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*Parkinsonia*

*Leguminosae*

[*Fabaceae/Caesalpinaceae*]

*Parkinsonia* commemorates an English herbalist, apothecary and botanical author, John Parkinson (c.1567-1650), who was apothecary to James I (1566-1625) and herbalist to Charles I (1600-1649). In 1617 he was a charter member of the Society of Apothecaries and the following year, with four of his peers, was consulted by the College of Physicians when the *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis* was being compiled. Some authorities suggest he was probably a man of humour. The first of his works containing three sections on the flower and kitchen gardens and orchard (covering descriptions of nearly 1000 plants in cultivation then and their uses) and published in 1629 is entitled *Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris*, a literal translation of which could be 'Park in sun's terrestrial paradise'. When he was 73 he also published a herbal describing over 3,800 plants, *Theatrum Botanicum*.

The plant's food (which would normally be expected to be produced and stored in the leaves) is instead found in the bark.

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.