

The Andalusian Network of Botanic Gardens in Natural Areas is firmly committed to support the development and efficient application of the World Conservation Strategy for Nature and the Convention on Biological Diversity. As centres for conservation, recovery and reintroduction of wild species, the Network takes part in the conservation strategy of the Regional Ministry for the Environment and coordinates actions with other regional, national and international organizations and institutions, such as the International Association of Botanic Gardens (IABG) or the Iberian-Macaronesian Association of Botanic Gardens (AIMJB).



Botanical Garden Network distribution
Biogeographic regions

UMBRIA DE LA VIRGEN BOTANIC GARDEN

This garden represents the flora and the vegetation of the inland Baetic Mountains of the Manchego and Guadiciano–Bacense biographic sectors. There are two different areas in the garden: an “ex situ” area, a cultivated zone with the typical plants of both biogeographic sectors, organised according to the different environments and uses of the plants; and an “in situ” area, a natural zone where it is possible to see the different stages of regeneration of the vegetation of the typical landscape of Sierra Maria.



RED ANDALUZA
JARDINES BOTÁNICOS
EN ESPACIOS NATURALES

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VISITORS

- Ask for information at the Reception area before starting your visit.
- Respect all plants in the garden and keep to the designated paths.
- Please keep all areas clean and use the bins provided.
- Smoking or lighting of fires is not allowed.
- Taking photographs, drawing or simply observing are the best ways to enjoy your visit.
- If you walk in silence, you will be able to hear many different sounds.
- Plan your route taking into account the garden’s closing times.
- If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact a member of staff.

INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

e-mail: reservatuvisita.amaya@juntadeandalucia.es

USEFUL ADDRESSES

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Provincial Office of Almería
Calle Canónigo Molina Alonso, 8
04071 Almería
Tfno. 950 101 676 / Fax. 950 037 107

Umbría de la Virgen Botanic Garden
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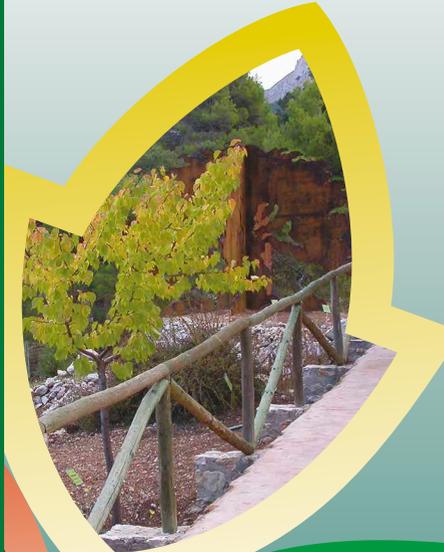
SYMBOLS USED

All plants are identified with plaques which include the following information: common name in Castilian Spanish and scientific name (in Latin, followed by the name of the authors that wrote the description), botanic family, geographical distribution and level of threat, which is shown using the following icons:

