



Native ornamental species for landscaping and xerogardening in semi-arid environments



J. Ochoa¹; M. Muñoz¹; M. J. Vicente^{1,2}; J. J. Martínez-Sánchez^{1,2}; J. A. Fernández^{1,2}; E. Conesa¹; J. A. Franco^{1,2};

¹ Dpto. de Producción Vegetal. Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena. 30203 Cartagena

² Unidad Asociada al CSIC de «Horticultura Sostenible en Zonas Áridas»

e-mail address: jesus.ochoa@upct.es

INTRODUCTION

Vegetation is the most important component of any landscape project. Knowledge of plant ecology, growth characteristics, aesthetic and cultural aspects, are key to sustainability and functionality in green spaces and for selecting the right plants.

Over the last decade the use of native species has increased in landscaping and xerogardening projects under semi-arid conditions, because of their ability to adapt to abiotic stresses and their usefulness to create connectivity within urban and sub-urban ecosystems, promoting biodiversity. Furthermore, they are becoming increasingly popular as they promote low maintenance costs for public administrations.

Despite the above mentioned, native plants are still little used in landscaping projects because of a lack of knowledge, are difficult to obtain in local nurseries and the lack of experience about their suitability to different urban and sub-urban spaces and conditions.

The Región of Murcia (SE Spain) is a territory of a great floristic diversity, most of them with ornamental and ecological features of great interest for landscaping and xerogardening.

The purpose of this project is to develop a guide of use of native species with ornamental value for landscaping and xerogardening in semi-arid regions via web.

MATERIALS Y METHODS

The project has been performed by the "Mediterranean Hortofloriculture" Research Team from Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena (Spain) throughout the collaboration agreement signed with the Dirección General del Medio Natural (currently Dirección General de Patrimonio Natural y Biodiversidad).

The home page explains the site map, the involved partners, the species forms, links to related websites and scientific references that support all the information contained in the web. The web structure is shown below.



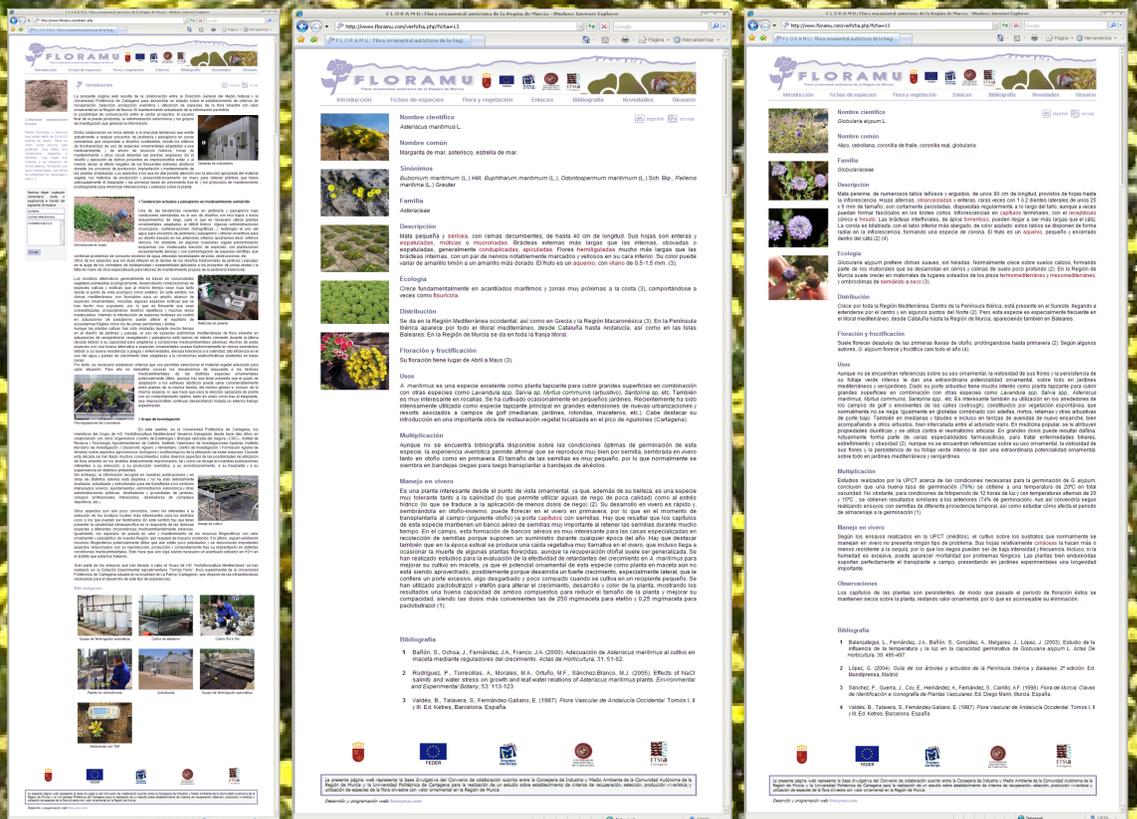
The species information is organized in forms that contains information about ecology, nursery production methods, and xerogardening and landscape uses of 62 Mediterranean native species, including trees, palms, shrubs and herbaceous perennials described in forms.

The data is available to the general public and to the professional sector and is expected to be increased on line with the professional sector needs.



RESULTS

The web site is www.floramu.com



FUTURE ACTIONS

- * Expand the list of native ornamental species database and edit the forms information in printable format in order to enable their direct inclusion in the landscape projects.
- * The web will be updated with a powerful search engine that provides real-time data and advice in selecting the most appropriate to each type of project and landscape design.