



Inspiring4Biodiversity

“BIODIVERSITY AROUND LAKE BALATON”

Building an online community platform



Erasmus+

Introduction - Online Community Platform

With the rise of the internet, more and more people are spending their free time surfing the web. There are millions of communities on the Internet, to which anyone can join. Taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the virtual world, these online community platforms (e.g. thematic websites, Facebook groups, Instagram pages, etc.) provide excellent opportunity to raise awareness about biodiversity conservation and environmental education in general. Social media platforms can help people interested in a particular topic to meet and keep contact. As a community forum, these platforms bring interested people together, who can use the site to share their experiences, discuss questions and upload content related to the given topic. These platforms can also be used to organise various online training courses, which contribute to improve the knowledge of participants.

In order to raise awareness, the Lake Balaton Development Coordination Agency has created the website " „Balatonról, jövőről”, which focuses on the future of Lake Balaton (<https://www.rolrol.hu/>). The website is not simply an information site, but it is also the working platform of the competition organised for secondary school students in the Balaton region, where you can find information material, reports, contacts and the competition materials. Basically, the website is designed for secondary school students, but similar online platforms could easily be created for the general public too.

The online community platform "Balatonról, jövőrd"



Source: <https://www.rolrol.hu/>



Building online community platform - as a pedagogical tool

The aim of the tool is to build an online community platform for local people. There are many community platforms around the world. Under this tool, we understand the development of websites, Facebook groups and Instagram pages in particular, which sites are popular and widely used by the majority of the population (even on a daily basis, or so).

Websites and social sharing sites can help users to explore what content is find interesting, useful and applicable by others regarding the protection of biodiversity. Users can select people with similar interests and following the recommendations from others they can learn about content they have not come across yet.

On social sharing sites, users with similar interests can share links to interesting and relevant content. The online communities are organised based on the common interests and activities. In addition, social networking sites – from the perspective of users – help the members of communities to meet each other. The user has to do only one thing: to register / log-in the site and establish contacts with others. In this case, biodiversity and openness to environmental and ecological issues will be the common denominator to create a community, which can effectively represent the habitats of Lake Balaton, the groups of biodiversity, such as pollinators, birds, native plants and animals.

On the website, the content of the previous two tools, the series of articles and the online presentations, can also be published on a thematised way, while on the related social media platforms dialogues can be launched on these topics. The information brochure on horticultural knowledge and planting ideas, as well as background material for the online presentations and the presentation videos can also be shared on the site. Under each topics, users can share photos, ask questions and replies to others. The platform is a site for deepening knowledge and sharing practical experience. Users are free to ask questions, and has opportunity to reply to others. The Facebook and Instagram pages are an integral part of the website, complementing it in a special way. Content linked to the current season or month can help users to slow down and pay attention to the rhythm and changes of nature. Competitions and challenges can be organised on the occasion of major nature days (Earth Day, World Pollinators Day, World Water Day, etc.), where the final results are determined by the votes of the community, e.g. writing poems and short stories, taking photos and making drawings.

In order to raise the interest of general public popular and practical approach is needed, which also significantly contributes to the development of local communities.

Understanding biodiversity is much easier when the topic is broken down into smaller parts. It is easier to learn about biodiversity if you receive gardening and planting information month by month. A good example for this timely distribution is the website of “garden friends” at www.kertbarik.hu:



Website of “Kertbarik” – Association of Garden Friends at Székesfehérvár

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Kertbarik website. At the top right, there are navigation links for 'FŐOLDAL', 'RÖLUNK', and 'KAPCSOLAT'. The main header features the logo 'Kertbarik' and the text 'Székesfehérvári Kertbarát Egyesület'. A search bar is located below the header. A banner image with the text 'Imádjuk a természetet!' is displayed. Below the banner, there is a list of links: 'On itt van:', 'Home', 'Képsorozat különleges kertekről és növényekről', and 'Miracle garden'. A sidebar on the left contains a menu with items like 'Közösségi kertek', 'Dokumentumok', 'Galéria', 'Kertművelési naptár', 'Eladó/kiadó kertek', 'Receptek, praktikák a konyhában', 'Partnereink', 'SZJA 1%', and 'Képsorozat különleges kertekről és növényekről'. The main content area is titled 'Miracle garden' and features a grid of 12 photographs showing various garden displays, including flower beds, topiary, and floral arrangements.

