

PLANT LABELS AT OLDS COLLEGE BOTANIC GARDENS

Botanic gardens are required to keep records on plants and to label their plant collection. This task of maintaining accurate records and keeping plant labels visible and up to date is never ending. Please bear with us as we continue to improve the labelling in our gardens.

Plant labels in the Olds College Botanic Gardens and Treatment Wetlands are intended to inform visitors about the plants in the collection. In this way, gardeners and other visitors can discover more about a plant by researching it later, and if they see a plant they might like to include in their own garden, they know exactly what plant it is.

It is a challenge to have a thorough plant labelling system that does not detract from the aesthetics of the garden. For this reason, each plant type requires a slightly different label format and/or material.

Trees and Shrubs:

- Tree labels are 4" x 6" with white letters engraved on green plastic.
- Shrub labels are the same but are 3" x 4"
- These are cut and engraved in our facilities department on campus
- Trees and shrubs that have been entered into our inventory management system HisTREE will have a QR code on a plastic or metal tag

CHOCKECHERRY

Prunus virginiana 'Bailey's Select'

ROSACEAE

Origin: North America

Perennials

- Labels are 3" x 4" with white lettering on black vinyl
- This is done to save on costs due to the number of perennials in the gardens
- These are made in-house by the Botanic Gardens Manager
- They include a QR code which links to the HisTREE database
- There should be one label for each group of a particular plant



Annuals

- Annuals are labelled in the same way as perennials but do not include the country of origin or the QR code.
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Bulbs, Alpine plants

- Because true bulbs are ephemeral, disappearing from site after blooming has finished, their labels are more subtle
- We use this same system for alpine plants because of their diminutive size
- We use a label maker to type up a sticky label that is attached to a metal stand

If you would like to learn more about latin plant names click [here](#)

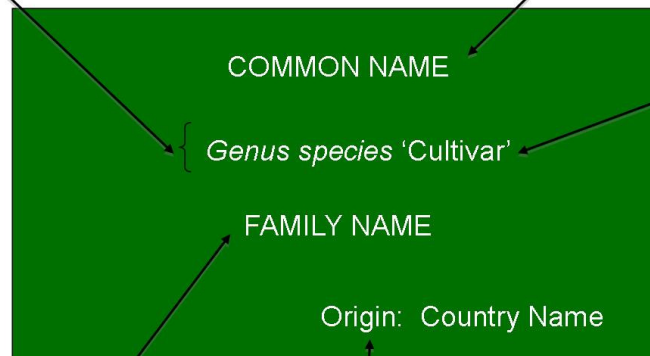
For more information on the **HisTREE** program at Olds College click [here](#).

HOW TO READ OLDS COLLEGE BOTANIC GARDENS PLANT LABELS

Genus is the lowest level of grouping – plants in the same genus share many characteristics. The species name applies to a specific plant. Both are written in italics and the genus name has the first letter capitalized.

There may be several common names for a particular plant so we have chosen the one most frequently used. The common name is that of the species, (unless the trademark name differs from a cultivar name.) Examples are included below.

The two words together comprise the Latin or Scientific plant name. This binomial system (two names) gives each plant a unique Latin name that is the same regardless of the language of the gardener.



Names after the species indicate a plant that differs from the species but not enough to be a different species. Examples include:

Cultivars – plants bred for characteristics such as colour, hardiness, size etc. Cultivar names are not italicized and have single quotes around them.

Subspecies (ssp.) – plants separated geographically developing different characteristics

Variety (var.) and forms (f.) – plants only slightly different from each other.

Hybrids (x) – plants created by cross-breeding (usually between species in the same genus) either in the wild or in the garden.

Genera names are grouped into Families – groups of plants with many shared characteristics, some more recognizable than others. A familiarity with common families can make the identification of an unknown plant somewhat easier. Most Family names end in 'aceae' for example Rosaceae (the Rose Family) Fabaceae (Pea Family) or Poaceae (Grass Family). The Family name is often printed in all caps to make it stand out (no italics).

Indicates the origin of the species.



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