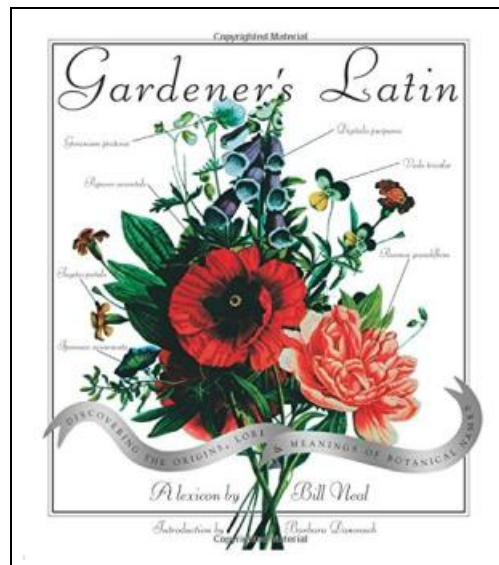


Gardener's Latin: Discovering the Origins, Lore and Meanings of Botanical Names (Hardback)



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Reviews

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GARDENER'S LATIN: DISCOVERING THE ORIGINS, LORE AND MEANINGS OF BOTANICAL NAMES (HARDBACK)

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The Crowood Press Ltd, United Kingdom, 1993. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English. Brand new Book. Author Bill Neal has weeded through the Latin words that describe and distinguish plants and flowers and compiled a single volume of select definitions and gardening lore. Narcissus bulbocodium or Narcissus cyclamineus? Isabellinus, iadinus, ianthinus? Basilaris or basilicus? Today's gardeners encounter Latin terms like these whenever they enter garden centres or pick up mail-order catalogues. They must still, of course, decide whether dahlias or peonies will best complete that floral border. But new questions in an increasingly technical vocabulary are sprouting up among perennial concerns and demanding attention from devoted gardeners. As Latin terms appear with increasing frequency in garden centres and on the pages of gardening catalogues, we need such brief, clear definitions for the finite number of Latin terms that combine to form the names of a seemingly infinite number of plant species. Equally welcome are the little-known horticultural facts and fables which fill the broad margins of every page. "Gardener's Latin" is a book for the gardener who needs to know that a plant with isabellinus (tawing yellow) on its nursery tag might not belong in a carefully planned ianthinus (violet-blue) border. Or that the ostensibly similar basilaris and basilicus mean 'base' and 'royal', respectively. Bill Neal leads us down the path from abbreviatus to zonatus, turning aside here and there along the way for glimpses at gardens and gardeners from Virgil to Vita Sackville-West, from Gertrude Jekyll to Gertrude Stein. Patches of garden lore and literature are scattered throughout the beds of definition: why Narcissus cyclamineus is a horticultural joke; why basil is the herb of dread and suspicion; why Cleopatra's asp arrives in a basket of figs whenever "Antony and Cleopatra" is performed. Whether it's dahlias or peonies that will best...

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