

# Poisonous Plants

Dr Kathryn Harkup

*[Faint, illegible handwritten text in a historical script, likely Latin or Greek, surrounding the plant illustration.]*



Molecular Tales of Myths,  
Magic and Murder

# Poisonous Plants

## Sinister seeds and fatal flowers

Has your partner been asking about insurance? Have some sinister new species suddenly appeared in your garden? This is the talk for you! This talk explores a 'potted' history of plant poisons and the part they have played in myths, magic and murder. Expect witches, Vincent van Gogh and a three-headed dog.



### The Talk

30 to 60 minutes to any number of people

Plants give us life. They are our source of oxygen, food and medicines. However, a few of them have also provided us with poisons for killing insects, rats and, occasionally, people. Some of the compounds found within certain plants can relieve pain, affect our heartbeat or even make us think we are flying. This talk will look at five potent plants, cultivated killers and worrying wild flowers.



### Curriculum Links

Suitable for Sixth Form Students and older

This talk relates to science curriculum topics on proteins, enzymes, cells, the nervous system, circulatory system, respiration, development of medicines, effects of drugs, pathology and adaptation.



### Contact

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