

Ferdinand von Mueller

Arriving from Germany in 1848, Ferdinand Mueller (1825-1896) first worked as a chemist in Adelaide, but he was an accomplished botanist. Moving to the new Colony of Victoria in 1852 he was soon appointed Government Botanist and undertook extensive collecting trips throughout the Colony. He joined the 'North Australian Exploring Expedition' (under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society of London) in 1855 and over the course of a year collected numerous specimens from Victoria River in the (now) Northern Territory to Moreton Bay. Mueller built up the Victorian Herbarium into the foremost in Australia, his 1879 *Native Plants of Victoria succinctly defined* was one of the earliest school texts on Australian botany and he was a foundation member of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria.

In recognition of his extensive contribution to science over the years he was awarded, among many other honours, a German baronetcy in 1871, a British Knighthood in 1879, the Clarke Medal in 1883 (Royal Society of New South Wales) and the Royal Society of London Medal in 1888. His portrait from the early 1880s shows him wearing some of his medals and honours.

