

Citizen Science Stroll: Highlights

An easy stroll from the East Gate of the Botanic to the Terrace Café, visiting plants and habitats used in Citizen Science projects looking into impacts of climate change.

Three projects are noted along the stroll route: <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2696522>

- **Rhododendrons.** The Botanic has one of the leading *Rhododendron* collections in the world. In general, Rhododendrons naturally occur in regions of high rainfall and humidity, with a temperate climate and acidic soils. Many rhododendron taxa (~ ¼) are under threat of extinction in the wild. However, phenological observations in Edinburgh (2008 to present) reveal that several temperate Rhodo. species are capable of adapting to climate change.
- **Threatened Plants of Central and South Chile.** The Botanic has an exceptional collection of plants from the temperate rainforests of Chile. These include many red-listed taxa (e.g. *Fitzroya*). Monitoring of phenology (by satellite and ground-truth) is a key tool in quantifying the impact of climate variability on these endangered taxa, as central Chile is an established climate-change hot-spot. It has already become hotter and drier, and more at risk from wildfires. Man-made climate change will continue to stimulate further alterations to the oceanic upwelling offshore to central Chile leading to even stronger continental droughts.
- **The British Dragonfly Monitoring Scheme.** An excellent example of a particularly well-run and productive citizen-science project. Many Insects, such as the emperor dragonfly have been found to be becoming more common in Scotland, having moved hundreds of km poleward as they track rising summer temperatures.

