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Hydrangea quercifolia

[Synonyms : *Hydrangea platanifolia*]

OAK-LEAVED HYDRANGEA is a deciduous shrub. Native to south-eastern North America it has creamy-white flowers that turn greenish-purple.

It is also known as Oakleaf hydrangea, and Swamp snowball.

The flowers are delicately scented when first in bloom.

Warning – the plant is poisonous, especially the leaves and buds. It can cause nausea, abdominal pain, vomiting, gastroenteritis and diarrhoea. It can be poisonous for some animals, particularly horses and cows.

Quercifolia is made up of *Quercus* (genus name) and Latin *-folia* (leaved) components meaning ‘oak-leaved’.

It is understood that this species was discovered by the celebrated American naturalist, William Bartram (1739-1823), who was the fifth son of the man that Carolus Linnaeus described as ‘the greatest natural botanist in the world’, John Bartram. It was one of the few that he actually named, and was also one of the first hydrangeas to be grown at Mount Vernon, the Virginia garden of George Washington (1732-1799), the first President of the United States.