Magnoliophyta - Flowering Plant Classification

The shift from "artificial" systems of classification to "natural" systems basically involved the departure away from reliance on a single or few characters used to "pigeon-hole" a plant (e.g., habit, medicinal property, # of stamens). Instead, large numbers - or "suites" - of characters were later used.





This switch from artificial to natural systems of classification was aided by a fad in the 18th and 19th centuries - laying out botanical gardens to reflect the current classification scheme in vogue.

Shown here is the famous Linnaean Gardens in Uppsula, Sweden, in which the plants are arranged by stamen number as in Carolus Linnaeus' "Sexual System of Classification"



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The shift from "natural" systems of classification to "phylogenetic" systems required the concept from Charles Darwin that organisms are tied together by genealogical descent - one of the two basic evolutionary paradigms.





Magnoliophyta - Flowering Plant Classification It is important to realize that evolution predicts a "tree"- like pattern to life; not the Greek "ladder of life" pattern. This confusion is the basis of a lot miscommunication in the "evolution-creationist" debate.



Magnoliophyta - Flowering Plant Classification

Karl Prantl

(1849-1893)



Adolf Engler (1844-1930)

First truly **phylogenetic** system of classification for flowering plants was put forward at the turn of the 20th century by the German botanists Engler and Prantl.

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First truly **phylogenetic** system of classification for flowering plants was put forward at the turn of the 20th century by the German botanists Engler and Prantl.

They stressed that "simple" flowers - that is with few or no parts - were "primitive". Thus, their system can be called "*Salix* (willows) primitive".

Magnoliophyta - Flowering Plant Classification

SCIENCE

PRACTICE

RICHARD A. OVERFIELD

Maturing of

WITH

Charles Bessey, early 20th century botanist from University of Nebraska, revolutionized plant classification when he published rules - **Bessey's dicta** - to determine if plants were primitive or advanced.

His four main rules were:

- Many parts is primitive; reduction in parts is advanced
- Actinomorphy is primitive; zygomorphy is advanced
- Separate parts is primitive; fusion of parts is advanced
- Hypogyny is primitive; epigyny is advanced



Magnoliophyta - Flowering Plant Classification Bessey produced a classification system based on his rules. The orders of flowering sympetalo epigynous called "Bessey's cactus". poly petalous epigynous Shown here is an overlay of the some of his most important features and how they change as you move up the "cactus". polypetulous upogynous The order **Ranales** was considered by perigynous Bessey to represent the most primtive flowering plants.

Magnoliophyta - Flowering Plant Classification

The Ranales are better known as the Magnoliales - the order containing the Magnolia. The flower has many parts in each whorl, actinomorphic, no fusion, and hypogynous. Some refer to Bessey's system as "Magnolia primitive".











