

Botanic Gardens from A to Z

(526089; 2 – 4 credit points)

March 10 - May 14 2009,
Tue + Thu 8 – 10, Kaisaniemi

www.fmnh.helsinki.fi/opetus



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Today's lecture

1. Tue March 10: *Course introduction*
2. Thu March 12: *Setting the scene - what is a botanic garden?*
 - What makes a botanic garden? – history, definition
 - Which are the core fields of activity of botanic gardens?
 - What kinds of botanic gardens are there?



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remember: aims of the course were...

- After completion of the course, students should be able to answer the following questions:
 - **What is a botanic garden?**
 - **Which are the core fields of activity of BGs?**
 - What constitutes an accession, i.e., the basic unit of a BG collection?
 - For which fields of research are BG collections particularly valuable?
 - Which are the specific benefits of BG collections in teaching and education of various target groups?
 - In which ways can and do BGs play a particular role in conservation?



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History

- Gardens and gardening, even horticulture, are ancient; but:
- *botanic* (≈scientific) gardens born in the Renaissance
 - 16th century Italy: Pisa 1543, Padua 1545



Padova: Orto dei Semplici, veduta d'insieme.



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History

- Gardens and gardening, even horticulture, are ancient; but:
- *botanic* (≈scientific) gardens born in the Renaissance
 - 16th century Italy: Pisa 1543, Padua 1545
 - 16th century: Heidelberg, Prague, Leiden, etc.
 - 1600 Copenhagen, 1633 Oxford, 1655 Uppsala
 - 1678 Turku
- What, then, *is* a botanic garden?



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Independent task 1: define the concept *Botanic Garden*

- form pairs
- discuss c. 10 minutes, make notes
- present your definition



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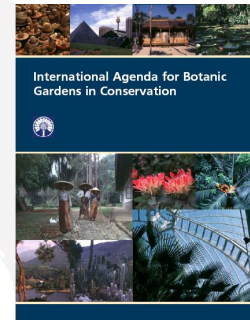
Once a visiting group of school children was asked how a botanic garden differs from other types of gardens. One pupil answered:

“All the plants in the world grow here!”

A good answer, but not quite right. At the Botanic Garden you may admire about two percent of the world's 300,000 plant species.

Definition

“Botanic gardens are institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of *scientific research, conservation, display and education.*”

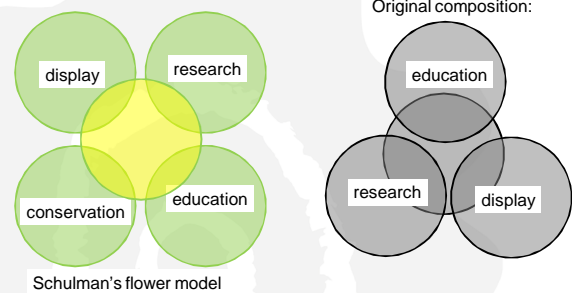


...definition

- nearly 500 years old, still going strong: currently >2,500 gardens in 148 countries — has nothing changed?
- “Botanic gardens are institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of *scientific research, conservation, display and education.*”
- this is still a simplified definition!

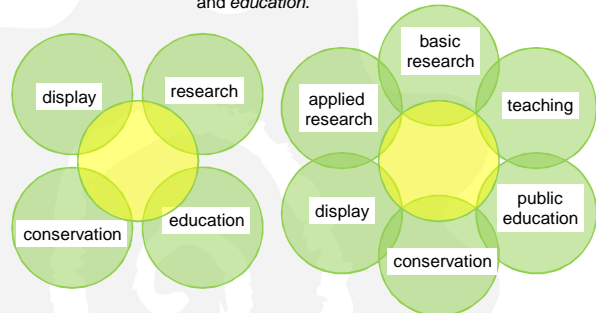
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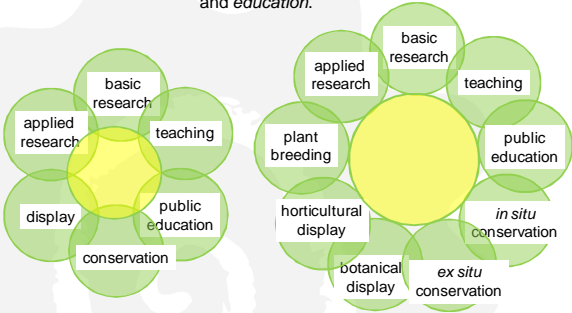
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...definition "Botanic gardens are institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of *scientific research, conservation, display and education.*"

BGs have different profiles

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Independent task 2:
define a scientific plant collection

- form pairs
- discuss c. 10 minutes, make notes
- present your definition next time we meet

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The nature of Botanic Gardens

- BGs always have been, are, and should remain multifaceted, and valuable for many interest groups, not least the surrounding society

Schulman's shamrock model

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...the nature of Botanic Gardens

- BGs always have been, are, and should remain multifaceted, and valuable for many interest groups, not least the surrounding society
- There are many types of BGs:
 - 'classic' multipurpose BGs, university gardens, ornamental gardens, historical gardens, conservation gardens, natural or wild gardens, combined botanical and zoological gardens, agro-botanical / germplasm collections, alpine or mountain gardens, horticultural gardens, community gardens, children's gardens...
 - etc., etc.



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...the nature of Botanic Gardens

- Examples of societal relevance
 1. education: not only universities, but also
 - schools, vocational schools, kindergartens, professional groups, general public
 2. conservation
 - policy
 - acts
 - messages



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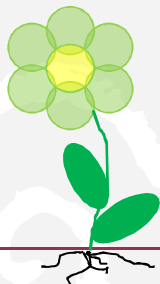
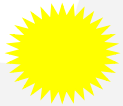
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...the nature of BGs



when the work continues for decades:
cultural heritage



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Take-home message again:

“Botanic gardens are institutions holding **documented collections of living plants** for the purposes of **scientific research, conservation, display and education.**”



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Course Programme

1. Tue March 10: *Course introduction*
2. Thu March 12: *Setting the scene - what is a botanic garden?*
3. **Tue March 17 – no lectures**
 - read Darwin technical manual pp. 3-10 and 27-39 and Action Plan EU pp. 7-12
4. Thu March 19: *Collection curation*



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