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*Plumeria*

*Apocynaceae*

*Plumeria* commemorates a French botanist, Charles Plumier (1646-1704) who was a member of the religious order of Minims (they forsook meat and dairy products). Commissioned by the French Government in 1689, he explored the Antilles in the Caribbean and made accurate drawings of many plants including ferns. On his return to France he was appointed as royal botanist to the Sun King, Louis XIV (1638-1715) who sent him on two further expeditions to the Antilles in 1693 and 1695, the latter including Central America. He was setting out on a fourth visit in 1704, this time to Peru, when he died from pleurisy in Spain (near Cadiz). He drew about 6000 flora and fauna (two-thirds of which were plants) and he described hundreds of them. His interests extended to physics, mathematics and turning and in his earlier years he made scientific instruments. A compilation of some of his works was published in 1703 entitled *Filicetum Americanum* and other works include *L'Art de tourner*.

All the species in this genus can cause dermatitis and blistering on the skin. Overdoses taken internally can cause gastroenteritis and diarrhoea.