

ENG

HORTUS BOTANICUS URBINAS

Orto Botanico
dell'Università degli Studi
di Urbino "Carlo Bo"

INFOR- MA- TIONS

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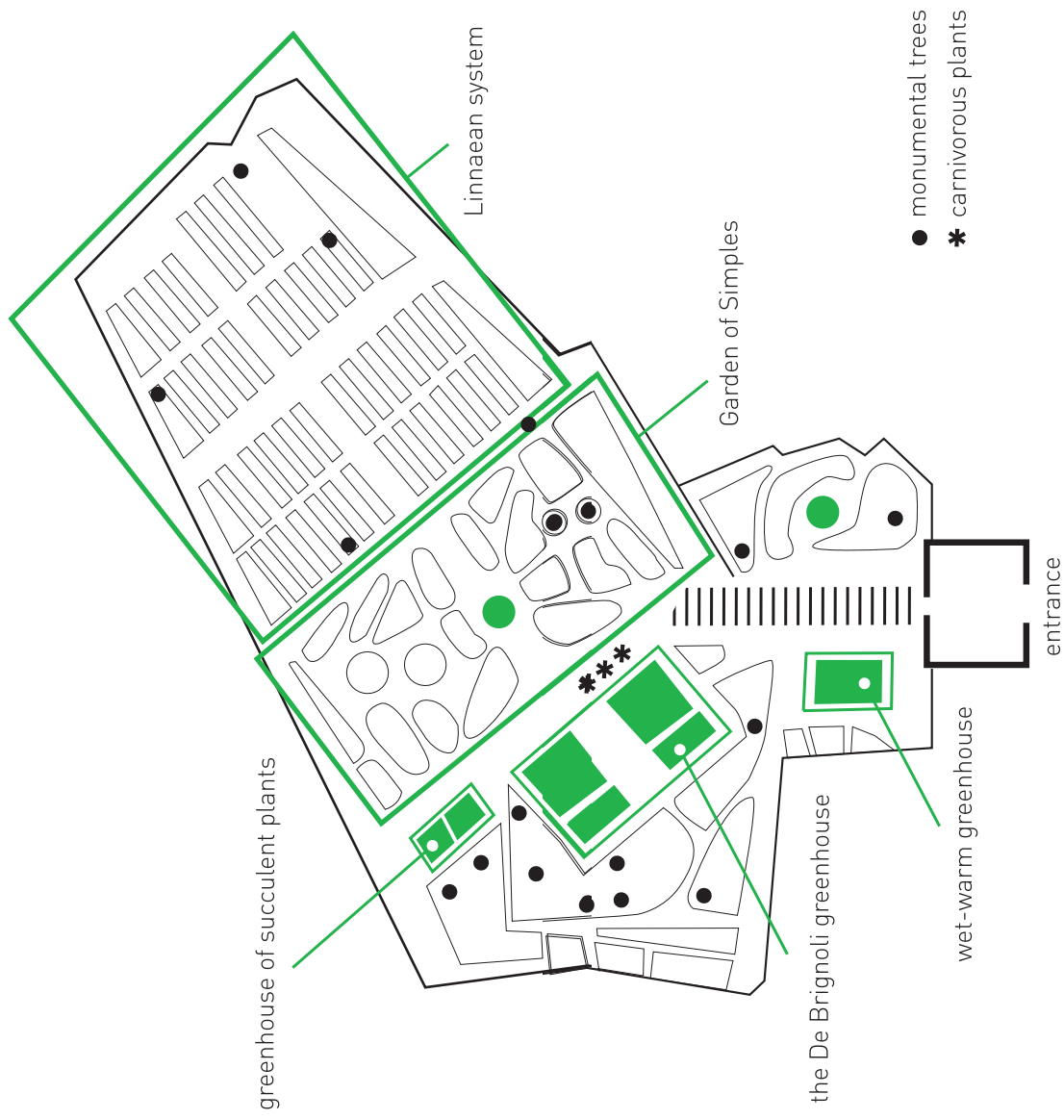
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THE BOTA- NICAL GARDEN HISTORY

