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ISU – Grünberg 10-12th Feb 2023



My visit to the ISU in Grünberg was one of pure delight. A broad selection of speakers, all with their own interests and subjects to discuss. Along with this was plenty of time to meet and greet with them and all the other visitors of the ISU. I've not had many chances to meet and mingle with such a range of people and professionally "talk plants". The venue was fantastic, comfortable and welcoming with all meals catered for and a little bar in the evening to open up the conversations. Speakers that I found of most interest and relevance were Peter Korn, who spoke in depth about his planting styles and techniques of planting into sand and how it makes the plants more resistant to environmental stresses. It was a real eye opener into a way of planting that I would never of considered for it being too risky or just unsuccessful. Alas, it is not and plants are able to grow from a young plant to a mature plant, adapting to the situation they are grown in and in turn being stronger over all. A great way to look at planting in the urban sense and how to minimise maintenance overall, meaning more energy can be placed elsewhere to develop more spaces. The other speaker of particular interest to me

was Yasemin Konuralp, a Turkish lady who gave two very interesting presentations on Turkish flora. The first being that of the bulbous plants of the Taurus Mountains. The second was on Perennials of North East and Eastern Turkey. Both presentations



gave an in depth look into these regions with fantastic detail of the plants as well

as the communities and habitats that they grow in. I had several chats with Yasemin regarding her trips as the other students and I are looking to take a trip to Turkey later this year to look at wild plant communities. We exchanged details and I am to email her soon with thoughts on our trip. She said she would be more than willing to give us advice and help us arrange. What are the chances!!! The ISU was amazing over all but my meeting with Yasemin was really too perfect and I am all too grateful that she was happy to help us. At the end of the event we met one of the head gardeners of the Palmengarten in Frankfurt who agreed to give us a tour of some new areas they had developed as well as the Tropicarium glasshouses. Easily one of the most impressive glasshouse plant collections I have ever seen and made all the better for having the spaces explained to us by Svet, the head gardener. During the mingling session in the bar, myself and Andrew had a fairly lengthy chat with Cassian Schmidt about all things plants, from design, wild trips, identification and the like. On our last day we took a little trip to see his



garden, Hermannshof. To our surprise, he was there and very kindly gave us a grand tour of the garden, explaining each area, the plants, successes and failures. It was all quite unprecedented and unexpected but we were all incredibly glad we were in the right place at the right time. This is to just mention a few of the highlights from the conference. Many great people were met, contacts exchanged and information shared. I am highly thankful for getting a chance to attend the ISU as it has

been incredibly eye-opening and beneficial to my career moving forward.