

Rob's interview with Malo, the director of the Arboretum at Les Arbres du Monde, Huelgoat

Rob. I'm here with Malo Dormont

Malo. Yes

Rob. ...who is the manager of the Arbres Du Monde du Huelgoat. Malo, can you tell us a little bit about the arboretum here?

Malo. It's a big collection of trees and shrubs, maybe 10,000 specimens and 3500 different species. And erm it's young, 30 years old, and it was plant by erm Jean Merret of retirement house in Huelgoat, he loves plants, he loves travelling and he plant a lot of trees and shrubs here.

Rob. Is it a particularly good place for plants from all over the world?

Malo. Er, yes because it's not very hot, warm, not too cold, and a lot of rain, all the year.

Rob. So you have plants from all over the world for example. Which countries?

Malo. New Zealand, Chilli, USA, Europe, Japan, Taiwan, China

Rob. A great variety?

Malo. Yes

Rob. Which are the stars, which are the ones that are really unusual, or even rare?

Malo. Lovely tree, Davidia Involucrata or erm, it's hard, dove tree

Rob. I think it's called a Handkerchief Tree

Malo. Handkerchief... that's it. It's a lovely tree

Rob. Why's it called a Handkerchief Tree?

Malo. er, It's, I think it's for erm, it's not flowers but it's, it's, erm, bract, it's a kind of leaf, er which are, is colour of, it's white bract, like mouchoir

Rob. Like a handkerchief

Malo. Handkerchief, and it's a lovely tree

Rob. So visitors can see this tree all year round? I mean are you open all year round?

Malo. Actually it's open from 2 to 6 pm from Thursday to Sunday

Rob. And that's all year or just in the autumn?

Malo. No, from April to the end of October

Rob. And do you give guided tours?

Malo. Yes, only if it's reserved for small group or in exhibition like erm, 'Rendezvous Jardins,' it's a national exhibition of parks and garden

Rob. And how long would a visit take to go around the garden?

Malo. 1 hour or 2 hours and er I give a map for visitors

Rob. And so Malo, is there a best time to come to visit the arboretum here?

Malo. Yes, it's, it begin in May er until the end of June, with a lot of flowers - rhododendron, magnolia, camellia and also er I like in autumn with colours of flowers, of leaves, sorry. It's two good period.

Rob. Do you have new plants, new exhibits coming in?

Malo. Yes, erm every year, with friends exchange or I buy in plant exhibition or some friends travel in China, Japan, they collect seeds

Rob. You have greenhouses here?

Malo. Yes, yes it's for young plants from seedling or from cutting er it's better in greenhouse

Rob. We're in the barn here, the 'accueil', the reception for the arboretum, is this an exhibition space as well?

Malo. Yes, erm, it's big and erm we made a festival in August and er some friends wanted to expose painting, er photo, and I think it's a good place for some exhibition

Rob. Do you have other activities here?

Malo. Yes, I sold plants

Rob. Oh, you can buy the plants from all over the world?

Malo. Yes, erm some trees and shrubs, like Maples, erm, Japanese Maple, Handkerpocketchief tree, Eucalyptus, pines, sugar maple, monkey puzzle tree

Rob. There is an association that helps you with your work, I understand?

Malo. Yes, it's 'Les Amies des Arbres du Monde.' It's a non-profit organisation and they help me er for the garden. They help me to activities and it's er support for me. There is a lot of English people and it's good.

Rob. And that's how you get to speak English?

Malo. Yes, English people in the organisation wants to speak French, but me I like to speak English because, it's, for me it's er it's good.

Rob. Now there are big plans for the arboretum, Malo, aren't there, could you tell us about that?

Malo. Yes, because the arboretum is the property of the EHPAD, it's retirement house in Heulgoat And I rent the park but the retirement house want maybe sell the arboretum and we are collecting some money for erm, it's SCI, 'Societe Civile Immobilier', It's to collect money to buy the park.

Rob. And it will be owned by a community?

Malo. Yes, that's it, to save, to save trees and shrubs, to save the collection, not me, but collection.

Rob. OK, well Malo, thank you very much indeed for telling us about the Arbres du monde du Huelgoat.

Malo. Thank you.