Source: <http://www.kertbarik.hu/>

Extract from the website for demonstration purposes:

May

What a glorious month! New life and blossom all around. Nevertheless, be careful, if you want to plant your annuals and put your expensive potted plants outside. King “Winter” only retreats when his three treacherous henchmen, the Ice saints (namely St. Servatius – May 12, St. Pancras – May 13 and St. Boniface – May 14) are gone.



Garden – in general

Remove weeds regularly, but do not weed everything ruthlessly, as seeds from the previous year may sprout. Be very careful what you remove.

Stubborn weeds may need selective weedkillers. Some products will kill the plant completely by spraying the leaves. When applying them, cover the other plants. A bottle with a hole in the middle is suitable for this purpose. Use this to cover the plants (or the shoots such as bamboo), unless they will also be killed. In any case, always be careful with using such products!

Remove moss and weeds from the paths and patios.

Stake young trees, high-growing shrubs and trunked roses by placing stakes and check the joints regularly.

Be proactive and place stakes near high-growing perennials, which they can easily reach.

Plant the early flowering clematis out into the garden.

Cut back flowers that have bloomed and the fruiting stems of flowering ornamental shrubs such as rhododendrons and lilacs. Seed production takes a lot of energy away from the plant, so there will be less flowers in the next flowering season.

Check your plants for slugs weekly, or even on a daily basis. They are like young shoots in particular. They can eat a host that has barely emerged from the ground even during one night.

Fertilize your plant beds.

(Ornamental) shrubs and hedges also need nutrient solution. Give your hedging plants a higher dose of nutrients, as they are densely planted and compete strongly with each other.

Plants

You can start planting the pre-grown annuals outside from mid-May.

Pot-grown, so called “container plants” can be planted all year round, but May is the most suitable month because of the warmer soil.

Before planting container plants, submerge their soil balls in a bucket of water until they are soaked. Caution: never plant plants into a soil, which is too wet.

If you were unable to plant roses and shrubs in autumn, you can plant them now. Roses will be in full bloom by the summer.

In this month, you can still plant outside the bulbous and tuberous plants that flower in summer. There is a wide range of shrubs and annuals to choose from, such as the well-known dahlias, begonias, cannas, gladiolus, but also lesser-known species such as the particularly white 'Hymenocallis Ismene', freesias, buttercups and Ixia.

Now you can sow the seeds of annuals and perennials. These include poppies, foxgloves, bluebells, pansies, peonies, carnations, marigolds, lobelia, daisies and endives. In addition, do not forget about the slightly taller seed-bearing plants such as the various ornamental sunflowers, mallows, cosmos and strawflowers.

This month is also suitable to sow biennials such as forget-me-nots, common snapdragon, bearded carnations, etc.

Grass

Remove wild grass from your lawn and re-seed it.

Check the grass for diseased patches.



If you want a quick result, remove dead and unsightly parts and replace them with grass clippings cut-to-size.

Large mossy areas can be treated with iron sulphate.

If you find moss all over the grass, trench the area and replant it with shade-tolerant grass seed.

Raking is a good way to remove old and dead grass clippings. Make sure you never do it on wet lawn. It will have the opposite effect.

After raking and reseeding, compact the soil with a roller.

Cut the edges of the lawn. It is easier to do it if the soil is a little wet.

Now you can mow the lawn regularly again.

If you want a nice result, give your lawn nutrients every month.

If there is slack water on the lawn or some parts are very wet, prick a pitchfork into the soil, turning it lightly. Thereby, water will seep deeper into the soil.

Plants in pots

After the Icy Saints, you can refill your flower boxes and hanging pots with annuals.

Bulbous and tuberous plants that flower in summer grow very well in pots and containers. If you plant bulbs in a pot, plant them closer to each other than in the ground. Use a “raised planting method”. Put the latest flowering bulbs in the pot first, and follow them by the earlier flowering plants.

