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*Monsonia*

*Geraniaceae*

*Monsonia* commemorates an English traveller and naturalist, Lady Anne Monson (c. 1727-1776) who by 1760, according to records, was recognised as a botanist by some of her peers. She is believed to have become interested in the insect world too after meeting a Danish entomologist, John Christian Fabricius (1745-1808) in London. She accompanied her husband to Calcutta where he fulfilled his duties in the Indian military. Meanwhile apart from being a leading member of the Anglo-Indian community there, she also collected plants and insects in Bengal. On a subsequent journey to India in 1774 she stopped for a period at the Cape of Good Hope and collected plants there too. While at the Cape she also met the Swedish botanist, Carl Per Thunberg (1743-1828), who acknowledged both her botanical standing and her beauty. Lady Anne died in Calcutta two years later and some records note that one of her coffin bearers to the cemetery gates was an English colonial administrator in the British East India Company and from 1773 the first governor-general of British India, Warren Hastings (1732-1818). From those gates the coffin was carried by six ladies to the tomb where her remains are said to rest to this day. The credibility of the funeral cortège is uncertain however as other reports suggest that her husband had been on extremely unsatisfactory terms with Hastings.