

THE JARDIN BOTANICO "VIERA Y CLAVIJO"

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Jardín Botánico "Viera y Clavijo" del Excmo. Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria

RESUMEN

Se expone brevemente lo que ha sido la historia del Jardín Botánico "Viera y Clavijo" que el próximo año cumplirá sus primeros 25 años de vida, después de que lo fundara el insigne Botánico E. R. Sventenius, al que dedicó hasta los últimos años de su vida.

A continuación se señalan las realizaciones conseguidas y actualizadas en una segunda fase de desarrollo, concentradas en la extensión de las actividades del Jardín hacia estudios científicos más modernos y la puesta en marcha de los nuevos laboratorios, herbario, libros y publicaciones.

Se señalan las actuales líneas de estudio seguidas en el Jardín junto con el personal dedicado a ellas, y por último se exponen los proyectos previstos para el futuro desarrollo del jardín y las facilidades que se ofrecen para aquellos botánicos que lo deseen visitar.

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INTRODUCTION

The Jardín Botánico Canario "Viera y Clavijo" is due, next year 1977, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of its foundation by the local government authority the Excmo. Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria. The garden is dedicated to the cultivation, conservation and scientific study of the Macaronesian Flora especially that of the Canary Islands.

It was between 1950 and 1952 that the distinguished resident botanist Dr. Eric R. Sventenius convinced the then President Don Matías Vega Guerra and the island council that the creation of a garden devoted to the local Canarian Flora would be an extremely foresighted investment for the future. In 1952 his proposal and initial project were accepted and the garden founded.

The first years of the garden, when it was under the very capable direction of Dr. Sventenius, were devoted to the landscaping and planting of a magnificent natural site in the Barranco de Guinguada near Tafira Alta, a few kilometres from the city of Las Palmas. The scientific labour of the garden during this stage of development was orientated towards the exploration of remote parts of the Canary Islands, and the collection and identification of new and poorly known taxa thus building up herbarium and living collections as a basis for study in the future. At this time Sventenius was also the senior botanist at the Jardín de Aclimatación de La Orotava, on the island of Tenerife, where the bulk of his herbarium collections are still to be found.

The results of this work were published at regular intervals and culminated in 1960 with the appearance of "Additamentum ad Floram Canariensem", one of the major 20th Century works on the Canarian flora and which was intended by its author to be a supplement to Webb & Berthelot's "Phytographia Canariensis". A further series of papers "Plantae Macaronesienses Novae vel minus Cognitae" was also published by Sventenius from 1969-71 following visits to the island of Madeira, the Cape Verde Islands and the Salvage Islands.

During this period Sventenius collected together a substantial personal library of books and reprints on the Macaronesian, Iberian and African Floras and on succulent plants. This library was, following Sventenius' untimely death in a road accident in 1973, presented to the garden by his family.

Towards the end of this first phase of development Sventenius initiated a programme of more modern scientific studies of the Canarian flora and, probably influenced by an old friend Prof. G. Erdtman, started palynological research with the aid of a post-graduate assistant. It is on this considerable legacy that we have, in the past two years been able to lay the foundations of the most recent phase of the expansion of both the scientific and public aspect of the botanical garden.

NEW FACILITIES

In August 1974 the Jardín Botánico Canario "Viera y Clavijo"

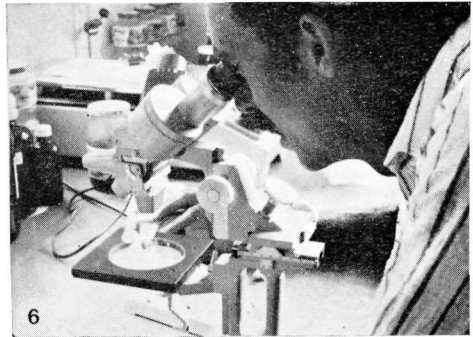
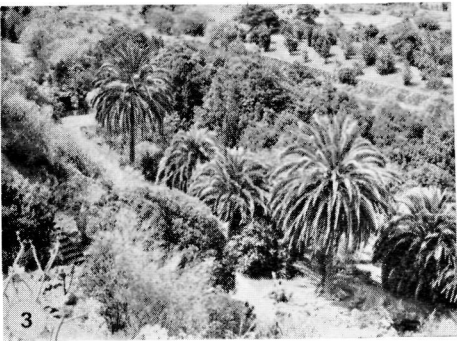
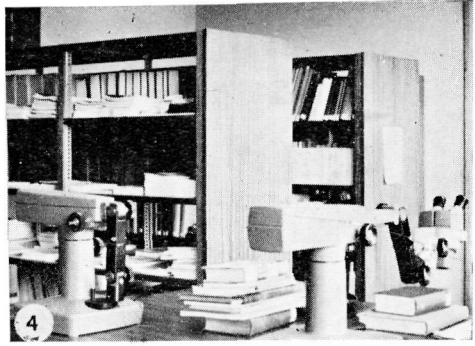
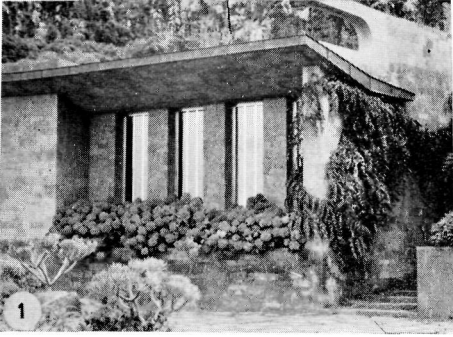


Plate 1. Jardín Botánico "Viera y Clavijo" : 1 . Laboratory and administration building. 2 & 3 Views of the garden. 4. Library and herbarium. 5 & 6 View of laboratory section.

began its second phase of development which has, so far, concentrated on the extension of research activities. It was immediately obvious that this could not take place without more research space, facilities, equipment, library etc., and the funds available to the garden have been generously increased to allow for this expansion.