The Botanical Garden was founded in 1809, when political events caused the University to close and to establish a boarding school in its place. The appointment of professor Giovanni De Brignoli from Brunhoff to cover the teaching of botany and agriculture brought about the establishment of the Botanical Garden for medical and agrarian studies. In 1812, the first "Catalogus Plantarum Horti Botanici Urbinatis" was published and, in 1813, the garden was enriched with a greenhouse to shelter exotic plants. When the Papal government returned to power and the University was restored, De Brignoli left Urbino. The garden was returned to the care of religious orders, but the burdensome expenditure required to maintain this commitment forced the friars to give the Garden in "perpetual lease" to the University [1844]. In 1848, the engineer Ercole Salmi erected the façade and, with it, the main entrance to the garden.

JOANNES DE BRI- GNOLI

Joannes De Brignoli was born in Gradisca (Friuli) in 1774. He studied in Vienna and there he also consolidated his naturalistic vocations with eminent scholars of the time. In 1797 he was already a botanist universally known as a great expert and explorer of alpine flora and as a highly cultured man: a "talentvoller und kenntnissreicher Mann" according to the botanist Henkel. In 1808, during the Napoleonic occupation, the University of Urbino was substituted with a "Liceo-Convitto" and De Brignoli was called to teach botany there that year. In 1809 he founded the Botanical Garden in this ducal town, and in 1811 he published the first "Catalogus Plantarum Horti Botanici Urbinatis". When the Papal State was again established, the University resumed its activity but De Brignoli had to go away, settling first in Milan and then in Verona. In 1817 he went to Modena, where he took on the role of director of the Botanical Garden for almost forty years. He died in Modena in 1857.

VISIT- ING THE GARDEN

FAÇADE AND MAIN ENTRANCE-HALL

The façade is the work of the engineer Ercole Salmi, pupil of Ghinelli from Senigallia, author of the Teatro Sanzio theatre, Urbino. The neo-classical style building was constructed in terracotta bricks painted with oil paint. The top of the façade ends with a projecting cornice, and above this there is a wall that supports six iron vase-holders. Beyond the wrought iron gate is the vaulted entrance-hall which was entirely frescoed by Quinto Possenti in 1861-62. An antique chromatic glazed door introduces the staircase which leads to the garden.

ARBORETUM

On the left is an area where various high-trunked plants can be admired. These include: the holm oak (*Quercus ilex* L.), the maple (*Acer pseudo-platanus* L.), the tree of heaven (*Ailanthus glandulosa* Desf.), the cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens* L.) and the ash (*Fraxinus excelsior* L.). Small, irregular flower beds contain some undergrowth species.

THE DE BRIGNOLI GREENHOUSE

The main greenhouse was constructed in 1813 by De Brignoli himself. Inside there is space for all the plants unable to tolerate cold winters; these plants are only placed along the garden's paths and flower beds during the summer period.

FIRST TERRACE

This terrace (Garden of Simples) contains the medicinal plants (Simples). It is set out in thirteen flower beds with boxwood borders; in the centre of the terrace is a small basin with aquatic species. Arboreal plants such as *Ginkgo biloba* L., *Picea excelsa* (Lam.) Link. and *Cedrus deodara* G. Don fil. are also present.

SECOND TERRACE

Here the layout of the herbaceous and shrubby species, which was initially carried out in accordance with the Linnaean system, was then changed due to the needs of cultivation and local climate conditions. The large signs indicate the names of the plant families, while the small signs indicate the genus and the species, followed by the name of the author. The final, shady and humid flower beds, adjacent to the Convent of San Francesco, contain ferns.

THIRD TERRACE

This is the garden's final level; among the flower beds there is: a European yew (*Taxus baccata* L.), a European beech (*Fagus sylvatica* L.), and a tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera* L.) which were mentioned by De Brignoli, and date back to the era of the garden's foundation.

EXIT

Returning up through the garden, halfway up the steps, on the right, there is a small, hot and humid greenhouse where there is a selection of tropical orchids and other species. The path at the side of this greenhouse leads to the exit of the Garden, in "Scalette S. Spirito".