



JOHNSONS
OF WHIXLEY
PROFESSIONAL NURSERYMEN

Latin to English common names

Why use Latin to name plants?

Botanical Latin is the language used throughout the world for naming and describing plants. Some of the very first writing about plants was in Latin and the Swedish botanist Linnaeus who lived in the 18th Century formally established the tradition that all plants should be given Latin names (or names of Latin form) and also that works relating to them should also be in Latin. Thankfully, whilst we still name plants in Latin we are no longer compelled to use it whilst writing about them!

This tradition of using Latin has continued for many good reasons not least that it has an abundance of words to describe the characteristics of plants such as colour, texture, size, and form. Also, since Latin is no longer spoken in an everyday sense the meanings of words in Latin do not change. (Remember, in English, a *computer* once referred to a person who adds up.) The other major advantage of using Latin is that the words mean the same to people wherever they are in the world and whatever their mother tongue.

A

AbiesFir
AcerMaple
Acer.....Sycamore
AesculusHorse Chestnut
AlchemillaLady's Mantle
Alnus.....Alder
AmelanchierSnowy Mespilus
or June Berry/Service Berry

B

Berberis.....Barberry
Betula.....Birch
Buddleia.....Butterfly Bush
Buxus.....Box

C

Calluna Vulgaris.....Heather
Carpinus.....Hornbeam
Caryopteris.....Blue Spiraea
Castanea.....Sweet Chestnut
Ceanothus.....Californian Lilac
Cedrus.....Cedar
Chaenomeles.....Quince
Chamaecyparis.....Cypress
Choisya..... Mexican Orange Blossom

Cistus.....Rock Rose
Cornus.....Dogwood
Cortaderia.....Pampas Grass
Corylus.....Hazel
Cotinus.....Smoke Tree
Crataegus.....Thorn
Cytisus.....Broom

D

Dryopteris.....Male Fern

E

Erica Carnea.....Heather
Erica Cinerea.....Heather
Erica Erigena.....Heather
Erica Vagans.....Heather
Eucalyptus.....Gum Tree
Euonymus.....Spindle Tree
Euphorbia.....Spurge

F

Fagus.....Beech
Fallopia.....Russian Vine
FargesiaBamboo
ForsythiaGolden Bell Bush
Fraxinus.....Ash

G

Garrya.....Silk Tassel Bush
Genista.....Broom

H

Hamamelis.....Witch Hazel
 Hedera.....Ivy
 Hemerocallis.....Day Lily
 Heuchera.....Coral Bells
 HibiscusTree Hollyhock
 Hippophae.....Sea Buckthorn
 Hosta.....Plantain Lily

I

Ilex.....Holly

J

JasminumJasmine
 Juglans.....Walnut
 Juniperus.....Juniper

K

KalmiaCalico Bush

L

Larix.....Larch
 Laurus.....Bay
 LavandulaLavender
 Leycesteria.....Himalayan
 Honeysuckle or False Nutmeg
 Ligustrum.....Privet
 Liriodendron.....Tulip Tree
 Lonicera.....Honeysuckle

M

Mahonia.....Oregon Grape
 Malus.....Ornamental Crab
 Malus.....Japanese Crab
 MalusCommon Crab Apple
 Matteuccia.....Shuttlecock or
 Ostrich Feather Fern

Morus.....Mulberry

O

Olea.....Olive
 Olearia.....Daisy Bush

P

Pachysandra.....Japanese Spurge
 Parthenocissus.....Boston Ivy
 Persicaria.....Knotgrass
 Philadelphus.....Mock Orange
 PhormiumNew Zealand Flax
 PiceaSpruce
 PierisAndromeda
 Pinus.....Pine
 Platanus.....Plane
 Polystichum.....Fern
 PopulusPoplar
 Populus.....Aspen
 Prunus.....Flowering Cherry
 Prunus.....Blackthorn
 PrunusLaurel
 Pseudotsuga.....Douglas Fir
 Pyracantha.....Firethorn
 PyrusPear

Q

Quercus.....Oak

R

Rhamnus.....Buckthorn
 Rhus.....Sumach
 Ribes.....Flowering Currant
 Robinia.....Acacia

Rosa.....Rose

Rosmarinus.....Rosemary

Rubus.....Blackberry

Ruta.....Rue

S

Salix.....Willow
 Sambucus.....Elder
 Santolina.....Cotton Lavender
 Sorbus.....Rowan
 Sorbus.....Mountain Ash
 Sorbus.....Whitebeam
 Spartium.....Spanish Broom
 Symphoricarpos.....Snowberry
 Syringa.....Lilac

