

Friday, May 12, 2023

The Oriental plane

A huge Oriental plane can be found near the “Gardener's Shed”; it is the largest to be found anywhere in the garden and over the years has acquired a shape reminiscent of a chalice or an upturned open hand, which, along with its five thick branches, makes it a curious sight to behold. Its trunk is almost 5 metres in perimeter. The Loring-Heredia family, the founders of La Concepcion, planted these trees to form boulevards, avenues and circuses in the garden, as well as to embellish the area surrounding the main house and the Gardener's Shed.

Its Latin name is *Platanus orientalis* (*acerifolia* variety), and it originated in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Oriental plane is a markedly rustic tree frequently used to line streets and roads. It can live for hundreds of years, though it is often blighted by fungi. It is less commonly used in gardening nowadays as it is highly allergenic.

Interesting fact: the Ancient Romans would pour copious amounts of wine onto the tree during palace orgies believing that it would aid its growth, a sign of the high regard in which it was held.



Platanus orientalis var. acerifolia