

# Did You Know?

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## Rose *Rosa* spp.

- Roses have long been called the flower of love and have been linked to the Greek goddess Aphrodite, Roman goddess Venus and other goddesses of love.
- Romans who believed roses symbolized love, beauty, purity and passion, incorporated them into daily living, from petals in bath water, home décor to strewing on banquet floors.
- Rose fossils date back approximately 35 million years.
- Cultivation of roses dates back to the fifth century in China, Asia, and the Mediterranean regions. During this time, roses were used for perfume, medicine and as confetti for celebrations.
- Monks grew roses for medicinal purposes in the Middle Ages.
- The term *sub rosa*, is associated with secrecy. It is a Roman term meaning under the rose, which comes from the practice of hanging roses in rooms or doorways where meetings were held.
- The “War of the Roses” occurred during the fifteenth century when the rose symbolized the warring factions fighting for control over England.
- Beads made from cooked and mashed rose petals and hand rolled originated in India as prayer beads. Christian monks adopted the practice and the term “rosary” was coined in the fifteenth century.
- Royalty considered roses and rose water to be a form of currency and used it for bartering and purchasing in the seventeenth century.
- Rose hips are high in Vitamin C and add a tart flavor to tea.
- 1867 is often considered the date that separates “old garden” roses from “modern” roses with the introduction of the hybrid tea rose. And yet, a newer introduction with parentage that dates back to an “old garden” rose, is still considered to be an “old garden” rose.
- There are more than 30,000 varieties of roses, in all growing forms. Over 300 species are accepted and of those only about 20 of them are ancestors of the modern rose.
- A notable trend in recent rose introductions is breeding fragrance back into new cultivars as well as disease resistance and hardiness to accommodate different climates