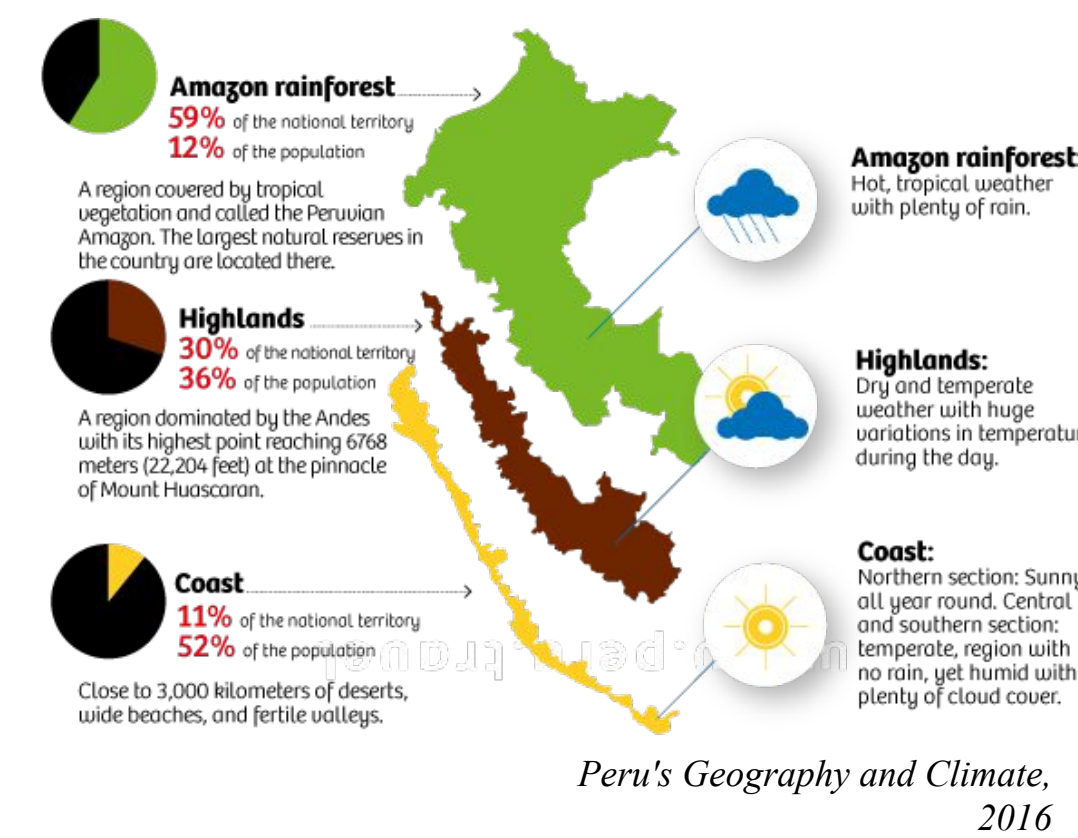


Cultural Preservation of Ethnomedicine in Perú

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Background

Minority Health & Health Disparities International Research Training Program (MHIRT-Perú) was funded by NIH in 2002, since then the Perú Ethnomedical Project in Trujillo has been an ongoing research both in the ethno-botanical and biochemical field. The summer 2015 Ethnomedical Project completed by MHIRT and supported by Linfield College focused on the usage of medicinal plants in northern Perú. Interviews were conducted in the coastal city of Trujillo, which has a population of around 800,000. The city has six districts: the urban core (Moche), las Delicias on the littoral, la Curva on the Panamerican Highway, an agricultural periphery (la Campiña), and two peri-urban sectors inhabited by migrants from the sierra (the older Alto Moche I and the more recent Alto Moche II, both also designated Miramar). The research was done on the urban core of Moche and the more rural sector of Miramar. The data collection of the commonly used plants was used to restore the garden in the Chan Chan archaeological site museum (Fajardo, Sours, 2012).



