

You are viewing one of thousands of biographies – click below for more, including Search box and access to Plant associated organisations.

[Plant Biographies](#)

[Bibliography](#)

---

*Medicago*

*Leguminosae*

[*Fabaceae/Papilionaceae*]

*Medicago* is for some authorities derived from Greek *medike* (medick), the classical Greek name used for a kind of crop, probably a cereal. Others note, although this seems less likely, that Darius I (548-486 BC) who ruled Persia (now Iran) is associated with lucerne (*Medicago sativa*) and that this is recalled in the use of the plant's name today.

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.