

PLANT CLASSIFICATION

| FAMILY | GENUS | SPECIES |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Botanists classify plants into families based on common botanical features; some use only 150 families, while others use 500. Plant family names always end in the letters -aceae. The conservatory's permanent collection has a large number of the plants from the <i>Arecaceae</i> (palm), <i>Bromeliaceae</i> (bromeliad), and <i>Orchidaceae</i> (orchid) families.</p> | <p>Plants classified within one family are further divided into groups (genera) of more closely related plants. The genus name is the first word in a plant's botanical name and should always be capitalized.</p> | <p>Plants within one genus are divided into species. The species name often describes some aspect of the plant (e.g., flower color, leaf size or shape) or it may be named after the place where it was found. A plant's botanical name is always written in italics and is a combination of the genus name and species name (e.g., <i>Euphorbia trigona</i>); together, the genus and species name refer to only one plant.</p> |

FAMILY

Euphorbiaceae

Is the largest family of plants with about 300 genera and 7,500 species. Plants in this family are herbs, shrubs, and trees, sometimes succulent and cactus-like, and are characterized by the frequent occurrence of milky sap.

GENUS

Chamaesyce

Euphorbia

There are over 2000 species of Euphorbias. Plants in this genus range from annual weeds to trees. They all have milky latex and have a unique flower structure. Many are succulents which originate from Africa and Madagascar.

Phyllanthus

SPECIES

Euphorbia trigona

African Milk Tree

Euphorbia milii

Crown of Thorns