Traditional medicine—including the use of medicinal plants—is defined by the World Health Organization as “the knowledge, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences indigenous to different cultures, used in the maintenance of health and in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness” (World Health Organization 1999, 2002).

Results/Conclusion

- No statistical significance between the preference in medicinal plants and location
- Deeply rooted practice of plant medicine in Perú
- In Moche, 49% of the participants preferred medicinal plants over pharmaceuticals, compared to 41.6% in Alto Moche
- 90% or higher for both communities’ belief in culturally bound illnesses
- 81% in Alto Moche and 66% in Moche-- Parents more knowledgeable about traditional medicine

Our descriptive and qualitative data analyzed through a Chi-Square test resulted in a no statistical significance between the preference in medicinal plants and location. In Moche, 49% of the participants preferred medicinal plants over pharmaceuticals, compared to 41.6% in Alto Moche. While 90% or higher of the participating population for both communities believed in culturally bound illnesses. Our questionnaire regarding the continuous intergenerational knowledge and use of medicinal plants demonstrated that 81% in Alto Moche and 66% in Moche confirmed that parents were more knowledgeable about traditional medicine.

Through our experience working with medicinal plants in Perú, we were motivated and inspired to implement that idea here in the Linfield Garden. The sustainability department granted support to begin the medicinal garden and begin connecting individuals to natural healing resources.

Medicinal Garden

The other part of the research project was restoration of the medicinal plant garden in the Chan Chan archaeological site museum. In the summer of 2010, the implementation of a medicinal plant garden in the Chan Chan archaeological site was established by two Linfield students for educational purposes on a previous summer faculty-student collaborative research project. Through a series of surveys conducted in the summer of 2015, the most commonly used medicinal plants in Moche were identified. The demonstration garden reflects that diversity of plants, and is meant to serve as an educational model to teach people about the medicinal and cultural components of each species.



