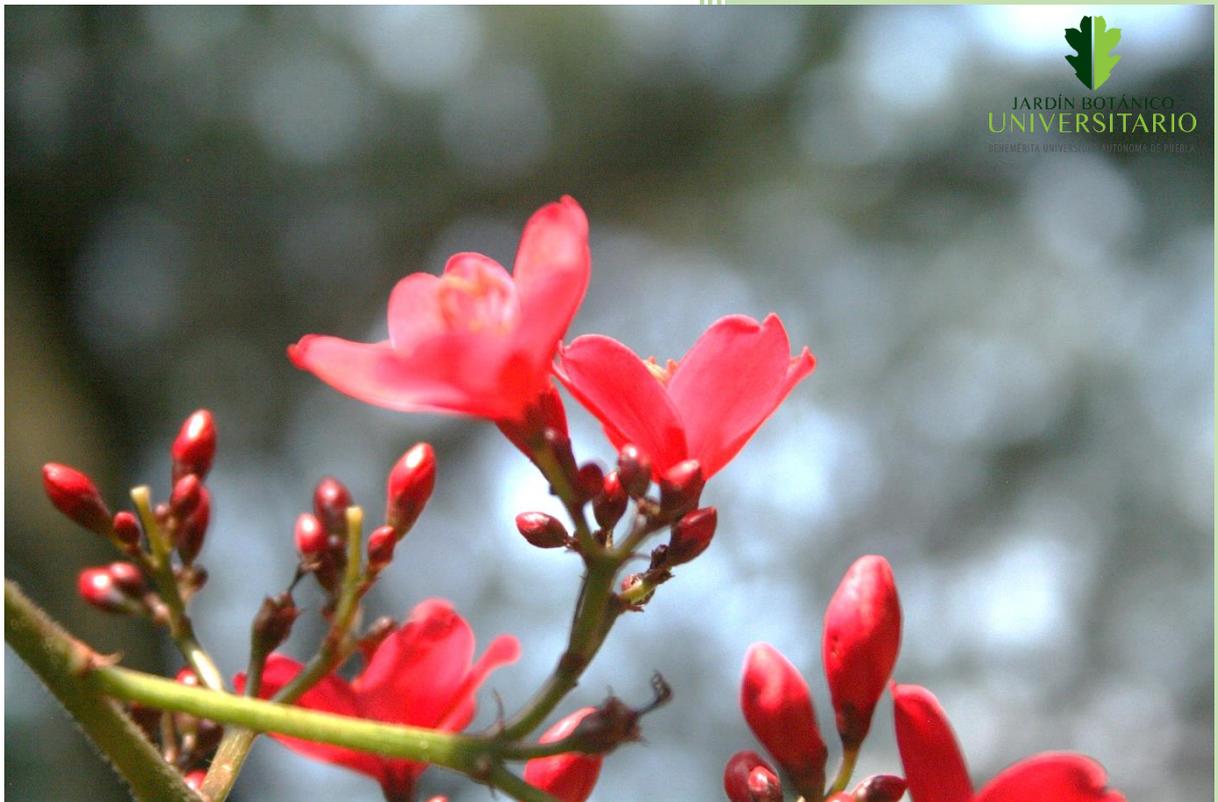


Botanic Garden BUAP Collections Policy



Allen Coombes

Curator of Scientific Collections

Contents

1. Botanic Garden BUAP Collections Policy	2
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 New Accessions	2
1.3 Labelling Policy	3
1.4 Annual and short/lived plants	3
1.5 Exotic Ornamental Plants	3
1.6 Native Wildlife	3
1.7 Conservation	4
1.8 Record Keeping	4
1.9 Identification	4
1.10 Landscaping	5
1.11 Deaccessioning Policy	5
1.12 Satellite Gardens	5

1. Botanic Garden BUAP Collections Policy

Allen J. Coombes

Curator of Scientific Collections

1.1 Introduction

The Botanic Garden BUAP aims to hold as wide a collection as possible of plants that can be grown considering the restrictions of space and climate. Particular attention is given to Puebla natives and our speciality, oaks, as well as to our increasing collections of *Salvia* and of Crassulaceae of Mexico. Ornamental plants that are attractive to the public as well as useful plants such as medicinal and culinary herbs are also included.

1.2 New Accessions

New material for the living collection can be obtained by several means. Some will be collected in the field as either seeds, cuttings, or occasionally by dividing plants. Other material will be obtained from reliable nurseries while some material arrives as a donation or exchange with other gardens. Occasionally material will be offered by members of the public. In the last case the Curator reserves the right to refuse this material as it may not be suitable for the collection or may already be represented. Some plants are received as donations of often rare plants that have been confiscated and are suspected to have been removed from the wild. Normally the Garden is obliged to accept these.

