

Botanical Illustration in the Heart of the Rainforest

Discover the fascinating world of tropical plants through the art of botanical illustration!

Surrounded by the extraordinary biodiversity of Costa Rica's tropical rainforest, join botanist and illustrator **Friederike Westrich** for a unique creative journey into the world of botanical illustration.

Using ink, microscopes, and dissecting tools, we will explore the remarkable diversity of native tropical plants, discovering the intricate structures, textures, shapes, and delicate details that often remain hidden to the naked eye. Step by step, you will learn how to transform your observations into beautiful and scientifically accurate illustrations, combining botanical knowledge with artistic techniques, careful observation, and creativity.

From delicate ink shading and detailed flower dissections to the principles of scale and proportion, the course offers a hands-on introduction to botanical illustration in an inspiring natural setting.

The workshop takes place at **La Gamba Tropical Field Station**, located on the edge of Piedras Blancas National Park in southern Costa Rica, surrounded by one of Central America's last remaining areas of primary tropical lowland rainforest. Beyond the drawing sessions, guided excursions will take you into the surrounding rainforest, offering opportunities to discover its extraordinary plant diversity and experience the tropical ecosystem firsthand.

Everyone with an interest in plants, nature, and drawing is welcome! No previous experience in botanical illustration is required. All you need is curiosity, enthusiasm, and a willingness to observe nature from a new perspective.

The course will be held mainly in English and a little in Spanish. Basic English skills are recommended.
For more information, contact **tropenstation.botanik@univie.ac.at**. Visit www.lagamba.at to learn more about the station and contact **Friederike.westrich@web.de** for more information about the illustrations.

Timetable

09. December

Arrival from 16 o'clock onwards. Welcome, introduction and getting to know each other

10. December

Morning: Guided tour of the nature conservation projects

Afternoon: Introduction in ink and botanical illustration

11. December

Morning: Guided rainforest tour and nature journaling

Afternoon: Botanical illustration

Evening: Night tour

12. December

Morning: Botanical illustration

Afternoon: Botanical illustration and guided birdwatching tour in El Dorado



13. December

Departure

Price and Booking

Booking: tropenstation.botanik@univie.ac.at, please book by 20 November 2026

Course Fees

Participants from	Students	Non-students
Latin America	USD 390	USD 540
Other countries	USD 540	USD 670

The course fee includes:

- Botanical illustration course
- 4 nights of accommodation with full board (breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- Internet access
- Use of bicycles
- Guided excursions and entrance fees

Not included: Travel to and from La Gamba Tropical Field Station.

List of Materials

Please bring

- A4 sketchbook or loose, smooth drawing paper e.g. Bristol paper (not aquarelle paper)
- Pigment fineliners / ink drawing pens, 003, 005, 01 (Copic, Micron or Staedtler)

For advanced participants and those interested in traditional techniques:

- Black drawing ink in a glass bottle
- Traditional pen holder with a fine drawing nib

Other materials:

- Pencils: HB, soft (e.g. 8B) and hard (e.g. H)
- Eraser
- Pencil sharpener
- Ruler

Optional:

- Magnifying glass
- kneaded eraser (not coloured)



About Friederike Westrich

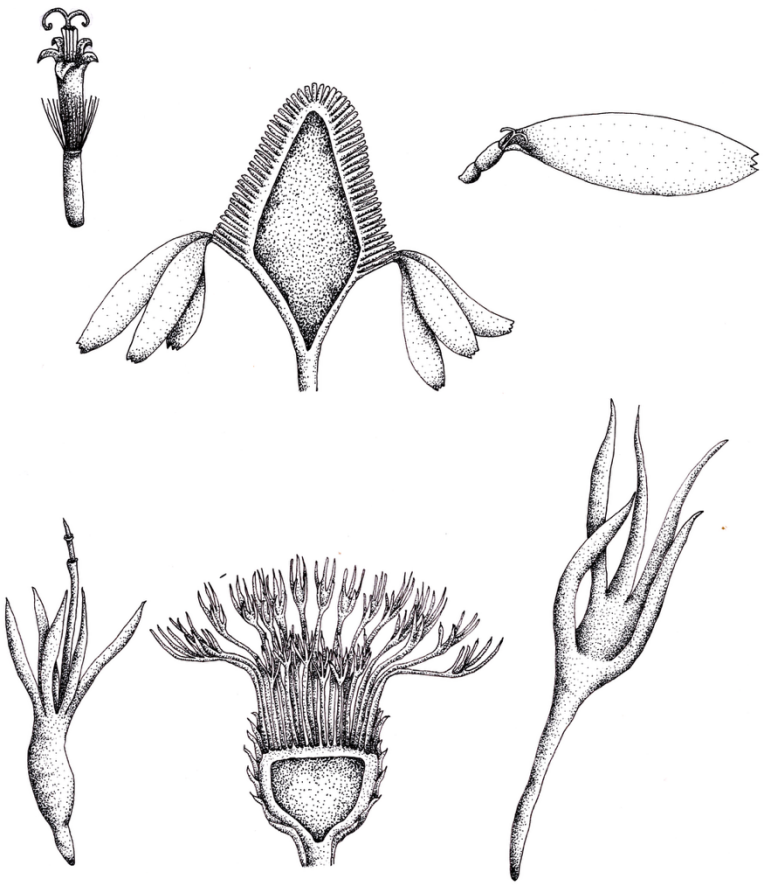


I am a botanist and botanical illustrator based in Innsbruck, Austria. My artistic practice grew from my scientific background: during my master's degree in Botany, I started drawing alpine plants during field excursions as a way to better understand and remember species. Over time, this personal practice developed into botanical illustration projects, exhibitions, workshops, and collaborations.

Meanwhile, I developed a huge interest in studying the effects of climate change on plant communities (see my first paper: *Rapid Change and Thermophilization of Summit Plant Communities in the Central Eastern Alps (Italy)*, Journal of Vegetation Science). My current dream is to make ecological processes more visible and accessible to everyone through art and illustration.

Friederikewestrich.com, Instagram @friede_fragaria

Examples



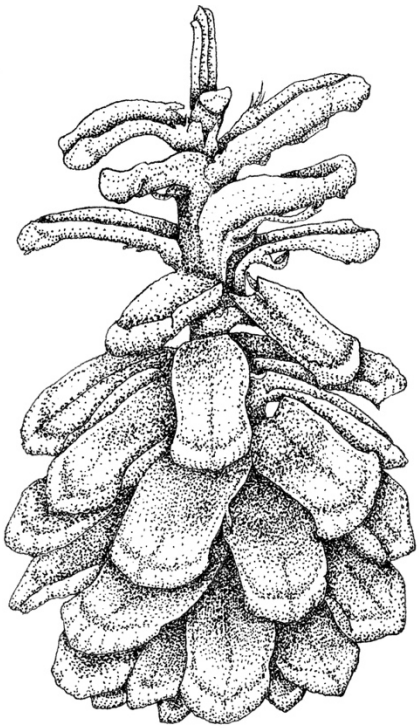
Asteraceae, 2026



Mum’s flowers, 2026



Hepatica nobilis, 2026



Pinus, 2026



Luzula, 2026