T

Taxus.....Yew
 Thuja.....Western Red Cedar
 Tiarella.....Foam Flower
 TiliaLime
 TsugaWestern Hemlock

U

Ulex.....Gorse
 Ulmus.....Elm

V

Vinca.....Periwinkle

X

X Cupressocyparis.....Leylandii

English common names to Latin

A

Acacia.....Robinia
 Alder.....Alnus
 Andromeda.....Pieris
 Ash.....Fraxinus
 Aspen.....Populus

B

Bamboo.....Fargesia
 Barberry.....Berberis
 Bay.....Laurus
 Beech.....Fagus
 Birch.....Betula
 Blackberry.....Rubus
 Blackthorn.....Prunus
 Blue Spiraea.....Caryopteris
 Boston Ivy.....Parthenocissus
 Box.....Buxus
 Broom.....Cytisus
 Broom.....Genista
 Buckthorn.....Rhamnus
 Butterfly Bush.....Buddleia

C

Calico Bush.....Kalmia
 Californian Lilac.....Ceanothus
 Cedar.....Cedrus
 Common Crab Apple.....Malus

Coral Bells.....Heuchera
 Cotton Lavender.....Santolina
 Cypress.....Chamaecyparis

D

Daisy Bush.....Olearia
 Day Lily.....Hemerocallis
 Dogwood.....Cornus
 Douglas Fir.....Pseudotsuga

E

Elder.....Sambucus
 Elm.....Ulmus

F

Fern.....Polystichum
 Fern (Male).....Dryopteris
 Fir.....Abies
 Firethorn.....Pyracantha
 Flowering Cherry.....Prunus
 Flowering Currant.....Ribes
 Foam Flower.....Tiarella

G

Golden Bell BushForsythia
 GorseUlex
 Gum Tree.....Eucalyptus

H

Hazel.....Corylus
 Heather.....Calluna Vulgaris

Heather.....Erica Carnea
 Heather.....Erica Cinerea
 Heather.....Erica Erigena
 Heather.....Erica Vagans
 Holly.....Ilex

Himalayan Honeysuckle/False
 Nutmeg.....Leycesteria
 Honeysuckle.....Lonicera
 Hornbeam.....Carpinus
 Horse ChesnutAesculus

I

Ivy.....Hedera

J

Japanese Crab...Malus
 Japanese Spurge.....Pachysandra
 Jasmine.....Jasminum
 Juniper.....Juniperus

K

Knotgrass.....Persicaria

L

Lady's Mantle.....Alchemilla
 Larch.....Larix
 LaurelPrunus
 LavenderLavandula
 LeylandiiX Cupressocyparis
 Lilac.....Syringa
 Lime.....Tilia

M

Maple.....Acer
Mexican Orange
Blossom.....Choisya
Mock Orange.....Philadelphus
Monkey Puzzle.....Araucaria
Mountain Ash.....Sorbus
Mulberry.....Morus

N

New Zealand Flax.....Phormium
NutmegLeycesteria

O

Oak.....Quercus
Olive.....Olea
Oregon Grape.....Mahonia
Ornamental Crab.....Malus

P

Pampas Grass.....Cortaderia
Pear.....Pyrus
Periwinkle.....Vinca
Pine.....Pinus

Plane.....Platanus
Plantain Lily.....Hosta
PoplarPopulus
PrivetLigustrum

Q

Quince.....Chaenomeles

R

Rock Rose.....Cistus
Rose.....Rosa
RosemaryRosmarinus
RowanSorbus
Rue.....Ruta
Russian VineFallopia

S

Sea Buckthorn.....Hippophae
Shuttlecock or Ostrich Feather
Fern.....Matteuccia
Silk Tassel Bush.....Garrya
Smoke Tree.....Cotinus
SnowberrySymphoricarpos
Snowy MespilusAmelanchier

Spanish BroomSpartium
Spindle TreeEuonymus
SprucePicea
Spurge.....Euphorbia
Sweet Chestnut.....Castanea
Strawberry TreeArbutus
SumachRhus
SycamoreAcer

T

Thorn.....Crataegus
Tree HollyhockHibiscus
Tulip Tree.....Liriodendron

W

Walnut.....Juglans
Western HemlockTsuga
Western Red Cedar.....Thuja
WhitebeamSorbus
Willow.....Salix
Witch HazelHamamelis

Y

Yew.....Taxus

If you'd like to know more about the naming of plants visit

www.rhs.org.uk/rhsplantfinder/plantnaming.asp

<http://www.kew.org/ksheets/pdfs/b2names.pdf>

- www.linnean.org
- and also visit our web site
www.nurserymen.co.uk

for our downloadable glossary of horticultural terms.

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