

AUB Nature Conservation Center (NCC)

Director

Saliba Aoun, Najat, PhD	Professor, Chemistry (FAS)
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Executive Committee Members

Abu Najm, Majdi, PhD	Assistant Professor, Civil Engineering (SFEA)
Homeidan, Fadia, PhD	Director of the Office of Grants and Contracts
Naja, Farah, PhD	Assistant Associate Professor, Nutrition and Food Sciences (FAFS)
Osman El Hage, Mona, MD	Instructor of Clinical Specialty, Family Medicine (FM)
Saad, Walid, PhD	Assistant Professor, Chemical Engineering Program (SFEA)
Saliba Aoun, Najat, PhD	Professor, Chemistry (FAS)
Talhok, Salma, PhD	Professor, Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management Department (FAFS)
Vuorela, Heikki, PhD	Professor, Pharmaceutical Biology, University of Helsinki, Finland

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Darwiche, Nadine, PhD	Professor, Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics (FM)

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Kobeissy, Firas, PhD	Associate Professor, Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics (FM)
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Romani, Maya, MD	Assistant Professor, Family Medicine (FM)
Rubeiz, Nelly, MD	Professor, Dermatology (FM)
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Srour, Issam, PhD	Associate Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering (SFEA)
Talhok, Rabih, PhD	Professor, Biology (FAS)
Talhok, Salma, PhD	Professor, Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management Department (FAFS)
Tannir, Lina	Lecturer, Finance (OSB)
Yehya, Nadine	Assistant Professor, Marketing (OSB)
Zurayk, Rami, PhD	Chairperson and Professor, Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management (FAFS)

Introduction

Established in 2002 as a hub for nature conservation efforts and awareness on campus, The Nature Conservation Center (NCC) is an interdisciplinary research center with the mission of promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and helping reinvent individuals' relationship with it through the use of research, education, community outreach and knowledge dissemination.

While almost every university in the West has its own biodiversity center, the AUB Nature Conservation Center is unique in the region as it is the only academic center that collects, identifies and catalogues species; creates databases; and cultivates and researches the nutritional, medicinal and traditional applications of endemic species in the region.

The Center's objectives are to link disciplines in order to generate new knowledge and create an open innovative and collaborative platform. Ultimately, the center aims to raise awareness about nature-related issues and to become a recognized reference for the study and sustainable use of dry land biodiversity. Through many running programs, research projects, outreach events, consultations on several large-scale environmental initiatives and awards, the Center has reached out to a demographic including everyone from laypeople to highly specialized scholars.

The center conducts research on medicinal plants to identify and extract medicinally-potent molecules, especially those with anti-cancerous properties. It also applies/ administers Citizen Science which involves activities that engage members of the community in its conservation efforts and research. It also offers awards to environmentally comprehensive ideas as part of IBDA (International Biodiversity Day At AUB). Recently, and in the wake of the waste crisis, NCC developed a new waste management program to assess environmental damages and stimulate public action in the development and harmonization of sustainable municipal Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) plans and practices. Moreover, in collaboration with the AUB Health and Wellness Program, NCC initiated a new Integrative Health program aiming to bridge between Research, Clinical, Educational and Policy in Integrative Health in AUB and the Middle East and North Africa.

The Center welcomes new members from AUB faculty every year, as well as interns and volunteers.

Membership and Governance

The AUB Nature Conservation Center consists of volunteers committed to collaborative learning and discovery. Membership includes AUB faculty and staff members and other scholars whose interests focus on biodiversity and nature-related issues.

The Center is a platform for scholars and activists at all stages in their careers and from all parts of the world to exchange ideas and information. Its participants take part in seminars and activities, as well as provide assistance to researchers and students and are categorized as Members, Associates, Assistants, Volunteers, Interns or Friends of the Center. NCC frequently collaborates with the business community, governments and NGOs at the national, regional and international levels. It is managed by a Director and one Executive and Research Committee of elected AUB faculty members, which is responsible for coordinating its work. As for the international Advisory Board, it is responsible for advising the Center on its strategic vision and future directions and for promoting NCC to the general community to public and private Institutions, and to potential funders.