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*Gaylussacia*

*Ericaceae*

*Gaylussacia* commemorates a French chemist and physicist, Joseph Louis Gay-Lussac (1778-1850) who was a professor of chemistry from 1809 at the École Polytechnique established in Paris during the French Revolution, and professor of physics at the Sorbonne from 1808 which he relinquished in 1832 to become professor of chemistry at the Jardin des Plantes. Published in 1802 his law on the expansion of gases (more familiar in Great Britain under the name ‘Charles’ Law’ ie. Jacques Alexandre César Charles (1746-1823) who reached similar conclusions on gas expansion earlier but did not publish them) would prove to be of considerable importance to the food-canning industry. He worked with various peers on different projects including the French chemist, Louis Jacques Thénard (1777-1857), the German explorer and naturalist, Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) and the French mathematician, physicist and astronomer, Jean-Baptiste Biot (1774-1862). Gay-Lussac is often remembered for his unique balloon ascents made in 1804 in order to carry out scientific, atmospheric and magnetic observations. These took place in hydrogen-filled balloons and reached about 6000-7000 metres above sea level and would not be repeated by anybody else for the next half century. He was also a co-discoverer of boron.