- In danger of extinction ●
- Vulnerables ●
- Of special interest ●

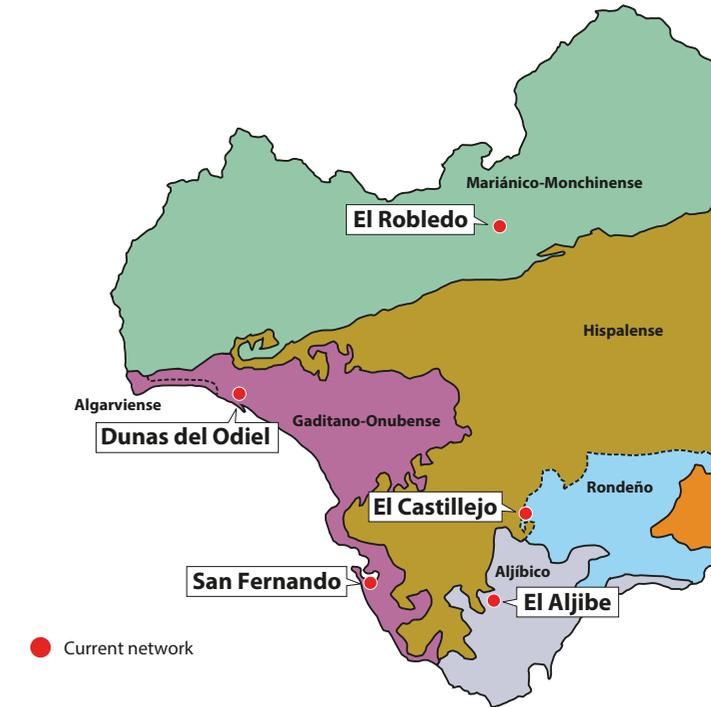


Consejería de Agricultura, Ganadería,
Pesca y Desarrollo Sostenible



UMBRÍA DE LA VIRGEN

Andalusia’s prime location, between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, as well as between two different continents, allows for a huge range of ecosystems and environments, with a great variety of climates and terrains, where a rich botanical and mycological heritage has developed. The region has around 4,000 different species of higher plants and around 3,500 species of fungi. Many of these species are endemic to Andalusia and some of them are endangered due to several factors.



Botanic and mycological gardens contribute to the conservation of this natural heritage. For this reason, a Network of Gardens has been set up. They are organised according to ecological criteria, to improve awareness, to promote conservation and to exhibit plants and fungi which make up the Mediterranean Forest of Andalusia. Each of the different gardens in the network is dedicated to local flora and vegetation, paying special attention to rare and endangered flora, in coordination with all the other gardens. The Mycological Garden is a regional showcase of fungi in Andalusia.

Location

The “Umbría de la Virgen” Botanic Garden is in the Sierra Maria-Los Velez Natural Park, in the municipality of Maria (Almeria). It is located on the northern mountainside of Sierra Maria, at the foot of La Burrica (2,045m, the highest peak of the mountain range). Access is from Velez Rubio, via the A-317 road. Passing the village of Maria, there is a paved road on the left hand side which leads to the Ermita de la Virgen de La Cabeza. The Botanic Garden is a little further on from this place.



The Garden

CULTIVATED SPECIES

At the entrance of the garden, there are examples of the most commonly grown fruit and vegetables in vegetable gardens, orchards, and dryland farms, as well as wild plants which are used as ornamental plants. The first human settlements cultivated plants for feeding purposes, source of natural fibre, etc.

ETHNOBOTANY

It is estimated that 80% of all plants have some known use for humans. Products obtained from wild species are very diverse: medicines, food, tools, fabrics, furniture, fuels, ornamentation, as well as “magic uses”, amongst others.



Paeonia broteroi

PROTECTED SPECIES

Some plants have problems of conservation which can lead to extinction. In order to conserve these plants, they are protected by law. It is everyone’s responsibility to take care of this biodiversity.

STEPPE

Esparto grass and thyme plants are the most typical plants in these areas, creating open landscapes on gently undulating topography which reminds you of the desert landscape. These plants have adapted to live in a Mediterranean climate: small and curved-edge leaves, light colours, hairs, essences, thick cuticles, vertical stems and leaves, etc.

SALT PAN

Only specialised plants are able to grow in soils with an excess of salts. They are unique species of great botanic interest. Fleshy leaves and stems, and the accumulation of minerals are frequent adaptations of these plants.

