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ARBORETUM KALMTHOUT AWARDED LEVEL III ACCREDITATION BY ARBNET ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

LISLE, Illinois (October XX, 2015) – The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and The Morton Arboretum are pleased to announce Arboretum Kalmthout in Antwerp, Belgium, has been awarded a Level III Accreditation. By achieving particular standards of professional practices deemed important for arboreta and botanic gardens, Arboretum Kalmthout is now recognized as an accredited arboretum in The Morton Register of Arboretum.

Established in 1856 by dendrologist Charles Van Geert, Arboretum Kalmthout was once a nursery and private botanical garden but today the 12.5-hectare intuition is owned and managed by the province of Antwerp. The Arboretum boasts a living collection of more than 4,000 plants, nearly 150 of which appear on the Red List of threatened plants.

More than 80 trees are listed on the inventory of the Belgian Dendrology Society as Belgian Champion.

Spring at the Arboretum brings flowering groundcovers, the foliage of Japanese maples, blossoms of cherry and apple trees and hundreds of colorful rhododendrons. Summer features hydrangeas, roses, dahlias, and more, attracting butterflies as well as patrons out for evening walks and concerts in the garden theatre.

In fall, many of the trees rooted at the Arboretum showcase their striking color and, in winter, visitors can take in hundreds of winter flowering shrubs and plants. For several decades, the Arboretum has held a festival celebrate the winter bloomer, witch hazel (*Hamamelis*).

“The ArbNet accreditation is truly encouraging for staff and volunteers of the Kalmthout Arboretum. It’s a fantastic feeling to belong to the extraordinary group of accredited arboreta that will strengthen our international links and enhance collaboration and the sharing of knowledge,” said Abraham Rammeloo, curator and director of Arboretum Kalmthout. “To the province of Antwerp, this accreditation demonstrates that the decision to safeguard this unique property and tree collection was right.”

About the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program

The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program is sponsored and coordinated by The Morton Arboretum in cooperation with American Public Gardens Association and Botanic Gardens Conservation International. This international initiative offers four levels of accreditation, recognizing arboreta of various degrees of development, capacity and professionalism. Accreditation is based on self-assessment and documentation of an arboretum’s level of achievement of accreditation standards. Standards include planning, governance, labeling of species, staff or volunteer support, public access

and programming and tree science, planting and conservation. More information is available at www.arbnet.org.

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