**Heritage plants in Historic gardens – case Jokioinen Manor**

**Park, Finland**

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**Abstract**

Owners of the manors have multiplied the biodiversity of horticultural plants in

Finland by importing the seeds and seedlings abroad to their gardens over the

last three hundred years. For many reasons in manor gardens are only some of

these heritage plants left, like roses, perennials and ornamentals shrubs. We have

developed a method for gathering knowledge of original plants in historic gardens

and for rediscovering and repatriating them as heritage plants back to the

gardens. This method includes an inventory of the existing cultural flora, search

for the lost vegetation (so called run-a-away-plants) and gathering the cultural

knowledge of the plants. In our case study we rediscovered several original plant

strains originating from Jokioinen manor in Southern Finland. In this paper we will

also demonstrate some ideas on how to bring out the cultural history of plants to

visitors in historical gardens.

**Introduction**

The ICOMOS-IFLA International Committee for Historic Gardens defines in The

Florence Charter (1982) that a historic garden as an architectural and

horticultural composition of interest to the public from the historical or artistic

point of view. Manor parks, vicarage and urban parks and parks around the

hospitals are good examples of those kinds of historical parks in Finland

(Hautamäki, 2000).

According to the Florence Charter (1982) it is important to determine the initial

vegetation of the site and preserve it. The Finnish National Programme for Plant

Genetic Resources was established in 2003 to facilitate the conservation of

agricultural and forest genetic resources in Finland (Anon, 2001). The Programme

emphasizes the origin of the plants and preservation of original, initial plants (the

heritage plants, landraces) that enhances biodiversity of the historical gardens.

According to Jordan (2007) a heritage plant (or heirloom plant) can be an old

variety or a landrace which has been introduced and locally cultivated at least

more than 50 years.

Especially manor gardens and parks have had a significant role in promoting

variability in the horticultural flora in Finland (Ruoff, 2002). In considerable

amount of the historical gardens the original plants are missing for different

reasons, like cold winters, lesser gardening and first of all the ignorance of the

value of the original vegetation (e.g. Ruoff 2002, Häkkinen, 2001).

Jokioinen manor Park is located in South-Western Finland and park is open for

public. The history of the Jokioinen Estate can be traced back to 1562 and the

history of the park to 18th century (Anttila, 1991, Kurki, 2003). According to Pia

56

Kurki (2003), the owners of the Jokioinen Estate have planted in the park for

example roses, fruit trees and ornamental shrubs. However there were only some

ornamentals growing in the park on 2002 (Kurki 2003)**.** In Finland it is commonly

known, that local people move perennials and even shrubs from the abandoned

gardens to their own gardens. We call these plants as a run-a-way plant. This

means that they are heritage plants that are not any more growing in their

original growing site, but they can still been found in the neighbouring gardens

(Veteläinen *et al*. 2007). We have developed a method to repatriate heritage

plants back to parks and thus preserve them for future generations.

**Materials and methods**

During 2005-2006 we made an inventory of the existing cultural flora in Jokioinen

manor park area. We marked, numbered, described and photographed the plants

and marked their position on a map. In some cases we collected herbarium

samples of the plants (Hartikainen, not published). We identified also the apple

varieties of the Jokioinen Park with DNA-fingerprinting (Antonius-Klemola *et al*.

2006).

In order to find run-a-away plants of the Jokioinen manor park we made so called

heritage plant calls during 2006-2007. Calls included one newspaper

advertisement in local newspaper, notices on the local boards, letters to the local

people, and interviews of the local plant experts. Our project was also introduced

twice in a local newspaper. In all these cases we gave our a phone number and

email address, so that it was easy to contact and tell us about the Jokioinen

manor park, it’s plants and the hints about the plant individuals related the

Jokioinen manor. We gathered knowledge about the run-a-away strains from

donors: We localized the plants and collected the knowledge of their common and

local names. In addition site information was collected. Furthermore estimation of

the age of a single plant strain, cultivation history, cultivation methods and the

use of the harvest, stories (happenings, memories) related to the single heritage

plant strain were recorded. We registered all this information of each plant

individual to a specific form.

**Preliminary results**

We found that there are still growing about 80 different heritage plant strains in

Jokioinen manor park, for example *Spiraea* x *rosalba, Sorbaria sorbifolia, Fragaria*

*moschata.* The DNA-fingerprinting of still existing 23 apple trees revealed 12

different varieties such as ’Mustialan Iso Venäläinen’ and Anisovka’.

We registered data of 238 individual heritage plant strains, which represent 112

different species or varieties. From those 238 individuals about thirty individuals

can be called as run-a-away plants of Jokioinen manor. One example of the runaway-

plants with historical value is a cabbage rose (*Rosa* Centifolia-group

’Pikkala’), which the gardener of the Jokioinen Estate gave to a local garden in

1930-1940’s.

It also turned out that the best practise to find run-a-away plants are

announcements and articles in local newspapers as well as plant expert’s

interviews.

57

**Discussion and conclusions**

We found evidence that heritage plants of Jokioinen park area have been moved

to the home gardens in the Jokioinen area and surroundings. The discovered

plants have been now collected and preserved in so called Wendla’s Garden in

Jokioinen, where the visitors and travellers can familiarize themselves with the

biological heritage of the Jokioinen manor. Since the historical gardens are rarely

demonstrated together with the heritage plants, a maintenance and restoration

plan of the Jokioinen Manor park is also under construction. Our future aim is to

repatriate the conserved heritage plants back to the manor park by the plan. Our

work has continued in the Finnish-Estonian project concerning the sustainable

management and development of historic parks (DEVEPARK). We have collected

the information about the Manor house area to the web pages

www.mtt.fi/kartanopuisto. Maps, signs and recorded presentations are under

construction.

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