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*Robinia*

*Leguminosae*

[*Fabaceae/Papilionaceae*]

*Robinia* commemorates a French botanist and herbalist, Jean Robin (1550-1629), who was herbalist and gardener to both Henri IV (1553-1610) and Louis XIII (1601-1643). He knew and exchanged plants with many of his European peers some of whom, like the English John Gerard (1545-1612), became lifelong friends. (Some authorities suggest this genus name commemorates father and son. The latter, Vespasien Robin (1579-1660) followed in his father's footsteps and in 1635 became head gardener in the new *Jardin du Roi* which would become the *Jardin des Plantes* or Paris botanic garden in 1693.) 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.