The combination of annuals and summer-flowering bulbous plants contributes to have a magnificent flowering garden.

Plants, which were planted into pots for winter, such as Brugmansia, agave, leander, yucca and ox-eye daisy, can be planted outside from mid-May.

Do not put these out immediately on a warm and sunny spring day. The leaves of the plants may get burn in the sun. Instead, take the plants out when the weather turns cloudy and rainy for a few days.

Accustom your young citrus and fruit trees slowly to the cold.

They can even withstand at 10°C. In spring, take these plants outside regularly to accustom to the colder temperatures, but take them back inside in case of frost. They can withstand a few degrees below freezing, provided they are accustomed to it. In case of doubts, wrap the pots with plastic foil in the evening.

Before you start accustoming the plants to the colder temperatures, re-plant them if necessary.

In all cases, replace the old soil in the pots with clay soil, such as geranium soil, as this soil mix holds water better.

Plant cutting

In May it is still suitable to cut evergreen hedges (yew, buxus, privet, pinaceae, lime and Leyland cypress). These plants can still be cut until August, but young shoots develop easier this period of time.

It is recommended to cut flowering shrubs immediately after flowering. For newly planted plants, cut them only after the third year.

Always cut plants on a cloudy, overcast day.

Over-flowered genista should be cut back above the old woody part.

Remove the dead shoots of Hortense.

You can cut back those trees, which are bleeding where they got cut, such as maple and birch.

You can trim hedges to a given shape, like buxus, yew and privet.

If you have not cut back your roses yet, do it now as soon as possible.



Cut back your bush roses at a height of about 45 cm.

Cut back stem roses above pruning. Cut back the branches to a maximum of 40 cm, just above the bud.

Do not cut off the main shoots of climbing rose. Cut backside shoots above the 5th bud. Old climbing roses can be re-juvenated by cutting back the old branch completely.

Remove the so-called water shoots (wild shoots with small thorns that grow very quickly).

If bamboo shoots have become unsightly due to frost damage, cut back the bamboo shoots at ground level. This certainly stimulates the plant to bring new shoots. Remember that this requires a lot of energy, so make sure the plant has enough moisture and nutrients.

In case of low-growing bamboo species, a severe cutback may also be acceptable. Even a complete cutback of 2 cm is possible.

Vegetable garden

If you have dug up and fertilised your vegetable garden, you can start sowing the different vegetables in early May.

Check the soil of strawberries for weeds.

Apply fertiliser high in potassium (dissolved in irrigation water) to the soil of strawberries (if they are in pots) once a week.

Kiwi can be planted from mid-May to the end of June. Always plant 5 to 6 female plants near each male plant. Cut back male plants immediately after flowering. In the meantime, self-pollinating kiwis can also be purchased.

For prunus, such as almonds, cherries, peaches and plums, it is suggested to start pruning to have abundant harvest later on.

Regarding pears, remove late blossoms from the stems in May and June. Thereby, you can prevent dieback caused by bacterial infection.

Check your apple trees for powdery mildew (a white powdery coating on the shoots). If you cut off the infected areas immediately, you can prevent the spread of this fungal disease.

After the apple tree has blossomed, the apple wasp and pear wasp want to lay their eggs in the flowering buds. The larvae quickly hatch and attack the apple. The apple continues to grow, but the result is an apple that has been eaten by a larva. Control measures must be taken immediately.

Currant fruits, such as ribes, gooseberry and blackcurrants, grown as hedges, the shoots can be cut back once they have reached 10–20 cm in length. As a result, the vigorous growth will be stopped, and more flower buds will be produced in the following year.

Check all currant fruits for sawflies. These insects can chew the whole bush to pieces in a few days.

You can plant your herbs directly into the soil outside. Do not have space for herbs in your garden? No problem, you can put them in flowerbeds, pots and boxes as well. Almost all herbs can be used in different ways. Due to their peculiar leaf shape herbs give plant beds a new character.

