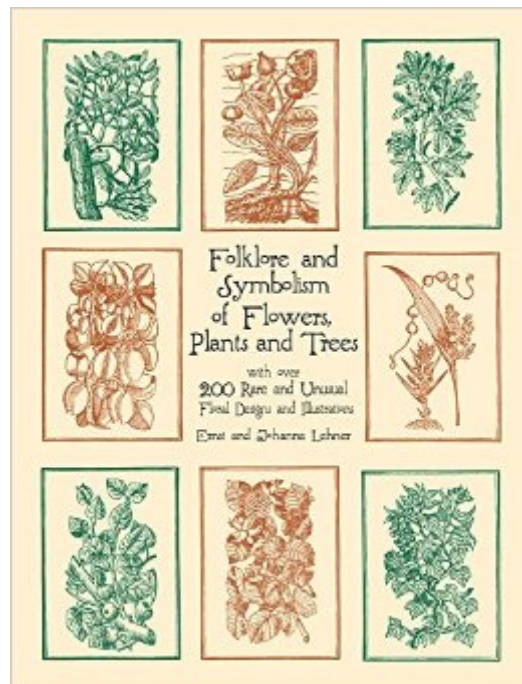


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# Folklore And Symbolism Of Flowers, Plants And Trees (Dover Pictorial Archive)



## Synopsis

This profusely illustrated archive of more than 200 flowers, plants, and trees was compiled by Ernst and Johanna Lehner — two of the world's foremost collectors of pictorial symbols (who also happen to be devoted flower enthusiasts). Their comprehensive collection, with illustrations selected from rare sources, extends from the image of a pomegranate, the Chinese symbol of fertility, to a basket of flowers in a nineteenth-century Valentine silhouette. A profusion of bouquets, wreaths, flowers of the months, and other floral designs are also included. In examining the symbolism of flora, the authors consider the religious, magical, and legendary significance of plants such as the mandrake, used as an opiate and love potion; the lotus, revered by the Egyptians and the Mayas of Central America; the mistletoe, a plant believed by the ancients to be capable of raising people from the dead; as well as the Bo tree, sunflower, dragon tree, ice plant, and many other botanical specimens. The development of horticultural images in heraldic devices, emblems, and symbols is also discussed, and a concluding section displays a table summarizing the symbolic meanings of every known species of flora — from absinthe to zinnia. A visual treat for flower lovers, this volume of royalty-free illustrations is an essential sourcebook for artists and designers. Of value to botanical experts and gardening specialists, it will also appeal to folklore enthusiasts.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Obviously much time and effort went into researching this book, *Folklore and Symbolism of Flowers, Plants and Trees*. Excellent line drawings and b/w illustrations used appropriately. Includes

European and Asian sources of information and illustrations. Quotes and all illustrations are excerpted from early printed sources - some dating back to 13th century. Great layout design of text and illustrations. Text is concise yet informative on specific topics. An easy-to-use book!

**Table of Contents:**

- 1) Sacred plants (including trees of life & knowledge) and specific plants;
- 2) Flower lore and legend (alphabetized by common flower & tree names)
- 3) Strange and wondrous plants (ex: Apple of Sodom, Ice plant, and Tree of Sorrow)
- 4) Flower Calendar - seasons, flowers of the month, both Chinese & Japanese flower calendars
- 5) Language of Flowers - Sentiments and symbolism

A good general background source book for those interested in folklore or historical "roots" of common and less common plants meanings. A basic source book for all who enjoy nature hikes and telling stories about plants along the way. Not only do readers learn more about their ancestors' views and beliefs of specific plants but also a new way of seeing the natural world around us.

My concentration for my major is ethnobotany, and this is a definite must-have addition to my collection! The illustrations are wonderful! Each section done has at least one illustration and a good paragraph explaining its origins. I particularly enjoy the seasons section, as well as the chinese flower calendar and the japanese flower calendar. There is also a shortened "sentiments and symbolism" in the back, similar to a glossary, with basic meanings of every plant in the book. It is organized well, and very informative.

This book offers brief passages about many commonly known plants, whether through lore or daily life. It isn't just based off of western Christian lore or western superstitions like Charlotte de la Tour's "Language of Flowers" (while it is very romantic, it is biased and some of it isn't quite understandable for someone who is not of European extraction). It also includes the beliefs and medicinal uses of middle eastern, northern european, far eastern, and native americans of both continents. It's a very age-friendly book that could probably be read by anyone at least 8-9 years old. As it is written in English, it would probably stimulate interest in other cultures if the reader does not already.

Excellent resource for information, but not complete. It has limited lists of flowers and their meaning, but gives a great history of where those things come from.

No single book on the language or symbolism of flowers is complete or exhaustive. But this small little reproduction of an older book does a nice job of giving one a glimpse into the symbology of

flowers.

This is a fun book which possesses interesting facts, but I wish it had been thicker and included more of the same. What it does do, though, is provide interesting facts regarding old superstitions regarding plants along with information regarding things like which plants traditionally symbolize which months. One rather disappointing fact: some things which I knew on my own were not mentioned: for instance mandrake was in fact used as a fertility drug but it is also (in reality) an effective poison. (It has no real usefulness regarding fertility.) Opium was left out of the book entirely even though as far back as the Romans it was used as a pain killer; it was imported from India. Things like that were left out and that was what I found least satisfying about the book.

I liked the references to old sources, the old and fanciful drawings, and the inclusion of mythical plants. Traditional medicinal and magical uses are mentioned as well. On the other hand, a sprinkling of punctuation and minor spelling errors made me wonder what else might not be quite right. For example, when they say Juno was associated with the moon, was that something I forgot about, something missed by everything else I've read about Greek and Roman mythology, something their source claimed erroneously, or their own mistake? Overall an interesting little book.

This book is great for anyone looking to learn more about folklore regarding plants. They are divided by a few different categories depending on what you're looking for, or just read the whole thing for an interesting lesson.

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