



ANZAAB *Aspects of Book Collecting*

Australian Botanicals

Out of Print Books

Background: Botanical Illustration was flourishing in Renaissance Europe from the 14th Century onwards. The advancements in printing engraved illustrations in the 1600s led to a wealth of printed material. The same period heralded the voyages of exploration providing even more unusual flora and fauna for the artist to illustrate.

With the exploration of Australia, we are extremely fortunate that on so many of the original voyages, many competent artists were part of the expeditions.

The normal botanical illustration was completed by three hands—the artist, the engraver and the colourist. Ferdinand Bauer (1760-1826) was the exception to the common rule as he produced most of his botanicals completely believing that he could not find quality engravers or colourists. Sydney Parkinson (1745-1771) another earlier artist also changed the style of illustration to make the finished product botanically correct.

Botanical illustration continued at a rapid rate from the 1770s onwards and there are so many famous illustrators of Australian botany that it is impossible to name all.

Range: This is only limited to the space available to the collector. It is suggested that a collector selects a particular area for collecting—all publications relating to Joseph Banks, Sydney Parkinson, or Von Mueller or selects a particular plant as the focus—banksias, eucalyptus, wildflowers of Victoria or New South Wales.

This is an area which is not static as many new publications and paintings are produced each year with the resurgence in the interest in botanical illustration in the seventies.

Availability: Books and paintings can be purchased from many of the ANZAAB dealers but some of the rare items will not always be available. Recommended you speak to your local ANZAAB dealer to discuss any rare items sought.

Price Range: The earliest publications of the 1700s are fairly scarce and can cost \$45,000 or more. The collector could purchase one of the many facsimile editions that are available. It is still possible to purchase individual parts of the Forest Flora of New South Wales by J. H. Maiden for \$20.

Footnote: Helen Hewson: *Australia 300 Years of Botanical Illustration* CSIRO, 1999 is an excellent overview of the subject.

Blunt & Stearn: *The Art of Botanical Illustration*, Collins, 1950 is one of the most comprehensive books for the history of world botanical illustration.