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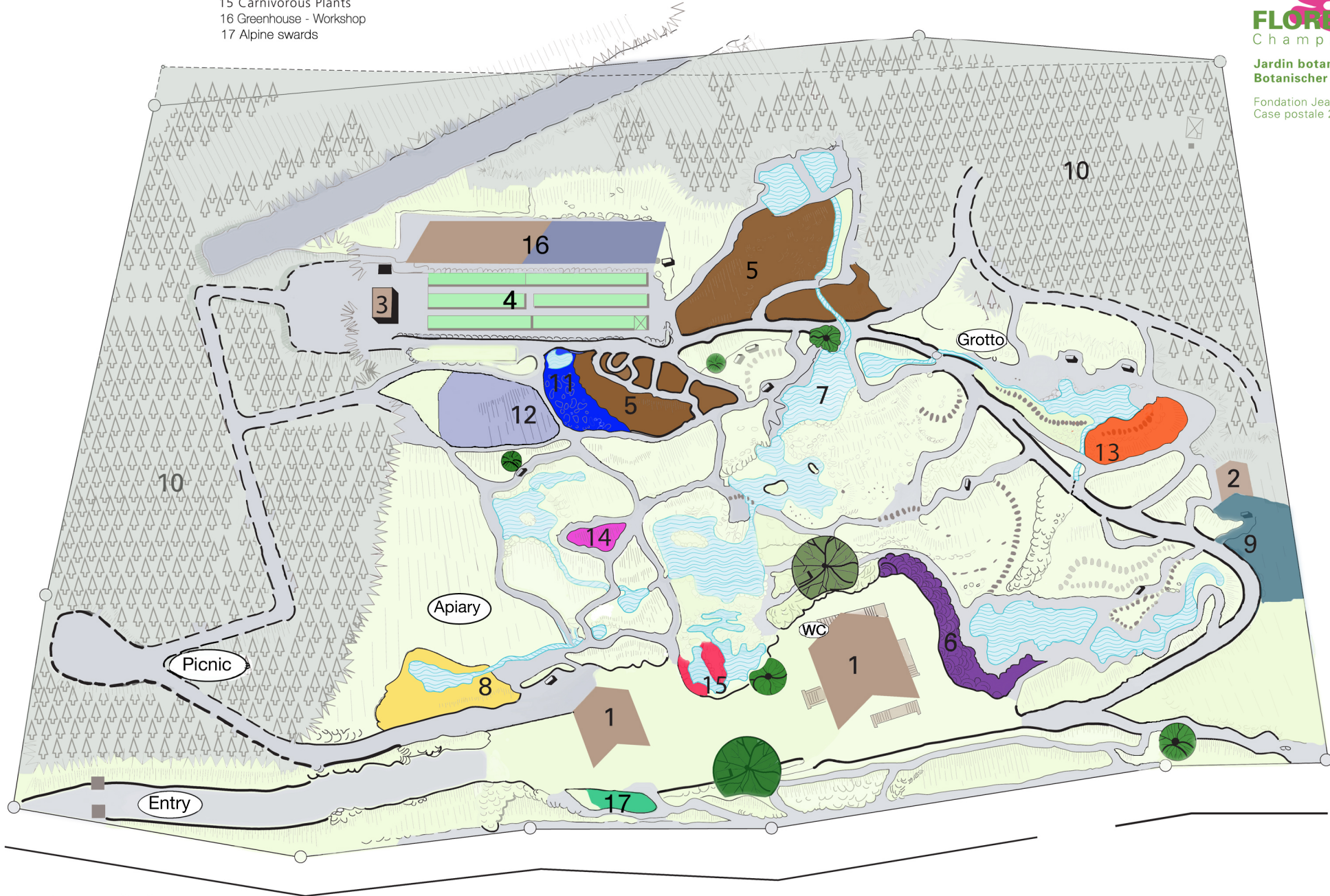
Altitude 4500 ft.
 Latitude 46°02'00N
 Longitude 7°06'50E

Number of Plants approx. 4000
 Surface 2.4 acres
 Date of creation 1927
 Owned by the Fondation Jean-Marcel Aubert
 Managed by the Canton of Valais and the Commune of Orsières



Jardin botanique alpin
Botanischer Alpengarten

Fondation Jean-Marcel Aubert
 Case postale 26, CH - 1937 Orsières





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The alpine garden Flore-Alpe is situated overlooking Champex-Lac. It features a large variety of indigenous plants as well as species from mountain regions throughout Europe and other continents, **making it one of the richest alpine gardens in the Alps**. The exposure to the noon sun makes it particularly favourable to plants from the southern Alps. Streams and ponds, trees and bushes, roccailles and moraines of granite and calcium, help create the contrast necessary for botanical diversity. The number of plants is estimated at 4000 (species, subspecies, varieties).

