

Interesting research projects on perennials in The Netherlands

Developments in nomenclature of perennials

Everyone in the perennial industry has to work with plant names. The usefulness of a correct and internationally unique nomenclature is clear to everyone. Fortunately, clear international choices and agreements have been made. We use the binomial naming system of Linnaeus as a basis and there are international nomenclatorial rules for both wild plants (ICBN) and cultivated plants (ICNCP). This ensures a certain degree of stability, but nevertheless plant nomenclature appears not to be static. Especially in cultivated plants a lot has changed in recent decades. Especially strongly domesticated perennials, in which much breeding work has been done, often have a complex genetic background (e.g. *Hosta*, *Heuchera*, *Hemerocallis*, *Paeonia*, *Orchids*, etc). This also has implications for their nomenclature. For that reason new categories have been introduced, such as the cultivar group and the grex.

From the nursery business another category emerged: the trade name. Especially these trade names cause much confusion, because they don't fit well in the hierarchical binomial system. One cultivar can have multiple trade names, depending on their use, country or producer, and different cultivars may have one and the same trade name. In addition, a trade name can be protected, so owners of these trademarks may impose restrictions its use. For modern businesses this offers new possibilities, but for botanists and many users, it causes a lot of confusion.

Also science doesn't stand still. By new DNA techniques taxa can be identified faster and better and also their phylogenetic relationships can be determined more reliably. This sometimes has consequences for the names of (cultivated) plants. Well-known names of garden plants such as *Dicentra spectabilis* and *Aster dumosus* according to the latest scientific insights must be changed to *Lamprocapnos spectabilis* and *Symphyotrichum dumosum* respectively. This is to great displeasure of the green/perennial industry and of many users.

In order to respond to the developments mentioned above and the resulting problems and of course for optimal communication and trading the International Stauden Union (ISU) and the Perennial Plant Association of North America (PPA) both find it essential to have one standard list of names of perennial products that is used everywhere in Europe and North America. Since 2000 both organisations accepted The List of Names of Perennials ("Yellow book") edited by Wageningen UR / Applied Plant Research as the international standard.

In order to get more involvement on developments and changes of names, on the initiative of the board of the ISU, a new working group on perennials plant names has been established in 2011. This working group, consisting of representatives of the perennial industry from different countries. This means that in 2015 there will appear a complete revised edition of the List of Names of Perennials under auspices of ISU (and PPA) and their working group nomenclature of perennials.

Sources for more information:

Hoffman, M.H.A. (2010): List of Names of Perennials, 6th edition – Wageningen UR, 563 p.

Hoffman, M.H.A. (2010): Nomenclature of Perennials, a never ending story – Presentation on the Third International Perennial Plant Conference, Grünberg, Germany

Hoffman, M.H.A. (2011): Nomenclature of Perennials, a never ending story, part two – Presentation on the Fourth International Perennial Plant Conference, Grünberg, Germany

Hoffman, M.H.A. (2008): Classificatie van planten, nieuwe inzichten en gevolgen voor de praktijk – Dendroflora 45, pa. 4-18 (In Dutch; PDF available at: <http://edepot.wur.nl/148415>)

Website: www.internationalplantnames.com



Left: List of names of Woody Plants and List of Names of Perennials

Middle: List of Names of Perennials

Right: The well-known *Aster novae-angliae* is changed to *Symphotrichum novae-angliae* in new taxonomic publications. The new ISU-working group of perennials has to decide to change it for the perennial industry or not..

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Dicentra spectabilis ' at the moment ' 🍷

