

The Botanic Garden, Padua

Engineering geological conditions and problems:

The subsurface of the city of Padua (Veneto region) is formed by alluvial deposits. The deposits belonging to the first depositional event are related to the Last Glacial Maximum. The top of the sequence has been found at depths of about 15 m. The second depositional episode is characterized by the deposition of a several metres thick coarse sand body, showing a fining-upward sequence. The top depositional surface had a rolling topography, and soil development took place. The last depositional event was by a river with lower energy and was contemporary to the first human settlements in the area.

As the origin of substratum deposits is alluvial, the ground is very permeable and the circulation of water is high. This seems to create problems of collapse in different parts of the city, as in the botanic garden, in case of subsurface constructions like parking.



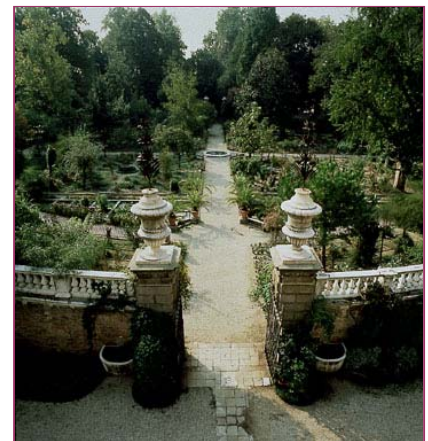
Plan of 1887 of the Botanic Garden
 (www.unimo.it/ortobot/horti/cd/Padova/padovahome.htm)



Water lily in the Botanic Garden
 (www.unimo.it/ortobot/horti/cd/Padova/padovahome.htm)

Historical background:

The world's first botanical garden was created in Padua in 1545. It still preserves its original layout - a circular central plot, symbolizing the world, surrounded by a ring of water. Other elements were added later, some architectural (ornamental entrances and balustrades) and some practical (pumping installations and greenhouses). It continues to serve its original purpose as a centre for scientific research.



The Hortus Sphaericus in the garden
 (www.unimo.it/ortobot/horti/cd/Padova/padovahome.htm)

Supplementary information:

The Committee decided to inscribe this property because the Botanical Garden of Padua is the original of all botanical gardens throughout the world, and represents the birth of science, of scientific exchanges, and understanding of the relationship between nature and culture. It has made a profound contribution to the development of many modern scientific disciplines, notably botany, medicine, chemistry, ecology, and pharmacy.

The Botanic garden of Padua was inserted in the list in 1997.