If you have kept your herbs indoors during winter, you can re-plant them outside now. If you want to keep them in pots, renew the soil or transplant them into a larger pot.

Ponds

Remove the old remains and dead leaves of aquatic plants from the pond. You can use a special pair of scissors to do the pruning.



Have water lilies not thinned out? If they have overwintered well, they start sprouting now.

May you like a different colour? The choice is surprisingly wide. There are lovely mini water lilies, which is very pretty in a pond or in a water tank located in the patio or balcony.

Take oxygen-producing plants into the pond, if necessary.

The plants, you took out and brought indoor in autumn, can be taken back into the pond from mid-May.

If it is relatively warm in May, it is time to start feeding your fish.

Indoor

Fertilise your indoor plants a weekly, dissolved in the irrigation water.

If the temperature outdoor is rising, your indoor plants will also need more water.

After flowering, you can put your Rhododendron out in the garden to a sunny area, and cut them back halfway.

Water your amaryllis regularly, even it has finished flowering.

After flowering, plants such as araceae go into a resting period, so give them less water at this time.

Succulent plants from rock gardens reach resting time in spring. When watering them, do not give them too much water.

From mid-May, you can take your pre-grown summer flowering bulb and tuber plants outside. The same applies to seeds pre-sown indoor.

Other tasks:

- Ideal time for planting annuals and herbaceous plants.
- All hedging plants can be pruned.
- Potted and frost-sensitive plants can be taken outside. However, watch out for night frosts!
- Water new and sensitive plants regularly.
- Protect your plants against aphids and slugs.
- Plant oxygen producing plants into the pond.
- You can even treat the lawn with cattle manure (granules).
- Remove dead branches from Hortense.



Detailed description on the website of the "Kertbarik" – Association of Garden Friends at Székesfehérvár

Közösségi kertek
Dokumentumok
Galéria
Kertművelési naptár
Eladó/kiadó kertek
Receptek, praktikák a konyhában
Tagjaink kedvenc ételei és süteményei
Hasznos háztartási tanácsok
Fogyasztási tanácsok
Pácolási tanácsok
Gyógynövényekről
Fűszernövényekről
Szendvicskrém receptek
Szószek és mártások
Savanyúságok
Partnereink
SZJA 1%
Képsorozat különleges kertekről és növényekről

Fűszernövényekről

Az egészséges táplálkozási szokások elterjedése ismét népszerűvé tette a gyógy- és fűszernövényeket.

Citrom

A citrom héja felhasználható gyümölcslevesekbe, dió-, mák-, és túrótelékbe, süteményekbe, kompótokba, turmixitalokba, édes rizsételbe, szószek, hidegtálak ízesítésére. Ecet helyett pedig – ha csak tehetjük – citromlevet használjunk. Egyetlen része, a héj alatti fehér hátya nem használható, mert nagyon keserű.

Fokhagyma

Olyan sokféle gyógyhatása van, hogy mindenbe és mindenféle formában fogyasszuk! Ne pirítsuk, mert nagyon keserű lesz!

Gomba

A gomba is fűszernövény, ámár az ízesítés mellett húspótlóként is igen nagy szerepe van a konyhában. Minden együtt van benne, amire a szervezetünk áhítozik: fehérje, zsír, szénhidrát, ásványi sók (foszfor, kálium...), vitaminok (A, B, D...). Tápértéke magas, gyógyhatását bizonyos fajok tbc-ellenes, és rákellenes antibiotikumai biztosítják.

Kapor

Édes és sós ételekhez egyaránt használjuk. Tökfőzelék, túróspite, kovászos uborka, savanyú káposzta el nem képzelhető nélküle. A kaporszósz pedig egyesek a legpompásabb étel főtt húсок mellé.

Metélőhagyma (snidling)

Egyesíti magában a hagyma és a fokhagyma illatanyagát, de sokkal barátságosabban, mint az eredeti növények. Fontos megjegyezni, hogy a metélőhagymát csak nyersen, frissen apróra vágva használjuk, nem szabad belefőzni semmibe. Tálaláskor szórjuk az ételre, vagy keverjük bele. Mindenféle zöldség-, hús-, és vegyes saláta, zöldséglevesek, sülték, halak, tojásételbe, körözött ízesítésére ajánlott.

