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*Jeffersonia*

*Berberidaceae*

[*Podophyllaceae*]

*Jeffersonia* commemorates an American lawyer, reforming republican politician, landowner (not least Monticello), architect and active horticulturist, the 3rd President of the United States of America, Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), who was a highly respected and knowledgeable botanical patron. He was an American diplomat in Paris, succeeding Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), from 1784-1789. Then from 1789-1793 he was appointed Secretary of State by George Washington (1732-1799), served as Vice-President from 1797-1801 under the 2<sup>nd</sup> President, John Adams (1735-1826), and he was President from 1801-1809. During this latter period he planned the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806) into the unexplored lands to the west of the Mississippi – and the party crossed the Rocky Mountains and reached the Pacific Ocean before turning back. He was president of the American Philosophical Society from 1797-1815, and founded the University of Virginia. He was the prime author of the Declaration of Independence. After the British had burned the Library of Congress (and Washington himself) he offered his own library of 6,487 books as the basis of a new national library and apparently the website of today's Library of Congress was christened 'Thomas' in recognition of this. In addition to the foregoing he was a connoisseur of food and drink, and was also interested in archaeology for which he is credited by some authorities of making a significant contribution in the development of methods of excavation. One authority at least recalls a comment made by the 35<sup>th</sup> President, John F. Kennedy (1917-1963) during his own presidency (1960-1963). In 1962 the White House gave a dinner for forty nine winners of the Nobel Prize and they were greeted with

*I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent and of human knowledge that has ever been gathered together at the White House – with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone.*