**Gardens and plants**

**Garden quotes**

<https://www.treehugger.com/inspirational-gardening-quotes-4868813>

**Shakespeare’s references to Roses**

*Midsummer Night’s Dream:*

..But earthlier happy is the rose distill’d

Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,

Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

..And thorough this distemperature we see

The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts

Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;

*Love’s Labour‘s Lost:*

..At Christmas I no more desire a rose

Than wish a snow in May’s new-fangled mirth.

*Romeo and Juliet*

..What’s in a name? that which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet.

*Sonnet:*

No more be griev’d at that which thou has done:

Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud;

Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun.

**Oberon in Midsummer Night's Dream**

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,  
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,  
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,  
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:  
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,  
Lull’d in these flowers with dances and delight;  
And there the snake throws her enamell’d skin,  
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:  
And with the juice of this I’ll streak her eyes,  
And make her full of hateful fantasies.  
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:  
A sweet Athenian lady is in love  
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;  
But do it when the next thing he espies  
May be the lady: thou shalt know the man  
By the Athenian garments he hath on.  
Effect it with some care, that he may prove  
More fond on her than she upon her love:  
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

**Plant names**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Linnaeus>

**Carl Linnaeus** (23 May 170 – 10 January 1778), also known after ennoblement in 1761 as **Carl von Linné**,was a Swedish biologist and physician who formalised binomial nomenclature, the modern system of naming organisms. He is known as the "father of modern taxonomy". Many of his writings were in Latin.

Linnaeus published *Species Plantarum*, the work which is now internationally accepted as the starting point of modern botanical nomenclature, in 1753.The first volume was issued on 24 May, the second volume followed on 16 August of the same year.The book contained 1,200 pages and was published in two volumes; it described over 7,300 species

In taxonomy, **binomial nomenclature** ("two-term naming system"), also called **binary nomenclature**, is a formal system of naming species of living things by giving each a name composed of two parts...

The first part of the name – the *generic name* – identifies the genus to which the species belongs, whereas the second part – the **specific name** or **specific epithet** – distinguishes the species within the genus. For example, modern humans belong to the genus *Homo* and within this genus to the species *Homo sapiens*.

**Notes from Anne**

Apparently, many of our plant names come from the Latin - Pliny was much given to writing about plants (though I assume he wasn't alone in doing this. The Romans loved their gardens.)

I imagine that these names were widely used in Britain after Julius Caesar colonised us and then were passed down orally after the Romans left.

A good example of this would be Betonica (much discussed by Pliny) which in due course became widely known as "Betony". Concurrently however, it was also known as Bishop's Wort ( "Wyrt" was most commonly used in Old English to mean 'plant' - hence our Ragwort, St John's Wort, etc. I assume the reference to Bishops is because its flowers are purple.)

These days, courtesy of Mr Linnaeus, it is known as *Betonica officinalis.*

You probably know that officinalis tells us a plant was used as a medical herb - here's the reason:

" The officina was the building, usually an out-building, in medieval monasteries where medical monks prepared medicaments and pharmaceutical preparations to heal the sick. Dried extracts, infusions, decoctions, tinctures and distillates were prepared therein. Often, the officina was attached to the medicinal or herbal gardens, also enclosed within the monastery precinct.

When Linnaeus invented the binomial system of nomenclature, he gave the specific name "officinalis", to dozens of herbs and plants whose medical use had been established in preceding millennia. In the 1735 (1st Edition) of his Systema Naturae, he acknowledged the historical traditions of healing by naming scores of plants with the species designator, "officinalis", as a generic qualifier. Literally "from the officina", the species name "officinalis" thus embodied the history of many centuries of medicinal use and health lore."

As is so often the case with linguistics, having learned something, I think "Ah ha! Here is a rule. Now I will be able to apply this rule across other examples."

BUT, as we have learned, Linguistics rarely does simple rule application. I discover that Digitalis (well known as a heart medicine) does not have the suffix "officinalis", nor does Aloe Vera (great for burns) or Cammomile (good for sleep.) I could go on.

There are complex reasons why Linnaeus chose to reflect the look of Digitalis rather than its purpose - he called it Digitalis Purpurea  - literally, purple fingers. We all know it as the beautiful foxglove.

Wikipedia tells us this:

" [Leonhart Fuchs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonhart_Fuchs) first invented the name for this plant in his 1542 book *De historia stirpium commentarii insignes* (*Notable comments on the history of plants*), based upon the German [vernacular name](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vernacular_name) *Fingerhut*, which translates literally as 'finger hat', but actually means 'thimble".

The name is recorded in [Old English](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_English) as 'foxes glofe/glofa' or 'fox's glove'. Over time, folk myths obscured the literal origins of the name, insinuating that foxes wore the flowers on their paws to silence their movements as they stealthily hunted their prey. The woody hillsides where the foxes made their dens were often covered with the toxic flowers. Some of the more menacing names, such as "witch's glove", reference the toxicity of the plant."

Another source on tinternet says, "A single species of plant could have several different names. An extreme example is the foxglove which has over 90 folk names.... not only did some plants have several names but some plant names denoted several different plants.

A generic name such as "wound healer".. might be used for in various parts of England but in each area might denote a different plant.... this complex situation is very difficult to understand from only a small number of surviving records."

Below there are a few links which you might find interesting. The first two offer a little more information about the names of flowers.

The first is  a list of alternative names for a variety of wildflowers. These sometimes point to the use of the plant - as in Comfrey, which was known as "Knitbone" (and was used when people had broken bones) or Juniper, which was known as "Bastard Killer" (for the obvious reason.) And so on.

