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Gods and Goddesses in the Garden: Greco-Roman Mythology and the Scientific Names of Plants

By Peter Bernhardt

Rutgers University Press. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Gods and Goddesses in the Garden: Greco-Roman Mythology and the Scientific Names of Plants, Peter Bernhardt, Zeus, Medusa, Hercules, Aphrodite. Did you know that these and other dynamic deities, heroes, and monsters of Greek and Roman mythology live on in the names of trees and flowers? Some grow in your local woodlands or right in your own backyard garden. In this delightful book, botanist Peter Bernhardt reveals the rich history and mythology that underlie the origins of many scientific plant names. Unlike other books about botanical taxonomy that take the form of heavy and intimidating lexicons, Bernhardt's account comes together in a series of interlocking stories. Each chapter opens with a short version of a classical myth, then links the tale to plant names, showing how each plant "resembles" its mythological counterpart with regard to its history, anatomy, life cycle, and conservation. You will learn, for example, that as our garden acanthus wears nasty spines along its leaf margins, it is named for the nymph who scratched the face of Apollo. The shape-shifting god, Proteus, gives his name to a whole family of shrubs and trees that produce colorful flowering branches in...



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