

# 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* Provided a vivid picture of life in the South Seas. He almost found the Great Barrier Reef and the great Southern Land but turned away due to heavy seas.

*De Saint Louis 1771-1772* Landed on Dirk Hartog Island in 1772 and took possession of the land for the French King Louis XV in a document they placed in a sealed bottle and buried.

*De Lapérouse 1785-1788* Thoroughly surveyed the northern Pacific and reached Botany Bay in 1788, just after the First Fleet arrived. Sailed to Port Jackson and stayed for two weeks, then sailed off and disappeared without trace. Wreck eventually discovered in 1828 off Vanikoro in the Solomon Islands.

*D'Entrecasteaux 1791-1794* Ordered to explore coasts of Western Australia, Tasmania and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Returned to the South Pacific and looked for de Lapérouse but was unsuccessful. In December 1792, discovered Esperance Bay and collected many important botanical discoveries. Died of scurvy on the voyage. The papers and collection were captured by the British, but returned after the war in 1802.

*Baudin 1801-1803* Explored the western and southern coasts of Australia and Tasmania extensively. Gathered a huge collection of plants and animals. Took 22 scientists and artists. The collection was brought back to France in 1804 and divided between the Paris Museum and The Empress Josephine Bonaparte.

*De Freycinet 1817-1820* Visited Australia, East Timor, many Pacific Islands and South America. Took the de Vlamingh plate from Dirk Hartog Island at Shark Bay and charted the bay. Took his wife Rose aboard disguised as a man. She was discovered but remained aboard.

*Dumont D'Urville 1826-1829* Searched unsuccessfully for Lapérouse. Anchored in King George Sound. Collected specimens and objects from people encountered on the voyage.



## 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?

It contained a document claiming the country for France

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

The letter claiming Australia was missing.



### 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. [Havre Henri Freycinet](#), [Rivière des Français](#), [Passage de Géographe](#), [Presou Île Péron](#)



### 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)

[Jeanne Baret](#)

The Captain she sailed with:

[de Bougainville](#)

What she studied:

[Botany – plant species](#)



'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)

[Botany – plant species](#)

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

[Life aboard ship](#), [observations of people and places they visited](#), [scientific work](#), [relationships between men and women](#), [the work of Jacques Arago](#)



## Extra for Experts:

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

Socially conscious and learned women who entertained and supported writers and intellectuals 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)

Eucalypts, Melaleuca, Acacia, Casuarina, kangaroos, emus, black swans



## 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.

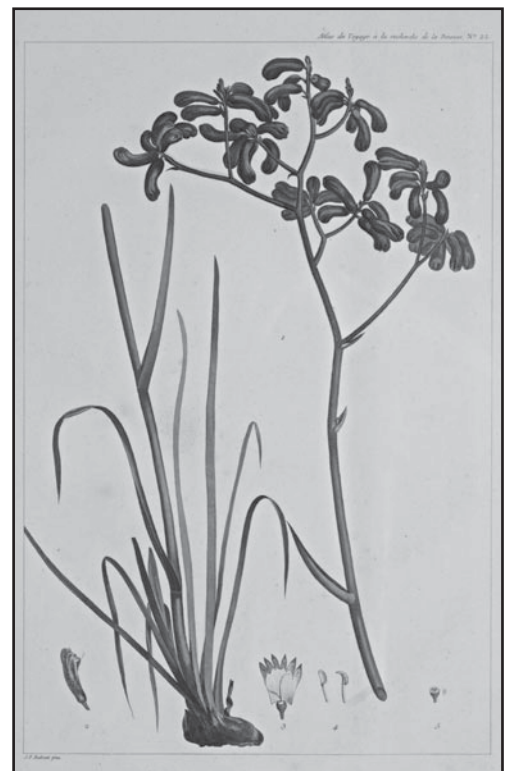
Separate groups are named using the genus and species name. The names are written in Latin. For example, cats are named *Felis catus* and dogs, *Canis familiaris*.

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

*Anigozanthus rufus*

Who collected it?

Labillardiere



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?

It is called a 28 parrot

Find out its Latin name back at school.

*Barnardius zonarius*  
(subspecies *semitorquatus*)





## *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



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