GYPSUM QUARRY SOIL

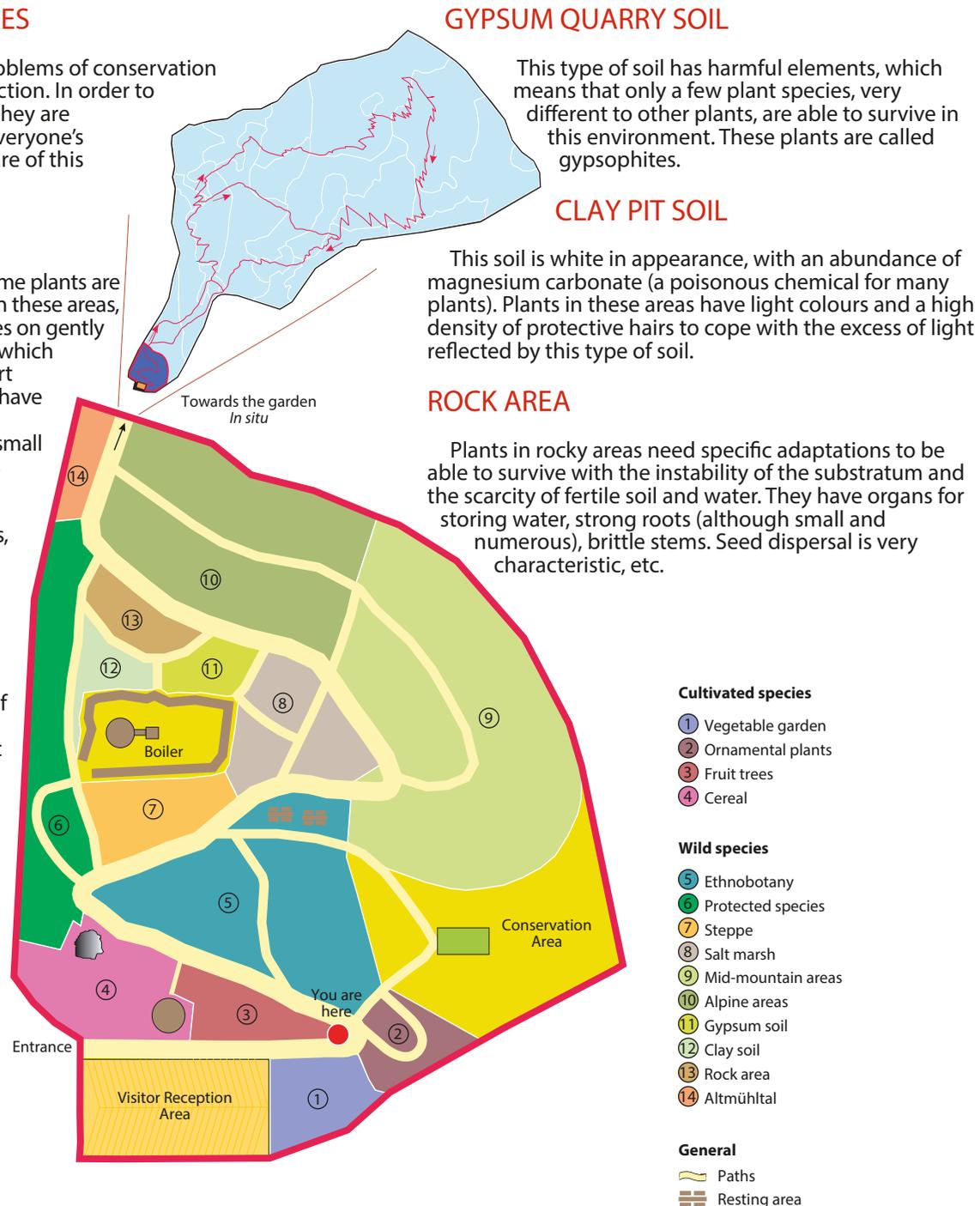
This type of soil has harmful elements, which means that only a few plant species, very different to other plants, are able to survive in this environment. These plants are called gypsophites.

CLAY PIT SOIL

This soil is white in appearance, with an abundance of magnesium carbonate (a poisonous chemical for many plants). Plants in these areas have light colours and a high density of protective hairs to cope with the excess of light reflected by this type of soil.

ROCK AREA

Plants in rocky areas need specific adaptations to be able to survive with the instability of the substratum and the scarcity of fertile soil and water. They have organs for storing water, strong roots (although small and numerous), brittle stems. Seed dispersal is very characteristic, etc.



MID-MOUNTAIN AREAS

The topographical variety in very little space produce a huge range of ecosystems (different types of forests, vegetation exposed to the sun or in the shade, gallery forests, etc.) where different forms of vegetation life can be found.

ALPINE AREAS

The appearance of this vegetation is very characteristic, with cushion, stunted and semi circular shapes (the igloo effect), with an abundance of shrubs and rosette shapes, to cope with snow and wind, as well as hairs and pigments to cope with ultraviolet light. Only a few isolated pine trees can be found at this altitude.

ALTMÜHLTAL

The Sierra Maria-Los Velez Natural Park is twinned with the Altmühlal Natural Park in Bavaria (Germany). Although they are located in totally different regions, there are certain botanic and ecological similarities.

THE IN SITU GARDEN

Three routes of different length (908m, 1,960m and 3,627m) and different levels of difficulty showcase the variety of vegetation formations of Sierra Maria and the ecological processes. This wide area of the Botanic Garden is ideal for the recognition of species and to learn about the different ecological adaptations of plants to altitude in a mountain environment.



Erinacea anthyllis



Ornamental wild flowers



Atropa baetica