08:30 till 13:00 and are strictly by appointment. Price is €3 per student.

 [www.um.edu.mt/argotti](http://www.um.edu.mt/argotti)

 [argottigardens@um.edu.mt](mailto:argottigardens@um.edu.mt)

 2340 7875/6/7

 Find us on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/um.argotti](http://www.facebook.com/um.argotti)

Argotti Botanic Gardens  
University of Malta Section  
Triq Vincenzo Bugeja  
Floriana, FRN 1553

**Application Form – School Visit to Argotti**

Please fill in this form in full and send it by email to [argottigardens@um.edu.mt](mailto:argottigardens@um.edu.mt) or book through our website from the following link: <https://www.um.edu.mt/services/resourcecentres/argotti/visit/>)

**Name of School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Person:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approx. age of Students:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approx. No. of Students:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of accompanying school officials:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Suggested date for visit:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time of tour:** Please tick as applicable:

- 9:30am – 11:00am       11:15am – 12:45pm
- or
- 9:30am – 10:30am       10:45am – 11:45am       12:00pm – 1:00am

- for other arrangements please contact us by email on [argottigardens@um.edu.mt](mailto:argottigardens@um.edu.mt)

1. You will receive a confirmation email once the date is booked. You will be contacted to find an alternative date if the date suggested is not available.
2. Visit date is subject to availability and weather conditions on the day. It is a good practice to contact us by phone on the day.
3. Students are expected to participate fully in the visit and should bring along writing equipment.
4. Before submitting this application, please make sure to read our Data Protection Policy and the Health and Safety Guidelines found in this form and to tick the consent boxes below.

- I have read and agree to adhere to the Health and Safety Guidelines.
- I have read and agree to the Data Protection Policy.

I confirm that I am authorised by the school to grant consent on behalf of the parents/guardians of the students attending this visit, for Argotti Botanic Gardens & Resource Centre to take group photos of the students during the visit. These photos may be used solely for educational or promotional purposes by Argotti Botanic Gardens & Resource Centre and may be shared with authorised officials of the visiting school for internal educational purposes. Images will not be shared with any other third parties.

<b>Data Protection Policy</b>
-------------------------------

The personal data provided in this form will be processed by the Argotti Botanic Gardens & Resource Centre for the purpose of organising and administering your school's visit, including contacting you about bookings and related arrangements. The legal basis for this processing is the performance of a service requested by you.

We will retain this information only for as long as necessary to manage the visit and related administration, and in any case no longer than one (1) year after the visit. Your information will not be shared with third parties unless we are required to do so by law.

Argotti Botanic Gardens & Resource Centre may take group photos of persons visiting the gardens during these visits only where consent has been granted in advance by the authorised school representative on behalf of the students' parents/guardians. If any student or school official should not be photographed, it is the responsibility of the authorised school staff to inform Argotti Botanic Gardens & Resource Centre prior to or during the visit.

You have the right to request access to, and rectification or erasure of, your personal data, to restrict or object to its processing, and (where applicable) to data portability. If you have any queries, please contact us at [argottigardens@um.edu.mt](mailto:argottigardens@um.edu.mt). You may also contact the University's Data Protection Officer on [dpo@um.edu.mt](mailto:dpo@um.edu.mt). If you are not satisfied with our response, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information and Data Protection Commissioner (IDPC), Malta.

## Health & Safety Guidelines

### **1. Visits to laboratories or workshops**

No student is allowed in the laboratories or workshops.

### **2. Emergency evacuation**

It is of utmost importance that the person responsible for the school children will have available a list of names of students they are supervising in the case of an emergency evacuation. If such an emergency were to occur, University staff will guide the school children and staff to the nearest exit.

### **3. Emergency equipment and signage**

During the visit the supervisors are to ensure that the firefighting equipment or emergency signage are not tampered with.

### **4. First Aid**

Although First Aid equipment is available at the University, it is important that at least one (1) of the supervisors is trained in administering First Aid.

### **5. School children with particular health conditions**

It is important that supervisors are fully informed about any school children who may have chronic health conditions which can be worsened if they visit areas due to sensitization, by low levels of contaminants in air, or in some other way.

### **6. Care in garden**

All visiting students and staff are to be strongly advised not to touch any plant and not to put any plant material in their mouths.

### **7. Safe near ramparts (swar)**

Student supervisors are to exercise extreme caution and care when visiting the Mediterranean garden and are to prohibit students from approaching ramparts (swar).

### **8. Further provisions**

While it is a commitment of the University of Malta to provide a safe place for students during visits to University premises, it is the Head of School or organising body that is responsible to:

- (i) Send an adequate number of supervisors to accompany the students, i.e one (1) supervisor for every fifteen (15) students;
- (ii) Ensure that supervisors do not allow students to wander unattended; and
- (iii) Ensure that groups of visiting students abide by directions and information given to them by University staff responsible to guide the visit.

## Argotti Students Competition

All school students visiting Argotti Botanic Gardens & Resource Centre will be eligible to participate in a competition according to their age group by submitting their projects which will be exhibited at the Argotti Botanic Gardens & Resource Centre. All entries should be submitted by post or by email directly to Argotti or to the student's respective school, clearly indicating name and surname, the respective class and school by noon of Wednesday 6th of May 2026.

### Category I – Years 1-3

**Draw** a colourful poster (A4 or A3 size) using any medium you like, whether pencil, pens, paint or otherwise, on the following theme:

*The hairy leaf / Il-werqa sufija*

### Category II – Years 4-6

**Write** an 80-150 word writing task in English or Maltese:

*A day in the life of a Cactus / Ġurnata fil-ħajja ta' Kaktus*

### Category III – Years 7-8

Sow some seeds, record their growth and do a report as follows:

On an A4 sheet you should present a **photo** of the seeds sown. Write the scientific name and the common names of the plant in English and Maltese if available. Record the date when you sow and the date when the seeds start to germinate. Take a photo when the seeds germinated and 1 week, 2 weeks, 3 weeks, and 4 weeks after germination. Write a **short description** (not more than 100 words) of any observation you made throughout these 4 weeks.

## Category IV – Years 9-11

You have been selected to develop a garden in a public town square.

- **Size of area:** 5 x 5 metres.
- **Surroundings:** enclosed by buildings, with no valleys nearby.
- **Water source:** a cistern close by, available for garden irrigation.
- **Existing feature:** An olive tree in one corner, providing partial shade.

Your task is to create a garden design that includes **5 different species of shrubs**.

You are to present a **report** with the following sections:

1. **Preparation** – Outline the key steps and considerations before planting (eg. watering)
2. **Plant selection** – Present your choice of 5 shrub species and explain why you selected them.
3. **Map** – Provide a simple plan (can be hand-drawn 2-D map) showing where each shrub will be planted in relation to the olive tree and other features.
4. **Vision** – Explain the overall idea you want your garden to express.

Feel free to discuss with your teachers for guidance. The report should be between **2-3 pages**. You may work individually or in pairs.

## Prizes

Prizes will be awarded in each category depending on the number of participants. The school with the greatest number of entries in each category will also be awarded for the effort with 2 indigenous trees and 3 indigenous plants to be used within the school premises. The prizes will be awarded by end of May.

**Deadline:** Noon of **Wednesday 6th May 2025**