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*Lathyrus*

*Fabaceae*

[*Leguminosae/Papilionaceae/Papilionoideae*]

*Lathyrus* is derived for some authorities from Greek *lathyros* (pea, pulse), and for others from Greek *la-* (very) and *thoures* (stimulant) components with reference to the seeds' alleged irritant qualities.

Species in this genus can cause lathyrism for which the most immediate significant symptom is paralysis of the larynx.

Members of this family absorb nitrogen from the air. Through the bacterial nodules on their deep growing roots, they will introduce nitrogen to the soil (and aerate it), to the benefit of neighbouring plants and any following them in the same soil.