Petrezselyem

Zöldjét frissen, és szárított állapotban használjuk. A petrezselymet – a metélőhagymához hasonlóan – nem főzzük bele az ételbe, csak rászórjuk, belekeverjük. Együtt sütjük viszont a hússal. A vajon sült, petrezselymes hal egyik legfinomabb ételünk. A petrezselyem-zöldet használjuk bátran és naponta, főleg télen. Levesekhez, főzelékekhez, főtt burgonyához, tojásételbe, salátákhoz.

Ha szárnyast sütünk, el ne felejtünk egy kis csokor petrezselymet a hasüregbe tenni sütés előtt. Finom aromát biztosít a kellemetlen "belső-rész-szag" helyett.

Tárkony

Ezt az egyre népszerűbb, fűszeres illatú konyhanövényt Erdélyből kaptuk. A tárkonyzósz érdekesebben pikáns étel, aki a kaporszószot kedveli, ezt is szeretni fogja. Levest is készíthetünk vele, bány-, és nyúlhúshoz, vada ételekhez, halhoz és burgonyafőzelékhez ajánlom.

Vöröshagyma

Nagyon sok ételünk el sem képzelhető nélküle. A pörkölt és a halételek alapanyaga, főtt és sült ételek legkedveltebb ízesítője. Pirítva köretként, nyersen salátákba használják.

Source: <http://www.kertbarik.hu/>

The website could include a Facebook community where people can comment, ask questions and discuss their experiences under the shareable posts. It can also be linked to an Instagram page where the members of the garden community can share their photos.



How to build an online community platform?

In the course of creating an online community platform, the first key task is to define what is your goal you want to achieve by creating the website.

Keeping the goal insight, we need to define the themes, based on which we can determine structure and the menus of the website.

In line with our objectives, we need to prepare the content and collect text, images, audio materials, video, etc. that will be uploaded to the website.

Another important task is to reserve the most appropriate domain name (web address) for the site, through which visitors will find our website by typing the address into the browser.

The next step is to design the unique graphic design (visual appearance) of the website and programme the website's functions in accordance with the content. Each website must be hosted on a so-called web server machine. These server machines (servers) operate 24 hours a day and they are constantly accessible via the Internet. Web hosting space can be rented from specialised companies.

As soon as the graphic elements of the website are designed, you can start uploading the content and checking the prepared texts and images, and make changes and corrections, if necessary.

How to operate an online community platform?

Managing information on online community platform requires a broad and deep knowledge of many disciplines. This requires the involvement and assistance of professionals. Examples of such topics include:

Introduction to native plant and animal species: the cost of irrigation and plant protection can be saved/reduced if plants are chosen from species adapted to local conditions.

Invasive species: prevention is the key to combating the spread and damage of invasive species. It is the cheapest and most effective approach, and early detection of emerging invasive species and rapid response are essential. Much more attention should be dedicated to invasive species because of their impact on biodiversity and human health.

Semi-natural design: pollinator-friendly flower meadows are one of the options for semi-natural green spaces. The establishment of such areas does not require many resources. Nutrient-poor soil is needed and the area has to be mowed twice a year.

Designing green roofs: green roofs have several benefits, including their role in reducing the heat island effect, influencing the microclimate, improving air quality, trapping particulate and airborne pollutants, and increasing biodiversity. Green facades with climbing plants are also beneficial from a sustainability point of view.



In addition, they reduce the building's carbon emissions by absorbing carbon dioxide.

Planting Mediterranean plants: warming climate, because of climate change, pushes vegetation belts further north. One of the domestic effects of this change is the development of sub-Mediterranean climate at Lake Balaton area. Thereby, planting Mediterranean plants has become more easily there.

Understanding soil life: I have dig a strange thing out of the soil, what is it?

Learning about protected species of plants and animals: I have found protected species in my garden, what should I do?