The Flore-Alpe was the private initiative of **Jean-Marcel Aubert** (1875-1968) an industrialist and engineer who in 1925, acquired a modest parcel of land of 600 m². In 1967 he set up the Fondation Jean-Marcel Aubert with the help of the City of Geneva and the Canton of Neuchâtel. The garden was expanded over the course of the years and by 1953 it had reached a little over a hectare when chief gardener Egidio Anchisi was engaged, shaping and enriching it until 1997.

Since 2000 the garden has been maintained and developed by Jean-Luc Poligné, who is passionate and knowledgeable about the flora of the Alps and eastern Europe.

In 1991, with the assistance of the Canton of Valais and the Commune of Orsières, the Fondation Jean-Marcel Aubert expanded to form the Alpine Centre de Phytogeography. The Centre leads research on the diversity, ecology and distribution of the flora and vegetation of the Alps as well as the adaptation of alpine vegetation to climate change.

In 2007, the garden **Flore-Alpe** was awarded the prestigious Prix Shulthess des jardins by Patrimoine suisse.

As of 2009, The Fondation Aubert is funded by the Canton of Valais under the aegis of the Cantonal Museums, and the Commune of Orsières.

10 The Forest

A forest of spruce and larch surrounds the garden but numerous coniferous trees from other regions can be found there.

7 Streams and Pools

The water that irrigates the garden Flore-Alpe comes from the municipal supply. An irrigation system of small streams bring vitality and freshness to the bogs and pools, a welcome environment for plants fond of humidity.

11 The Moraine

In nature, the moraine is a finer and colder sort of scree due to its proximity to glacial ice. Among the plants we find here are the alpine androsace, dwarf scorpion grass and the glacier crowfoot.

5 The Rocaille

This porous rock was formed over time by an accumulation of calcium on moss and leaves. Among the wide variety of plants we find in this region of the garden are gentians gathered from around Europe, eidelweiss from the Alps and Tibet, and the thomas herb.

12 The Scree

Rocky accumulations on the flank of a mountain or the base of a falaise form screes or talus. Some plants that have found a home in this limestone scree are the hawkhead, the paradoxical butterbur and the distich oatgrass. These plants are resistant to all sorts of trauma including being covered over by the movement of the rock.

**May to October open everyday from
10 am to 6 pm**

13 The Steppe

A prairie area that is subject to extremes of temperature, the steppe is found in the principal inter-alpine valleys of Switzerland and particularly in Valais. It provides a habitat for the specialised helvetic species, wormwood, stipes and ephedra, that form the reputation of the valaisan flora.

14 Sempervivum and Hybrids

Commonly known as hens and chicks, Sempervivum are plants particularly resistant to dryness. Their thick leaves, well adapted to difficult conditions, form a rosette that rises in the middle when the plant is in bloom. The collection is particularly rich and highlights species indigenous to the Valais.

6 Rhododendrons

In May, with their dark green leaves and blooms of white, pink and purple, the rhododendrons announce the coming of summer with panache. The garden exhibits a large number of species, many found in the neighbouring mountains, as well as a few hybrids.

9 Medicinal Plants

From the beginning humankind has used plants to cure ailments in the form of decoctions and infusions, the minute doses of medicine that form the basis of homeopathy. A liberal cross section of medicinal plants such as thyme, blueberry and wild garlic can be found assembled here alongside certain look-a-likes which could produce less than desirable results.

15 Carnivorous plants

These plants are well known for their capacity to digest small insects to provide nitrogen. Round leaved sundew, the picture plant and diverse carnivorous grasses grow in the garden.

8 Protected Plants

The disappearance of certain plants can be attributed to the destructive lifestyle of humankind. Some measures have been taken to safeguard certain species from being over-picked or to protect rare species. The garden is a space for conservation and biodiversity.

In the garden, plants are marked "protégé" on the national or cantonal level.

4 The Nursery

Before being transplanted into the garden, plants collected from other regions are fortified in this restricted area. It is the starting point of the garden and also the conservatory for the collection of sempervivum, saxifrage and primula.

17 Alpine swards

This bed brings together the dominant species in the main types of alpine swards. For example : blue moor-grass and evergreen sedge on calcareous soils, and the crooked sedge on acidic soils.