

## Stop 140 Kid's Tour – Palm House Overview

Are you ready for a plant safari? Talk a walk on the 'wild side' in the Botanic garden's "jungle room!" You'll find all kinds of plants from the tropical regions of the world in our Palm House. That's why it's so warm and humid in here – rainforest plants just *love* this climate... although if it gets too warm for *you*, you might want to remove your jacket or sweater.

Watch out when you're walking around, you might get dripped on! This greenhouse gets watered often to keep the plants growing and we have a fogging system to keep the air moist. That's because in nature, a rainforest can get 80 - 250 inches of rain a year! It's no wonder the plants have adapted to their wet environment. Did you notice the smooth, leathery texture of many of the leaves? That acts just like a raincoat, so the water runs right off. Check to see if any have "pointed ends" called 'drip tips.' That's another way the leaves protect themselves from too much moisture. The 'drip tips' funnel the water off the leaves so mold and algae don't have a chance to grow there.

Keep exploring, and you'll also find many familiar *food* plants like bananas or cacao, which is where chocolate comes from. You may even find plants for decorating your house - like philodendron vines. Almost *half* of all plant and animal species on earth are from tropical rainforests and scientists discover new ones every year. As you'll see today, plant stems, leaves, trunks, sap and fruits provide us with fibers, food, oil, spices, wood and even medicine – like quinine to treat malaria. Which are just a few of the reasons rainforests are so special to the world.