Garden Restoration

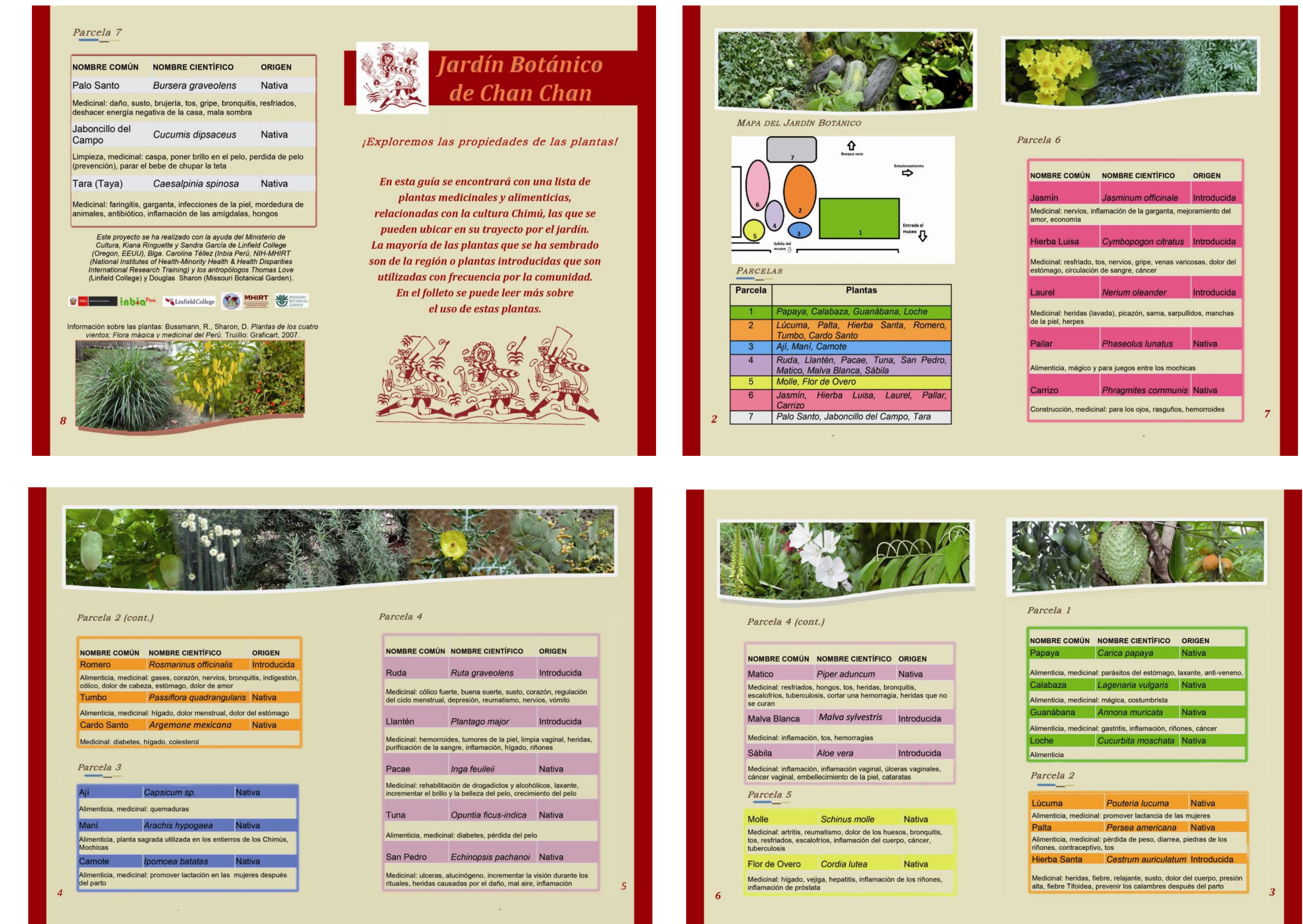
<p>Echinopsis pachanoi</p> <p>Family: Cactaceae Uses: ulcers, as a hallucinogen during rituals to enhance vision, wounds caused by sorcery, inflammation, acne and for hair washing</p>	<p>Ruta graveolens</p> <p>Family: Rutaceae Uses: Abortion, good luck, success fright, heart, menstrual regulation, depression, rheumatism, nerves nausea, aphrodisiac</p>	<p>Plantago major</p> <p>Family: Plantaginaceae Uses: Hemorrhoids, benign skin tumors, vaginal cleansing, wounds, blood purification, inflammation, liver, kidneys, arthritis, sprains, respiratory problems</p>	<p>Carica papaya</p> <p>Family: Caricaceae Uses: Stomach parasites, laxative, anti-venom, reverse poison effects, inflammation of the liver</p>
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(Bernard 2006, Burnard et al. 2008) (Brod et al. 2009) (Revene et al. 2008)

(Bussmann, Sharon, 2007)

Publication

A brochure was created to guide tourists and locals through the garden. The brochure includes the following information for each plant species in the garden: common name, scientific name, origin, and medicinal use.



Purpose

- Preserve the knowledge of these practices
- Analyze the plant properties
- Publish the information
- Provide the community with a garden
- Bring back and apply this in the Linfield community



Hypothesis

High cost of pharmaceuticals draws people toward using traditional use of medicinal plants. Recent migrants to peripheral areas are maintaining sierra traditions (Bussmann, Sharon, 2007).

Methods



Sponsors



Acknowledgements

We would like to recognize the contribution from the community of Trujillo, Perú for allowing us to complete this project. We are thankful to those who participated in our interviews, it was through them that we were able to collect data and restore the garden. We are also thankful for our colleagues who collaborated in conducting the survey: Marisa Álvarez, Shant Tamazian, and Javier Blanco. We are especially thankful to Carolina Tellez and Manuel Bejarano for guidance and support throughout the research. Lastly, we would like to thank our director of MHIRT-Perú, Douglas Sharon as well as Thomas Love and Linfield College for their support in the faculty-student collaborative research program.