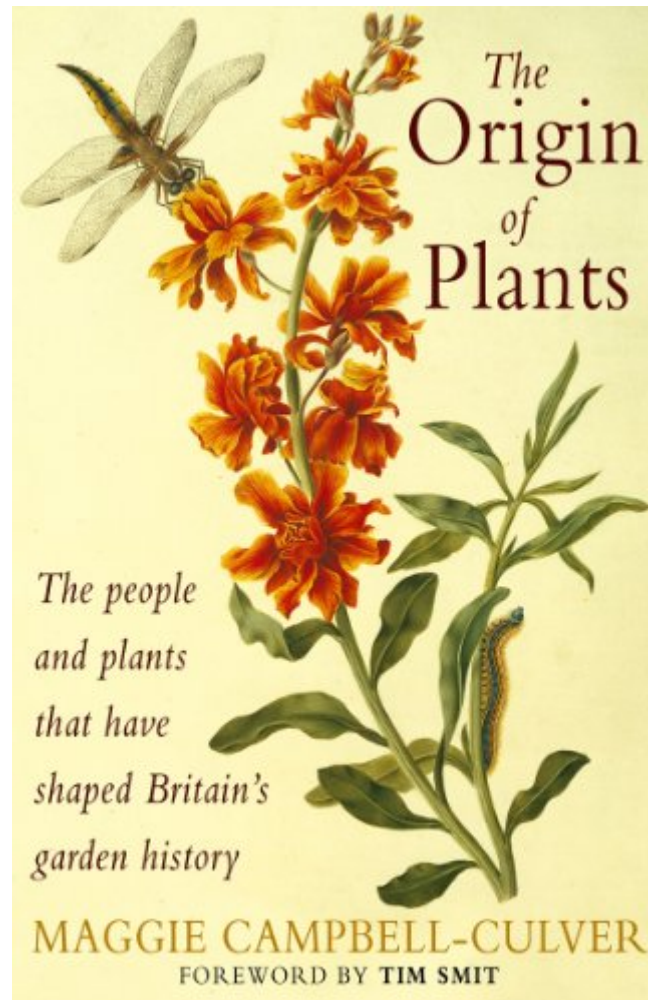


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# The Origin Of Plants



## Synopsis

A fascinating history of Britain's plant biodiversity and a unique account of how our garden landscape has been transformed over 1000 years, from 200 species of plant in the year 1000 to the astonishing variety of plants we can all see today. Thousands of plants have been introduced into Britain since 1066 by travellers, warriors, explorers and plant hunters - plants that we now take for granted such as rhododendron from the Far East, gladiolus from Africa and exotic plants like the monkey puzzle tree from Chile. Both a plant history and a useful reference book, Maggie Campbell-Culver has researched the provenance and often strange histories of many of the thousands of plants, exploring the quirky and sometimes rude nature of the plants, giving them a personality all of their own and setting them in their social context. The text is supported by beautiful contemporary paintings and modern photographs in 2 x 8 pp colour sections.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an extensively researched and well-written book that investigates how garden plants arrived in England. The writer, a respected garden historian and fellow of the Linnean Society, has chosen to divide her material into centuries. She sets the scene with a look at Roman and Anglo-Saxon

approaches to gardening and plants, then gets into more detail about plant immigrants, starting with the first century of the second millennium. To put the reader more clearly in the picture the writer starts each chapter (century) with a list of significant dates so we can see how historical events influenced the arrival of plants. In the twelfth century, for example, plant introductions were influenced by the Crusades as plants were brought to Britain from the eastern Mediterranean region. But this is not just a book about plants; it's also about the people associated with them. Sir Thomas More, for example, who in his book *Utopia* envisaged a town where everyone had a garden around their home. New plants are still arriving in England from around the world. A "living fossil" tree was discovered in Australia in 1994. Its Latin name is *Wollemia nobilis* (it was found by David Noble) and it is known as the Dinosaur pine. Plants have been arriving from every continent for centuries and shared back and forth especially to Europe and the US. Just as many new plants went from the New World to brighten English gardens, so seeds and plants were taken to North America by English settlers to create gardens in their new homeland. If you enjoy reading about the background and history of plants, who found them and how they came to us, you will enjoy this book. It has a very decent bibliography and deserves a place in every plantsman's (and woman's) library.

A wonderful reading for a plant lover. Provides a nice glimpse into British history as well. A fortunate combination of Natural and Social history in one book.

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