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*Gardenia*

*Rubiaceae*

*Gardenia* commemorates a Scottish physician and natural historian, Dr. Alexander Garden (1730-1791) who followed his clergyman father to South Carolina in the United States in 1752 and joined a medical practice in Charleston three years later. His scientific knowledge enabled him to inoculate 2000 patients against smallpox with some success during Charleston's 1760 epidemic. In his own time he also pursued his interest in studying flora and fauna and collecting plant specimens (as well as amphibia, birds, fish, insects and reptiles) which he sent to both Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778) and a London merchant and naturalist, John Ellis (1711-1776). His overt support for the British during the American War of Independence (1775-1783) led to the confiscation of his property in Charleston and he returned to Britain. There he chose to live in Westminster (London) and having suffered poor health for a large part of his life he eventually succumbed to tuberculosis. He was a Fellow of the The Royal Society and a member of several other bodies.