LIBRARY AND PUBLICATIONS

The garden library started in 1974, now contains over 2000 volumes including the Sventenius collection and forms a working basis for taxonomic studies and for modern plant research in the fields of ecology and conservation, cytogenetics, palynology, anatomy and biosystematics.

An extensive reprint collection especially on Macaronesian topics is also available. The garden receives a number of journals and the publication of a new periodical "Botanica Macaronésica" should lead to a considerable increase in the number of journals taken by exchange. The garden also publishes an annual seed-list (Index Seminum) and various publicity leaflets. A Spanish language edition of D. & Z. I. Bramwell "Flores Silvestres de las Islas Canarias" will be published in October 1976.

HERBARIUM

The scientific personell of the garden are currently engaged in the formation of a Macaronesian herbarium. The basis of the herbarium, at present, is part of the Sventenius collection especially specimens from Gran Canaria, La Palma, Salvage Islands and Cape Verde Islands. Canary Islands and Madeira specimens collected by D. Bramwell and various other workers are also available. It is hoped that the herbarium will in future be a major repository for Macaronesian plants. The garden staff will undertake the collection of herbarium specimens, seeds, etc., for genuine research workers whenever possible.

LABORATORIES

New laboratories have been set up for modern research in systematic and evolutionary botany in order to study living material, populations in the field and in comparative cultivation and generally take advantage of the "natural island laboratory" that is the Canarian Archipelago.

The garden has cytology, anatomy, palynology and ecology laboratories and a scanning electron microscopy unit and these will, in the near future, be moved to a new building with further room for expansion.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Research projects currently in progress are under the general supervision of the garden director Dr. D. Bramwell in conjunction with an internationally - based scientific advisory committee. This committee is a unit of the recently formed garden council which meets twice a year to consider and advise on all aspects of the garden's development.

The principal research under way at present is as follows:

DR. D. BRAMWELL,	Flora of Macaronesia. Cytotaxonomy and biosystematics of the Canary Flora. The genera <i>Echium</i> and <i>Silene</i> in Macaronesia.
JULIA M. ^a PEREZ DE PAZ,	Biosystematics of Macaronesian <i>Senecio</i> species. Palynology of Canary endemics.
JOSE ORTEGA GARCIA,	Cytogenetics of Macaronesian <i>Lotus</i> and other Leguminosae. Ecological variation in Canary <i>Sideritis</i> .
BERNARDO NAVARRO VALDIVIELSO,	Reproductive biology of Canary endemics. Pollination mechanisms.
ANA ROSA BARRY GOMEZ,	Systematic anatomy of forest tree species. Comparative study of epidermis and trichomes.
VICTOR MONTELONGO PARADA,	Reproductive ecology. Dispersal mechanisms in Canary endemics. Biology of halophytes.
ALICIA ROCA SALINAS,	Palynology of Canary endemics, especially Labiatae. Comparative morphology and structure of pteridophyte spores.
MIGUEL ANGEL MORENO CAMENO,	Biosystematics and cytotaxonomy of Macaronesian <i>Tolpis</i> species. Ecology of Lichens in pioneer habitats.
M. ^a NIEVES GONZALEZ HENRIQUEZ,	Ecology of <i>Zostera marina</i> and its epiphytes. Cryptogamic botany.
DR. ANGELA ALDRIDGE,	Anatomy and evolution of woody insular endemics. Macaronesian <i>Sonchus</i> . Macaronesian <i>Bryophyta</i> .

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

A new building has been acquired for the garden and work will begin towards the end of 1976 on converting the interior to house the library, herbarium and laboratories more adequately than at present. It is hoped that this will be completed in 1977. Four post-graduate studentships will also be available from September 1976

through the "Plan Cultural" of the Province of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, and several new research projects will, therefore, be started.

A landscape project for the development of all 26 hectares available to the garden has been drawn up and has been accepted in principle. Work has already started on the initial phases of this and it is hoped that it will go ahead quickly when discussions concerning finance and staff are completed.

FACILITIES FOR VISITING BOTANISTS

The existence of this relatively new and important research centre is not generally known to outside workers and, therefore, the facilities available are sometimes overlooked. As general policy the garden welcomes short-and long-term visits by research workers with a special interest in island botany and the Macaronesian flora. Such visits stimulate interest and scientific exchange of material and ideas and, when the new building is completed, extra laboratory space will be available to house visiting workers.

NOTA PARA LOS AUTORES

- 1.—Botánica Macaronésica publica trabajos científicos originales en español o inglés dentro del tema de botánica descriptiva y experimental relacionada con la región Macaronésica (Islas Canarias, Madeira, Azores, Islas de Cabo Verde e Islas Salvajes).
- 2.—Los trabajos son aceptados para su publicación bajo el asesoramiento de al menos un árbitro independiente.
- 3.—Los manuscritos presentados deberán ajustarse al estilo utilizado en Botánica Macaronésica N.º 2. Un resumen conciso y cuadro sinóptico deberán ser incluidos.
- 4.—Los manuscritos deberán ser mecanografiados a doble espacio y solamente en una cara de papel.
- 5.—Los nombres científicos en latín deberán ser subrayados con una sola línea, todas las demás marcas deberán ser dejadas a los editores.
- 6.—Fotografías en blanco y negro y grabados de buena calidad son aceptados como también material ilustrativo.
- 7.—Los manuscritos deberán ser enviados al Editor, Botánica Macaronésica, Jardín Botánico "Viera y Clavijo", Tafira Alta, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Islas Canarias, España.
- 8.—Los autores recibirán 50 separatas gratis y también pueden encargarse más de antemano a precio de costo.