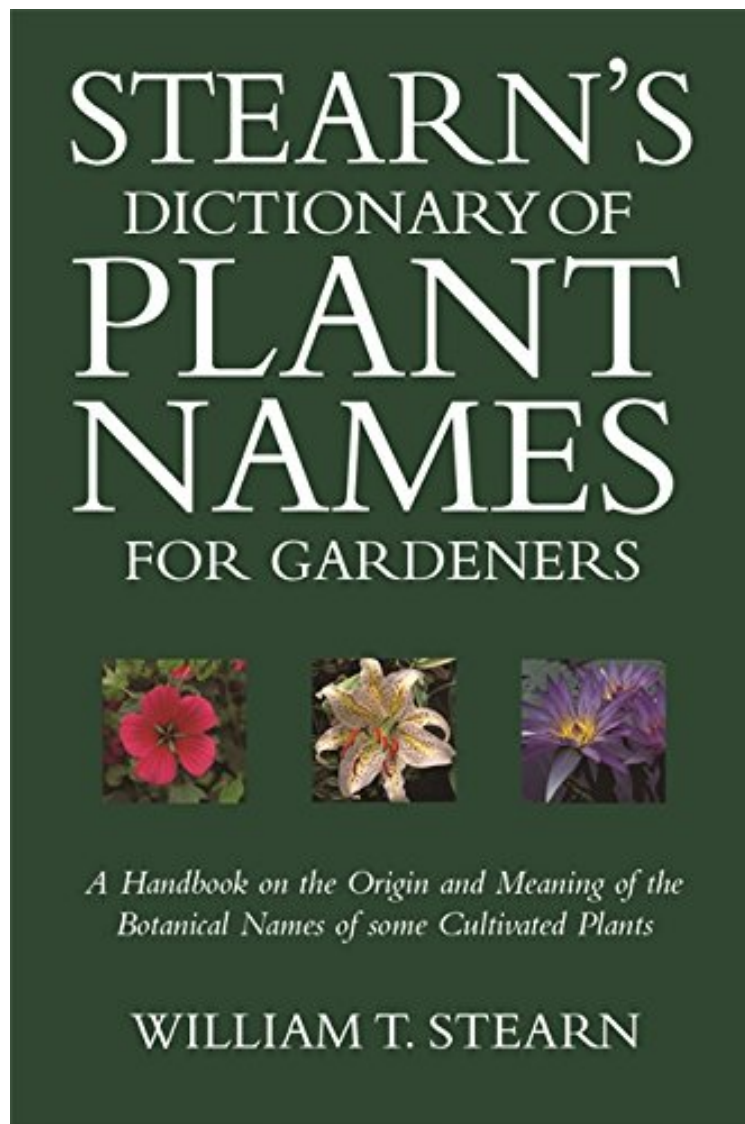


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## Stearn's Dictionary of Plant Names for Gardeners: A Handbook on the Origin and Meaning of the Botanical Names of Some Cultivated Plants

*William T. Stearn*

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By Plant LoverIf you are serious about learning the Latin names of plants and their meanings, this little book is invaluable.

Professor Stearn gives the meaning and origin of some 6,000 botanical names, selecting those most likely to be encountered by gardeners and horticulturists. No other single source provides so much etymological information for the gardener, much of it out of the way, all of it enlightened by a wealth of detail, the result of years of scholarship and original research. Also listed are 3,000 of the most widely accepted vernacular names, cross-indexed to their correct botanical names. Both the dictionary sections are prefaced by introductions: plant classification and binomial nomenclature are explained, and there are notes on the structure and pronunciation of botanical Latin. There are also extensive bibliographies.

From Library JournalThis volume updates and expands the 1972 Gardener's Dictionary of Plant Names by the same author, which in turn updated A.W. Smith's Gardener's Book of Plant Names (1963). You may want to keep the earlier volumes for their pronunciation guides, but definitely buy the new volume for its inclusion of 6000 botanical names, with definitions and derivations, plus 3000 common names, cross-referenced to their botanical names. This is indisputably the best dictionary of plant names available and is essential for botanical and horticultural libraries. Public libraries on a tight budget that already own Allen Coombes's Dictionary of Plant Names (Timber Pr., 1985) would be safe to pass; others may want to add it for its excellent chapter explaining how plants are named and why plant names change.- Laura Lipton, Miller Horticulture Lib., SeattleCopyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. World-famous nomenclature expert, William T. Stearn, left a gap in the horticultural world when he died in 2001. Since publishing his first scientific paper at the age of 18, he has had an enormous influence in the botanical field and was awarded the Veitch Memorial Medal, the Victoria Medal of Honour and a CBE. This is his definitive work on plant names and meanings for the everyday gardener. A vital reference work, he covers the meaning and origins of the most common everyday cultivated plant names, cross-referenced with some 3000 vernacular names to solve what is often a conundrum amongst gardeners. Full of amusing anecdotes related to the naming of plants, it is a fascinating insight into nomenclature and the clues they give to a plant's appearance: aureus - golden, azureus - sky blue, erubescens - blushing. They also give a sense of history with plants named after the discoverer or their patron - davidii - Armand David, knautia - Christopher Knaut and hookeri - Sir William Jackson Hooker. Greek and Latin mythology make appearances too as befits the horticultural mix of the two languages. A fascinating book to dip into and an important work that deserves a place on every gardener's bookshelf. - Lucy WatsonAbout the AuthorWilliam Stearn ((1911-2001) was librarian of the Royal Horticultural Society's Lindley Library, senior principal scientific officer in the Department of Botany at the Natural History Museum and visiting professor in the Department of Botany and Agricultural Botany, University of Reading. In 2000 he was awarded the Asa Gray Award, the highest award of the American Society of Plant Taxonomists.