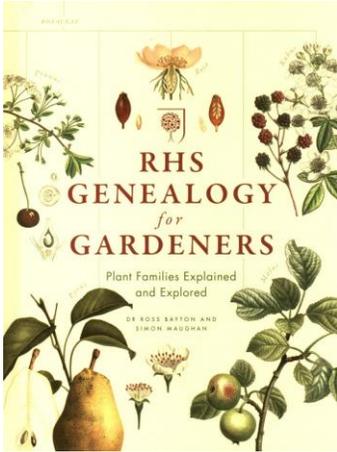




### The Elisabeth C. Miller Library Gardening / Horticulture Book of the Month *RHS Genealogy for Gardeners: Plant Families Explained and Explored*



This month's featured book, *RHS Genealogy for Gardeners: Plant Families Explained and Explored*, by Ross Bayton and Simon Maughan (Mitchell Beasley, 2017), offers a way to make sense of the hundreds of plant families and how the specimens within them are related. Brian Thompson, Curator of Horticultural Literature, reviewed the book.

“Confused by plant families? Having trouble keeping track of recent changes based on DNA and other molecular research? *RHS Genealogy for Gardeners* can help with these questions. Ross Bayton (a long-time volunteer in the Otis Douglas Hyde Herbarium and at the Rhododendron Glen of the Washington Park Arboretum) is co-author with Simon Maughan of this Royal Horticultural Society (“RHS”) publication.

Don't be put off by 'for Gardeners' in the title. This is an excellent book for field botanists, or anyone interested in understanding the relationships between plants in any setting. The book is published in the United States under the title *Plant Families: A Guide for Gardeners and Botanists*.

Bayton has his PhD in taxonomy, while Maughan has an extensive background in writing, editing, and publishing both botanical and horticultural works. The combination means this book has scientific accuracy and is very readable for those with all levels of botanical knowledge. Family descriptions include basic characteristics, the genetic history, best-known genera, and the important uses of the members, including as ornamentals and for food crops or other plant-based products.

The introduction section also coaches good techniques in observation and teasing out the family connections of the plants you're considering, with the following words of both warning and encouragement: 'The intricacies and subtleties of plant identification are unfortunately beyond the reaches of a simple Internet search engine. The best we currently have to rely on are our own observational skills.' ”

*Brian Thompson's book review of RHS Genealogy for Gardeners was originally published in the April 2018 Leaflet for Scholars Volume 5, Issue 4.*

*About the authors* (from the University of Chicago Press website): **Ross Bayton** has a doctorate in palm taxonomy and is the curator of a large succulent plant collection at Hare Hatch Sheeplands, an independent garden center and nursery in Berkshire, United Kingdom. **Simon Maughan** has worked as an editor and publisher for the Royal Horticultural Society for

over twelve years, and is the author of *RHS Botany for Gardeners*.

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