

Journeys of Enlightenment



FRENCH EXPLORATION OF TERRES AUSTRALES

Self Guided Tour

Before or after you visit, you may like to have a look at the Museum's exhibition web page at <http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/exhibitions/journeys/index.html>

The Journeys of Enlightenment exhibition is about the dramatic and often tragic journeys of the 18th and 19th century French maritime explorers who were the first to extensively study the plants and animals (flora and fauna) of Terres Australes.

The journeys took place as a consequence of the Age of Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, a time when Europeans were searching for knowledge about God, reason, nature and man.



Explorers

As you experience the exhibition write down a sentence describing the achievements of each of the main explorers, emphasising exploration of the Australian coast.

De Bougainville 1766-1769

De Saint Louiarn 1771-1772

De Lapérouse 1785-1788

D'Entrecasteaux 1791-1794

Baudin 1801-1803

De Freycinet 1817-1820

Dumont D'Urville 1826-1829



Claiming new territory

When maritime explorer Louis de Saint Aloüarn visited our coastline, he left coins and a bottle with a letter in it as traces of his visit (text panel 2.2.4).

What was special about this letter?

What did Museum scientists discover when they found and opened the bottle in 1998?



Extra for Experts:

When you get to the Baudin section, record some of the French names given to places on the maps. Hint: look for French surnames, ships, references to France.



Back at school:

Research other French place names on the Western Australian Coast.



Contributions of Women aboard Journeys of Enlightenment

This Frenchwoman was the first to sail around the world.

Find out her name and how she added to an understanding of the world around her.

Who was she? (text panel 2.1.1)

The Captain she sailed with:

What she studied:



'MAD LLA BARÈ', Engraving, artist unknown. From Navigazioni di Cook pel grande oceano e intorno al globo, Volume 2, 1816, Sonzogono e Comp, Milano. Reproduced courtesy of the Mitchell Library — State Library of NSW (Call No. 980/CO1/22A2).

Women were not welcome on sailing ships at this time. In September 1817 this woman joined her husband on the Uranie disguised as a man until they left port. She completed an account of the three-year circumnavigation in a series of letters which took the form of a diary. She recorded many things about the journey in the diary.



Who was this woman? (text panel 2.6.2)

What kinds of things did she describe which contributed to the knowledge gained on the voyage?



Extra for Experts:

Find out who the salonnères were (text panel 1.2) and how they helped to drive the search for knowledge during the Age of Enlightenment.



New species and scientific classification

Many new plants and animals were discovered during the voyages. Scientists collected specimens and brought live creatures back to France. The Empress Josephine Bonaparte created an exotic garden of newly discovered trees and animals brought back from Australia.

What plants and animals did she have in her garden? (text panel 2.5.3)



Extra for Experts

In the 1700's, Carl Linnaeus (see the white statue near the entrance) worked out a way of separating all living things so that each different type has a special name. They are separated into smaller and smaller groups, until each group is so different from the others that the groups can't interbreed.

The biggest group is a DOMAIN which divides into increasingly smaller groups – KINGDOM, PHYLUM or DIVISION, CLASS, ORDER, FAMILY, GENUS, SPECIES. For example, cats and dogs belong to the same ORDER (Carnivores which eat meat) but belong to a different family, genus and species.

Separate groups are named using the genus and species name. The names are written in Latin. For example, cats are named *Felis catus* and dogs, *Canis familiaris*.

What is the Latin name of this red kangaroo paw collected during D'Entrecasteaux's expedition?

Who collected it?



Hand-coloured engraving, 1808. Originally published in Atlas du Voyage à la Recherche de la Pérouse, No. 22. after Pierre Joseph Redouté, 1797



What is the common name of this parrot?



Find out its Latin name back at school.



Scientific recording and drawing

All of the French expeditions happened before the invention of portable cameras so it was important for naturalists like Labillardière to work closely with artists like Piron and Redouté, to record all the important characteristics and details of all the new species that they saw.

Choose an animal specimen to observe and draw and imagine you are a Naturalist, seeing this animal for the very first time. Write down the main characteristics of your specimen, for example: shape, colour, texture. Record other information such as the number of legs, the length of the body and tail, the size of the beak.

Notes:

Now imagine you are an Artist. Draw your animal carefully. Start with its main shape, then draw lines to suggest its texture (for example, short soft lines close together to suggest feathers, sharp lines to suggest echidna quills, small, round shapes to suggest the bumpy texture of the sea stars.)



Museum at Work

Western Australia Museum scientists are still working to discover, record and classify new plant and animal species, just as the French naturalists and scientists did on the Journeys of Enlightenment during the 1700 and 1800's



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL EQUITY
Pty. Limited



Western Australian Museum – Maritime
Victoria Quay, Fremantle
www.museum.wa.gov.au