Operators of professional partner sites can be valuable partners. In addition, the websites, Facebook profiles and Instagram pages of relevant regional organisations also represent safe sources for sharing information and posts. It is important that operators of online community platforms make contacts to these sites and organisations, and establish clear agreements and cooperation regarding the disclosure of copyright and resources.

Below we are going to introduce the online platforms of the main cooperating organisations of LBDCA from the Lake Balaton region, in terms of conservation of biodiversity and environmental protection:

Facebook site of the Balaton Limnological Research Institute



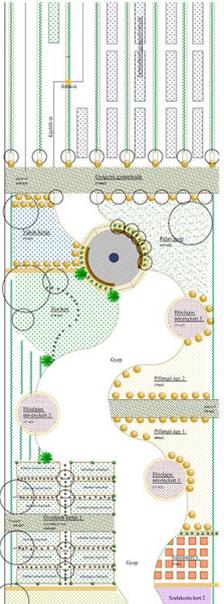
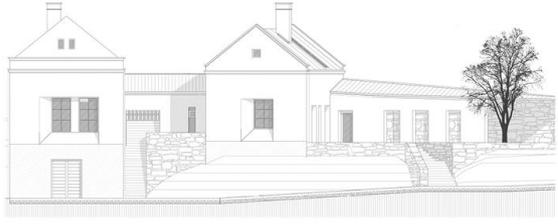


Source: <https://www.facebook.com/BalatonLimnologia>

Website of the “Herbal Valley”

GYÓGNÖVÉNY-VÖLGY, ZÁNKA

ÚJ SZÉCHENYI TERV

Gyógynövény-völgy

Látogató- és Oktatóközpont, nonprofit ökoturisztikai projekt

A Káli-medence keleti kapujában

2014 nyarán **Zánka** válik a gyógynövény-kevelők paradicsomává, itt nyílik ugyanis több mint 7000 négyzetméternyi területen a Gyógynövény-völgy Látogató- és Oktatóközpont.

A Gyógynövény-völgy igazi öko-centrum, ahol minden érdeklődő és szakmabeli kiválaszhatja a számára leginkább vonzó foglalkozást, kikapcsolódási formát.

A széles kínálatban specifikus programokat is találunk: az ökoturisták, a fenntartható gazdálkodásért lelkesedők valamint a természetgyógyászok és holisztikus gyógykezelők számára.

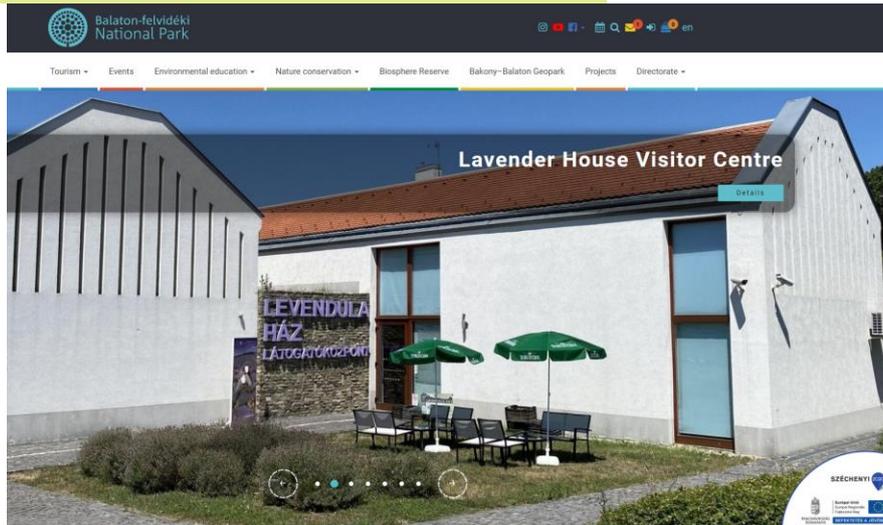
elkészíthetjük saját gyógynövényes termékeinket. A kényeztetés sem marad el, mert a teázóban válogathatunk a különféle gyógyteák, szörpök, gyógyborok közül.

