Writing a Botanical Name

This self-check worksheet aims to help you practice and evaluate your understanding of botanical nomenclature - the system botanists devised and use to create a formal scientific name for plants that conforms to the International Code of Nomenclature.

Activity Time: 15 to 30 minutes

Materials: botanic books, experts or reliable Internet resources, *Latin 101* by Dora Galitzki in Garden Design magazine from October 2000 pages 88 to 89.

Guiding Question: How is having a shared naming system valuable in cultivating plants?

Activity:

- Use print publications or reliable experts or Internet resources to research what is the botanical name (formal scientific name) given to the following plants?
  1) Redbud
  2) Arrowwood
  3) White oak

- Think of your very favorite tree. What is the common name you use for that tree? What is its botanical name (formal scientific name)?

- Think of your very favorite vegetable. What is the common name you use for that vegetable? What is its botanical name (formal scientific name)? What is a variety name? Is your favorite vegetable specific to a variety? Consider when and how the terms variety and cultivar are used in formal and informal ways.

- Can you identify the error(s) in each of the following botanical names? What is a common name or names for each plant? Which of these plants have variety or cultivar names?
  1) *Cornus florida*
  2) *Prunus subhirtella* “Pendula”
  3) *Acer Rubrum* ‘October Glory’
  4) *Acer palmatum* ‘waterfall’

- Create a plant name for yourself using the list of the meanings of Latin and Greek specific epithets (see *Latin 101*). For example, because I love trees, I might create: *Barbneal arborea*

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Published: August 2016
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