



The drawing shows the classification and distribution of peony species. The two species native to far western mountain ranges of N. America are of little horticultural value, being difficult to grow outside their natural range and never having entered into hybrids. The blackened roots emphasize that the genus consists of two SECTIONS: the HERBACEOUS and the woody SHRUB ("tree"). The species names and classifications are based largely on the monograph by the English botanist Sir Frederick Stern, published in 1946 by the Royal Horticultural Society.

In the HERBACEOUS SECTION, Stern lists 29 species (incl. the two American ones) and 12 botanical varieties. Only the more important are named in the drawing. Disagreements among botanists have resulted in many name-changes and synonyms, with "splitters" giving specific rank to many endemic populations with minor differences, and "lumpers" ignoring those names. In the drawing, the large W-M-R root on the left includes 12 species and botanical varieties, the most important being *lokosevitschi*, yellow, *daurica* (syn. *triternata*), rose-magenta-pink w/rounded leaves, witt. var. *macrophylla*, pale yellow to milky-white (all from the Caucasus), and *russi* var. *leiocarpa* from Corsica. Some botanists think Stern's *Dissectifoliae* Subsection unjustified because similarity in leaf-form does not necessarily indicate any major genetic kinship. Stern also placed *emodi* in a *lactiflora* group. The drawing, however, has it in the *Dissectifoliae* Subsection because other botanists think it more akin to *anomala*; and it shows some affinity with members of that subsection by forming some fertile hybrids with them. [The other subsection is *Foliolatae*.]

In the SHRUB SECTION, there are only two species: (1) *suffruticosa* Andrews 1804, more often called by its Chinese name, *moutan* ("botan" in Japanese), and (2) *delavayi* Franchet 1886. Stern splits the latter into three species and two botanical varieties: *delavayi* (mahogany-maroon flowers), *lutea* (yellow) and var. *ludlowii* (less wood-hardy, otherwise superior), and *potaninii* (ref. white, yellow) and var. *trollioides* (yellow, dwarfish, narrower leaf-segments).