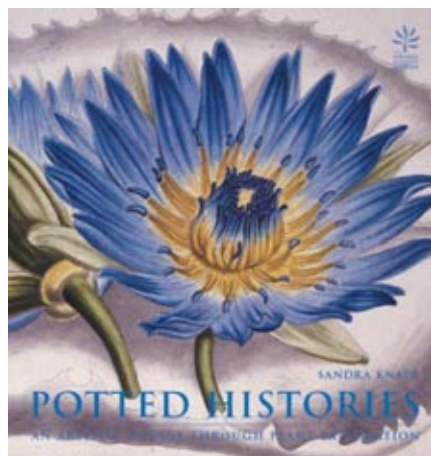


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# POTTED HISTORIES

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AN ARTISTIC VOYAGE THROUGH PLANT  
EXPLORATION

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FROM THE TREASURY OF ORIGINAL BOTANICAL  
ART HELD IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE  
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

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*Potted Histories* is a voyage of discovery through some of the treasures of botanical painting held in the internationally renowned collection of the Natural History Museum in London. This amazing collection of exquisite images, chosen for their scientific and artistic merit, is beautifully produced and accompanied by text which explores the discovery and development of each plant – from wild origins in far-flung regions to their place in today's gardens. *Potted Histories* will delight, amaze and inspire plant enthusiasts, garden lovers and artists alike.

Every garden plant has a name – it has been discovered by someone, described by someone and has often been the subject of a life's work. Each one has a story to tell, some are from the harshest environments on earth, some have flowers which mimic rotting flesh, while still others have a beauty which defies the human imagination. The history of garden plants is one of science and adventure, mirrored by the stories of artists who have recorded the plants in exquisite and devoted detail. As with scientists, particular plants have often been the inspiration for an entire artistic career – such is their power to arouse passion. Each chapter, or 'potted history' is devoted to a particular plant – some familiar, some more exotic, but all with a surprise or two in store.

SANDRA KNAPP is an internationally respected botanist and an expert in the taxonomy and phylogeny of the nightshade family. She took up her current post at the Natural History Museum in London as one of the editors of *Flora Mesoamerica*, an international collaborative project to provide an identification guide to the plants of Mexico and Central America. She is the author of several books on botany and its history and is actively involved in improving the public understanding of science.

THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM in London, is a repository for some of the most significant, exciting and comprehensive collections of natural science specimens, original artworks and literature to be found anywhere in the world. It holds 70 million specimens, some several centuries old, one million books, including many rare and richly illustrated volumes dating back to the 15th century and close to half a million botanical artworks, comprising one of Britain's biggest art collections and representing most of the great natural history artists. Together they constitute an unrivalled resource consulted daily by scientists and scholars worldwide.

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