

Mrs. Darwin's Garden

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Book binding: Jana Pullman

It is widely believed that Charles *Darwin* delayed publishing his theory of *evolution* for more than 20 years. Many explanations have been proposed. While there is no clear evidence, a possible reason might have been that Darwin did not wish to upset his *wife* Emma, who followed the religious traditions of Victorian England, believing that God's power was above everything and cherishing a belief in the *afterlife*.

Although Charles and Emma Darwin did not share the same deep religious faith, their marriage was one of *love*, respect, understanding and *mutual support*. Before their wedding, Charles wrote to Emma: "I think you will *humanize* me, and soon teach me there is greater *happiness*, than building theories and accumulating facts in silence and solitude." Charles Darwin and Emma *married* in 1839.

Throughout their marriage the Darwins found their most enjoyable shared activities to be Emma's excellent *piano* playing and *strolling* together through their gardens.

Darwin died in Emma's *arms* in 1882.

Fuchsia

tradescantia virginiana

Cotula hispida

orchis

Crassula ovata

celosia Argentea

aquilegia canadensis

Freesia

pomum granatum

Martensia virginica

epimedium

crassula portulacea

ORCHIS

Lavandula

angelonia

Agave

Crocarius

Papaver rhoeas

tulipa

This art book *celebrates* the productive and *enduring* love between Charles and Emma, of which I learned while living in *Cambridge*, England. The botanical images in *Mrs. Darwin's Garden* are the product of my *imagination*. I was guided by speculations about how Darwin might have envisioned flora, *before* the Beagle hit the shores, and what he saw in his mind's eye while *experimenting* in his *greenhouse* at their home, the *Down house*.

These *abstract* images are *imagined* plants for Mrs. Darwin's garden. They are illustrations of named floral specimens that never existed in reality. In *Mrs. Darwin's Garden* they are presented as if they correspond to data derived from Darwin's experimentation in his greenhouse. In this book I replaced the *19th C methods* of botanical *drawing* with *pouring* paints to incorporate the contemporary notion of *valuing an accident*, followed by drawing with *brushes* and pencils to gain *control* and give the images a place and *time* in the *21st C*.