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Cecropia

Urticaceae
[*Cecropiaceae*]

Cecropia honours the name of an early ruler of Athens, Cecrops I. He was an earthborn creature, half man and half snake, sometimes referred to as ‘son of Gaia’ or ‘son of the soil’. There is debate among classicists about who first ruled the Greek peninsular known as Attica (of which Athens was the principal city) but it was during Cecrops’ reign that Athena (goddess of wisdom) and Poseidon (god of the sea) are supposed to have vied for the privilege of bestowing patronage upon that kingdom. The competition was eventually won by Athena with her gift of the olive tree and this led to its being re-christened Athens.