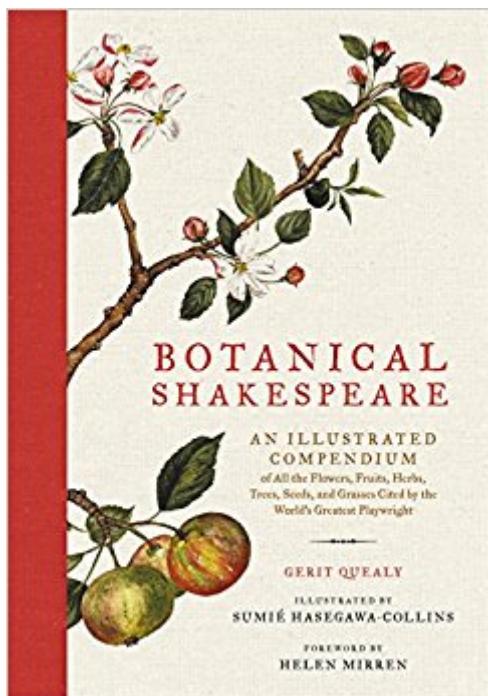


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# Botanical Shakespeare: An Illustrated Compendium Of All The Flowers, Fruits, Herbs, Trees, Seeds, And Grasses Cited By The World's Greatest Playwright



## Synopsis

A captivating, beautifully illustrated, one-of-a-kind color compendium of the flowers, fruits, herbs, trees, seeds, and grasses cited in the works of the world's greatest playwright, William Shakespeare, accompanied by their companion quotes from all of his plays and poems. With a foreword by Dame Helen Mirren—the first foreword she has ever contributed. In this striking compilation, Shakespeare historian Gerit Quealy and respected Japanese artist Sumi-fuji Hasegawa combine their knowledge and skill in this first and only book that examines every plant that appears in the works of Shakespeare. Botanical Shakespeare opens with a brief look at the Bard's relationship to the plants mentioned in his works—a diversity that illuminates his knowledge of the science of botany, as well as the colloquy, revealing his unmatched skill for creating metaphorical connections and interweaving substantive philosophy. At the heart of the book are "portraits" of the over 170 flowers, fruits, grains, grasses, trees, herbs, seeds and vegetables that Shakespeare mentions in his plays and poems. Botanical Shakespeare features a gorgeous color illustration of each, giving a "face" to the name, alongside the specific text in which it appears and the character(s) who utter the lines in which it is mentioned. This fascinating visual compendium also includes a dictionary describing each plant—such as Eglantine, a wild rose with a slight prickle, cherished for its singular scent, superior to any other rose; and the difference between apples and apple-john—along with indices listing the botanical by play/poem, by character, and genus for easy reference, ideal for gardeners and thoughtful birthday gift-giving. This breathtaking, incomparable collection of exquisite artwork and companion quotes offers unique depth and insight into Shakespeare and his timeless work through the unusual perspective of the plants themselves.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“BOTANICAL SHAKESPEARE [is] a comprehensive guide to the flora that appears in Shakespeare’s work. (The New York Times) “The book [has] stunning illustrations paired with beautiful (and, sometimes, downright bawdy) lines from Shakespeare. (Paste Magazine) “Each plant’s one-page entry (a few get two) features a lovely full-color drawing and the line(s) where it appears, fully cited . . . Nature buffs and general readers as well as students will enjoy this interesting book, which is suitable for both browsing and quick reference. (Booklist)

In this stunning compilation, Shakespeare expert Gerit Quealy has teamed up with notable Japanese artist Sumi fumi Hasegawa-Collins to create the most comprehensive collection of all the flowers, fruits, herbs, trees, seeds, and grasses mentioned in Shakespeare’s works, each paired with an exquisite illustration and corresponding quote. Quealy supplements the dazzling main text with rich background information, explaining Shakespeare’s relationship to plants, describing his deep knowledge of botany as well as colloquialisms and his unmatched skill for creating metaphorical connections. An accompanying dictionary elaborates on each plant, providing facts, historical context, and anecdotes such as the differences between an apple and an apple-john, how clinging burrs from the burdock plant that stick to anything brushing by became associated with obsessive crushes, and that the turnip is mentioned only once in all of Shakespeare, in the Merry Wives of Windsor, when Anne Page says she prefers Death by Vegetable to marrying a foolish suitor. Twenty years in the making, Botanical Shakespeare is a labor of love from illustrator Hasegawa-Collins and Quealy, whose combined passion for both Shakespeare and plants has resulted in this beautiful and meticulous compendium that leaves no petal unturned.

This book is a must have for anyone who loves Shakespeare, plants, flowers and/or gardening. You are treated to stunning watercolors of every plant in the mentioned anywhere in the Shakespeare canon alongside the quotes in which the plants appear, a lovely intro by no less than Helen Mirren and a wealth of knowledge written with humor and insight about Shakespeare’s works and their

relation to the botanical world with section titles like "Shakespeare, Plants and Sex". And after you treat yourself to a copy, think of what a great gift it is for others. My sister has already asked for it for Christmas and I've already bought it for her, along with another as a gift for someone else who will love it. Highly recommended!

This is a spectacular book. Not only are the illustrations gorgeous but the information is so useful and well-written. The introduction is valuable, and I greatly appreciated the definitions of all the botanicals. The connections with the plays is fascinating. I will not only treasure this book but buy more copies for friends.

From cover to cover this book delights the senses and inspires the imagination. The illustrations are superb, and the collection of botanical references in Shakespeare's plays is extensive, evocative and elegantly presented. I particularly appreciated the personal notes in Dame Helen Mirren's introduction. *Botanical Shakespeare: An Illustrated Compendium of All the Flowers, Fruits, Herbs, Trees, Seeds, and Grasses Cited by the World's Greatest Playwright*

I received in the mail today, my copy of "Botanical Shakespeare" by Gerit Quealy. It is elegant and meticulous, impeccably researched, and gracefully illustrated by her colleague Sumie. The foreword by Helen Mirren (who is a heroine for her talent, grace and spirit, for every woman over a certain age) is personal and engaging. Everyone should have this in their library and plus it is a great gift.

This is the perfect combination of flowers and Shakespeare....the illustrations are lovely and so is the text. I know people on both sides of this book who will love read and looking at this lovely volume....it's a winner....

Beautiful book!

It's a beautifully produced book, with elegant illustrations and the quotations are great fun. A great reference book...

Yes, this is a gorgeous volume. The illustrations are incredible, and pairing them with the quotations makes for wonderful browsing; the book is worth having on your shelf or coffee table for its beauty

alone. But my favorite parts of this book are the revelations. Anyone familiar with Shakespeare's oeuvre-- theater fans, academics, and literary sleuths -- will appreciate Botanical Shakespeare's academic scholarship: Why peonies aren't pictured, which poison killed Hamlet (Hint: It probably wasn't henbane or hemlock), and how the wordplay around the medlar fruit should make high school students blush. And the writer makes the topic come alive as vividly as the illustrator does, so it's not, as she cleverly puts it, "All Latin and Fenugreek." As a bonus, the last page of the book provides a link to a thorough list of plants by play, by character, and by species. No botanist, teacher, florist, actor, autodidact, or curious reader should be without Botanical Shakespeare. Get thee to a bookstore! Or the convenient "Add to Cart" button!

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