Our library is special, for it is the uninterrupted historical botanical library, as a part of the Leiden University, since 1575. It consists of a unique historical book collection and a modern collection that is divided in different scientific ‘specialties’. We also have a huge collection of journals on these subjects, and thousands of illustrations, with many items from the hands of famous illustrators.

The online resources consist of the OCLC Dutch Catalogue and the Leiden University catalogue, which can be used for searching, borrowing and extending books and article copies of our collections. The library website (www.nhn.leidenuniv.nl/index.php/library) contains links to botany and natural science related catalogues, databases, and e-journals. These services have improved the accessibility of our library collection.

Examples of non online resources are our card catalogue (discontinued since 2006) and BRAHMS, the herbarium database used in the library for referencing journal articles containing plant names, and linking to our digitized image database.

We are trying to give an excellent service to our library users. We’ve asked in a survey for their opinion concerning the library, the catalogue, the website and the services. In general they are happy with these aspects, but there was a wish for the extension of the opening hours and for a list of recent acquisitions on the website. We are now trying to find satisfactory solutions within the possibilities we have. This library survey will be repeated on a yearly basis.