

ETYMONS GONE WILD

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“INDYCAR”, trade name of the Indy Racing League LLC, has a distinction which few have paused to appreciate. It is a race sanctioning body which is named after an annual auto race (Indianapolis 500), which is named after a city (Indianapolis), which is named after a state (Indiana), which is named after a population (North American Indians), which is named after a large geographical region (East Indies), which is named after a river (Indus River). To the best of my knowledge, nothing else meets or exceeds the six levels of etymons (words from which other words are derived) which INDYCAR derives from. And it could be argued that “India” should fit in at the etymon for “East Indies”, adding a seventh level.

It is relatively hard to find even three levels of derivation stacked upon each other before the origins are lost in the mists of time. Some of these chains of etymology are given below, but, as puzzles for the reader, with the specific terms replaced by generalities (but placed back in Answers and Solutions). Checking relied primarily on Wikipedia and the Online Etymology Dictionary (etymonline.com). See how many of the following you can identify.

1. A record company
which is named after a capital
which is named after a national toponym
which is named after an explorer
which is named, ultimately, after a bird.
2. A ground cover
which is named after a building
which is named after a sports team
which is named after something distant.
3. A shoe
which is named after a university
which is named after a city
which is named after a pathway.
4. A military alliance
which is named after a sea
which is named after a mountain
which is named after a god.
5. An insect
which is named after a type of killer
which is named after a religious sect
which is named after a drug.
6. A messaging system
which is named after a technology
which is named after a fundamental particle
which is named after an energy description
which is named after a semiprecious gem.
7. A crop pest
which is named after a state
which is named after a river
which is named after a color.
8. A Fortune-500 company
which is named after a machine
which is named after an insect
which is named after a mammal.
9. A hair removal treatment
which is named after an attire
which is named after a Pacific site
which is named after a tree.
10. An LGBTQ intuition
which is named after a locating system
which is named after a form of radiation
which is named after a shape and direction.

11. A bacterium genus
 which is named after a disease
 which is named after a social organization
 which is named after a military unit.
12. A governing document
 which is named after a ship
 which is named after a type of plant
 which is named after a month
 which is named after a goddess.
13. An advertizing medium
 which is named after a food
 which is named after a certain nobleman's title
 which is named after a town.
14. A communication directive
 which is named after a clerical supply
 which is named after an element
 which is named after something hot.
15. A test spacecraft
 which is named after a fictional spacecraft
 which is named after a number of naval ships
 which are named after an ideal.
16. A genre
 which is named after a group of languages
 which is named after an empire
 which is named after a city
 which is named after a mythical character.
17. A color
 which is named after a drink
 which is named after a French region
 which is named after an Italian region.
18. A color
 which is named after a drink
 which is named after a French region
 which is named after a Germanic tribe.
19. An editorial guide
 which is named after a university
 which is named after a city
 which is named after a smell.
20. A melon
 which is named after a color
 which is named after a bird
 which is named after an island group
 which is named after a mammal.
21. An interpreted programming language
 which is named after a general-purpose
 programming language
 which is named after a drink
 which is named after an island.
22. An insect virus
 which is named after a genetic material
 which is named after a pentose monosaccharide
 which is named after another pentose
 monosaccharide
 which is named after a product from tree sap
 which is named after an ethnicity.
23. A national park
 which is named after a tree
 which is named after a biblical character
 which is named after a religious declaration.
24. A neuroscience journal
 which is named after a brain region
 which is named after a fish
 which is named after a mythical creature.
25. A comic strip
 which is named after an audience
 which is named after an edible seed
 which is named after another edible seed.
26. A put-down
 which is named after a hominid
 which is named after a valley
 which is named after a pastor.
27. A stereotyped woman
 which is named after a figure
 which is named after a material
 which is named after a country
 which perhaps is named after a dynasty.