

## Project Update: December 2009

The project activities by mid-December 2009 were:

- 1) Documentation of botanical and natural information on both live and dried specimens. For example, preparation for a poster publication and to introduce botanical plates into the biodiversity garden.
- 2) The project receives attention of local, national and tourist visitors, who paid attributes to the activities of the project, mainly conservation of nature, one comment says: "It is valuable to save plants and nature at the time of conflict like the case in Palestine". Many visitors follow also the progress and updates of the project on the webpage of both Rufford and Bani Naim and contacted Khaled Sawalha for appreciation and asking for further information.
- 3) Live botanical specimens were collected: group of black iris was introduced to the garden, red branches of *Arbutus* shrub of Ericaceae were collected for propagation and herbarium; bryophytes (i.e. mosses) were collected from the wild of Bani Naim and used for practical session for teaching botany students at Al-Quds University.
- 4) Fossils believed to be plant and animal specimens were collected from Bani Naim natural sites; five distinctive pieces were introduced to the natural museum. These specimens have a very important scientific and tourist value, since the area is rich with such fossils. Also group of mixed colored stones were collected and introduced to the museum.