Az oktatóközpontban tartozó bemutatókertben **több mint 400féle gyógynövény** időszakosan változó tárlatát lehet megtekinteni: egyvári, kétnyári és évelő növények, fák, bokrok cserjék gyógyhatásával, természetesi praktikáival és ökológiai növényvédelmével ismerkedhet meg a kedves látogató. A szóban forgó növények szempont szerint, illetve tematikusan kerültek csoportosításra, megtalálhatók itt külön-

Source: <http://www.gyogynovenyvolgy.hu/info/>

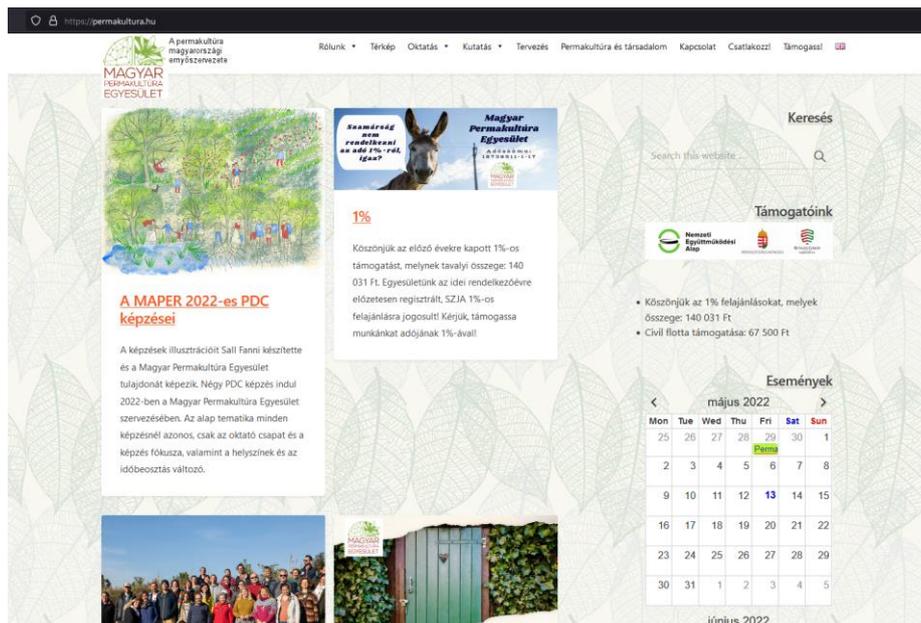
Website of the Balaton Uplands National Park Directorate





Source: <https://www.bfnp.hu/>

Website of the Hungarian Permaculture Association



Source: <https://permakultura.hu/>

Conclusion

Nowadays, people are spending more and more time online, whether for work or for leisure activities. They use many online community platforms on a daily basis. The



popular social media sites offer a suitable platform to be filled with educational and awareness-raising content. Running an online platform does not require any particular expertise. Rather time and constant attention is needed. However, it is recommended to look for a professional computer/web programmer, who can be assigned to create the website. In addition, it is also suggested to ask local/regional experts to contribute to the elaboration of the content of the site. Do not be discouraged by any initial difficulties. Once the initial technical difficulties have been solved, online community spaces, including online platforms and online communities, offer an excellent opportunity to raise awareness about biodiversity and actively involve the public in protecting local habitats.



Imprint

Inspiring for Biodiversity (Inspiring4Biodiversity) is a project funded with support from the European Commission. The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use, which may be made of the information contained therein.



Project code: 2019-1-DE02-KA204-006510

Authors: Lake Balaton Development Coordination Agency (LBDCA)

Project Partners: Global Nature Fund, Global2000, Etna, Ekopolis and Peipsi

Contact:

Global Nature Fund (GNF)

Fritz-Reichle-Ring 4 ·
78315 Radolfzell, Germany
Phone: +49 7732 9995-80
www.globalnature.org

Lake Balaton Development Coordination Agency

Batthyány utca 1.
8600 Siófok, Hungary
Tel: +36-84-317-002
www.balatonregion.hu

Images: Lake Balaton Development Coordination Agency, Tihany Sport and Leisure Association

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