In the case of wild collected material we ensure that the relevant collection permission is in place before any collections are made. When material is collected from the wild we will also collect a voucher herbarium specimen. In the few cases where it is not possible to collect a specimen for the herbarium we will collect such a specimen from the cultivated plant at a suitable time.

1.3 Labelling Policy

All permanent plants in the garden receive a permanent label. Labels are normally ordered and received in summer and planting usually starts a little before this. Before the permanent labels arrive, newly planted material is marked with a temporary label. Accurate labels with accession number are important not only to convey information to the public but also for curatorial purposes. A qualifying letter after the accession number identifies individual plants within an accession.

1.4 Annual and short/lived plants

The Garden maintains a collection of some plants that may only survive for one or two seasons, such as plants in the Vegetable Garden. These will often not receive permanent labels or be entered onto the database but are planted according to season, the requirements of the garden and what is available. They are marked with hand-written labels.

1.5 Exotic Ornamental Plants

Most of the ornamental plants available in nurseries are not of Mexican origin but are important here as these are often the plants that people know best. We therefore aim to have a good representation of these to show which can be grown in the climate here, how they perform in gardens and to teach visitors a little more about them. We are also trying to introduce and promote native plants that are not available in cultivation as potential ornamentals.

1.6 Native Wildlife

As well as the cultivated plants grown here, the Garden is home to more than 200 species of plants that grow here as natives or as introduced species and include 5 different orchids. These are all documented by herbarium specimens and mostly by photographs as well. The Garden is maintained in such a way as to maximise the survival of these species which are important to our native insect and bird populations. Only some invasive weeds such as the introduced *Reseda luteola*, are removed. The island in the lake here is left as a reserve for native flora and as a safe nesting site for birds, the only maintenance needed being the occasional removal of *Eucalyptus* seedlings.

1.7 Conservation

The Botanic Garden BUAP recognizes that conservation is an important part of its activities.

Our floristic activities in different parts of the state are helping to map the flora of Puebla including species that are of conservation concern. With known localities mapped we will attempt to collect propagating material for inclusion in the collection. Material from threatened plants should be collected from as many individuals as possible. While some plants will be dispersed through the garden, conservation collections should be planted together, and, if possible, away from possible pollinators. When threatened plants are considered to be not suitable for the climate here, attempts will be made to plant them in more suitable locations, such as another university campus. Reintroduction to the wild should only be considered when safe sites can be found.

1.8 Record Keeping

Our plant records, both living and herbarium collections are kept on one database, BG.Base. Living material is given an accession number on arrival that stays with it throughout its life in the garden. During spring the Curator evaluates material in the nursery and decides which plants are needed for the collection and which are suitable to plant. These are entered on the database, creating plant records from the accession records, a planting list as well as a list of those plants that need labels is created.

Before planting, locations are marked for each plant with a temporary label attached to a stake. The Head Gardener together with the member of horticultural staff responsible for each area then collect the plants from the nursery and plant them in the location selected. Details of planting date and location are recorded for each plant. Each member of the horticultural staff has two books in which to record information on planting, moving, deaths etc. These books are swapped every 2 weeks, after which data is entered into the database.

1.9 Identification

Regular checks are made on the identification of our living plants and we aim to have every plant labelled with its up-to-date name. This is helped greatly by having voucher specimens of the original collection in our herbarium which are available to anyone visiting from other institutions. As part of this process we are gradually collecting herbarium specimens of our living plants.

1.10 Landscaping

Planting in the Gardens will aim to develop each area as one that is attractive to visitors, thus including ornamental flowering plants in all locations. Primary importance is given to the survival of species planted in the gardens and so plants are laid out not usually taxonomically or geographically but are planted in locations where they are most expected to survive. Such as plants from warm, dry areas on sunny slopes and plants from more humid areas on cooler and more humid or shady slopes or among trees for shelter. Some areas on a shaded slope beneath pine trees have already been developed for plants such as *Echeveria*, *Begonia*, orchids and ferns as well as other plants that require these conditions.

1.11 Deaccessioning Policy

The small size of the Gardens means that it will only be possible to grow a small percentage of the plants that we would like to. At some time some of the existing plants may be competing for space with new arrivals, which may, potentially, be more important to the collection. When this occurs an evaluation will be made of any plants considered for removal. They will be evaluated on the basis of their landscape value and scientific importance to the collection, for example if they are native of Puebla, if they are in a suitable location, if they are wild collected, if they are rare and if there are any other plants of that species in the Garden. Following this evaluation some plants may be removed.

1.12 Satellite Gardens

Considering the current restrictions of size and climate we regard Satellite Gardens as essential to the future development of the collection. These could provide homes to plants that may be difficult to grow here and in larger numbers than we can currently accommodate. They could be important in growing conservation collections of rare species. At the time of writing the use of some Satellite Gardens for the collection is under discussion.