



## Obituary

### Bernhard (Bernd) Kirchner

(21 September 1940–6 March 2022)

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Bernd Kirchner at the Botanical Garden, Frankfurt, 2003

Bernd Kirchner, former Technical Director of the Botanical Garden of Ruhr University (Bochum, Germany), passed away earlier this year. He will be best remembered for playing a key role in developing the Garden, one of the ten largest in Germany. While implementing an educational programme for Ruhr University he led major projects in the Garden, such as completion of the Tropical House, Desert House, Chinese Garden and Savannah House, all of which are enjoyed by visitors to the Garden. Another interest that occupied him for a long time was the Botanical Garden at Bodrum in Turkey. His work in creating the gardens involved, not only botany as such but also the knowledge of the environments in which the plants are growing in their natural habitat and the ability to recreate them in the Garden. Thus, he collected plants on many field trips and cultivated them in the Garden. He had a special interest in certain plant groups, such as tillandsias, fuchsias, orchids, willows and carnivorous plants. He described *Pinguicula esseriana*, named after Karl Esser, the first Director of the Botanical Garden of Ruhr University.

Bernd was particularly interested in arctic alpine willows and collaborated with Irina Belyaeva and Lidia Semkina from the Botanic Garden of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Yekaterinburg, studying such willows in the mountains of



*Pinguicula esseriana* B.Kirchn.

Austria, Croatia, France, Spain, Switzerland and the Urals, and visiting private willow collections in Germany. Recently, a willow, *Salix × kirchneri* I.V.Belyaeva & O.V.Epanch., was described in his honour. More details concerning Bernd's achievements can be found in Skvortsovia (2020, 6(3): 1–4).

Bernd, during his many worldwide travels, made many friends who will have fond memories of this wonderful, bright and successful man. They and his ex-colleagues extend their condolences to his widow.

Compiled by Irina Belyaeva