<https://www.tumblr.com/themori-witch/689449386308141056/english-folktraditional-names-for-common-plants>

Sadly, this list doesn't mention Sweet William -  named (I believe) to honour William, the Duke of Cumberland, who fought off the Jacobites in 1745/6 and was adulated by English Whigs as a consequence. However, given that the Battle of Culloden was bloody and disastrous for the Scots, "Sweet William" is known as "Stinking Billy" north of the border.

This next link talks about those flower which get their names from classical myths/ poetry.

<https://www.blossominggifts.com/blog/flowers-in-mythology/>

This last is about "the language of flowers". Apparently, the idea that particular flowers had a special significance became popular in the Victorian age. (That concept suggests to me that there might have been a regrettably large number of women from affluent families with too much time on their hands in the 19thC. )

<https://www.interflora.co.uk/page/flower-meanings#what-is-floriography>

**Aptonyms**

The RHS has discovered that nearly one in eight of its 900 staff has a name that can be linked to gardening. Around 12% have a name associated with nature, the outdoors or horticulture – supporting the theory of ‘nominative determinism’, the idea that people are drawn to careers that fit their names.

Nearly a third of the names are taken directly from horticulture, including four Heathers, three Berrys and three called Moss. If you visit an RHS Garden plant centre, you might be served by a Gardiner, Marsh or Shears. More peripheral names include Hill, Moore and Shaw – an old word for a strip of woodland – as well as Bird, Fountaine and Goodacre. The staff at RHS Wisley in Surrey include a Garland, a Garlick and a Greenfield, as well as the garden’s curator Matthew Pottage – who was preceded in the role by Jim Gardiner.

<https://www.kitchengarden.co.uk/whats-in-a-name->

Anther website has this

"Always on the look-out for other examples of nominative determinism, I’ve found the world of gardening fruitful. My favourites include **Bob Flowerdew** and **Pippa Greenwood**, both regulars on BBC Radio 4’s Gardeners’ Question Time. When the late **Clay Jones** was chairman, I was doing battle with a garden with a clay-based soil.

"And today I came across a new addition to my list. Just appointed President of the **Royal Horticultural Society** is one **Keith Weed**. As a bonus, his mother’s maiden name was **Hedges**."

<https://authordebbieyoung.com/2020/07/31/whats-in-a-name-mr-weed/>

**Jargon Call My Bluff**

***Which definition is correct?***

*Haulm*

To cut with a spade

The leaves and stem of a potato plant

A dome-shaped protector (cf helmet) for young plants, now usually called a cloche

*Feathered Maiden*

A one-year-old tree with several side branches (feathers)

A variety of fern

Rootstock of a fruit tree that has been prepared for grafting by making several fine parallel cuts

*Rose end*

The end of a seed potato with the most eyes – often the widest end

A star-shaped attachment for a lawn aerator

A variety of asparagus with a characteristic pink tip

***Answers***

*Haulm*

The leaves and stem of a potato plant

*Feathered Maiden*

A one-year-old tree with several side branches (feathers)

*Rose end*

The end of a seed potato with the most eyes – often the widest end

**Some poems**

***Thomas Hardy The garden Seat***

Its former green is blue and thin,  
And its once firm legs sink in and in;  
Soon it will break down unaware,  
Soon it will break down unaware.  
  
At night when reddest flowers are black  
Those who once sat thereon come back;  
Quite a row of them sitting there,  
Quite a row of them sitting there.  
  
With them the seat does not break down,  
Nor winter freeze them, nor floods drown,  
For they are as light as upper air,  
They are as light as upper air!

***Benny Hill  My Garden of Love***

Oh the sun and the rain fell from up above  
And landed on the earth below,  
In my garden of love  
  
Oh there's a rose for the way your spirits rose when we met,  
A forget-me-not to remind me to remember not to forget,  
A pine tree for the way I pined over you  
And an ash for the day I ashed you to be true  
  
And the sun and the rain fell from up above  
And landed on the earth below,  
In my garden of love  
  
Well there's a palm tree that we planted when we had our first date,  
A turnip for the way you always used to turnip late,  
Your mother and your cousin Chris, they often used to come  
So, in their honour, I have raised a nice chris-an'-the-mum  
  
Oh the sun and the rain fell from up above  
And landed on the earth below,  
In my garden of love  
  
Oh there's a beetroot for the day that you said that you'd beetroo' to me,  
A sweet pea for the sweet way you always smiled at me,  
But you had friends who needed you,  
There was Ferdy, there was Liza  
So in their honour, I put down a load of ferdy-liza  
  
And the sun and the rain fell from up above  
And landed on the earth below,  
In my garden of love  
  
But Gus the gardener's gone now and you went with him too,  
The fungus here reminds me of the fun Gus is having with you;  
The rockery's a mockery, with weeds it's overgrown,  
The fuchsia's gone, I couldn't face the fuchsia all alone  
  
And my tears fell like raindrops from the sky above,  
And poisoned all the flowers in my garden of love.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pt1i6oZXW2o>

***Digging  Seamus Heaney***

Between my finger and my thumb

The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound

When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:

My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds

Bends low, comes up twenty years away

Stooping in rhythm through potato drills

Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft

Against the inside knee was levered firmly.

He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep

To scatter new potatoes that we picked,

Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade.

Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day

Than any other man on Toner’s bog.

Once I carried him milk in a bottle

Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up

To drink it, then fell to right away

Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods

Over his shoulder, going down and down

For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap

Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge

Through living roots awaken in my head.

But I’ve no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb

The squat pen rests.

I’ll dig with it.