



Naturalists On Board

All four voyages (HMB *Endeavour*, HMS *Resolution I & II* and HMS *Bounty*) employed botanists, naturalists and/or collectors to obtain specimens during their journeys. When anchoring near any land mass, a party including the botanist and any servants or assistants often went on field trips, collecting specimens and describing the environmental and geological conditions. The specimens were frequently sketched and painted, pressed, preserved in alcohol or even propagated (grown from cuttings) on board the ship in an attempt to keep them alive until they reached the United Kingdom.

There were three main reasons for the enthusiasm for collecting natural specimens:

1. Scientists sought specimens to add to their scientific collection from voyages to the southern hemisphere. As well as employing naturalists and gardeners, ships also carried surgeons, artists, astronomers and servants who may have been involved in collecting, classifying, recording and preserving specimens during the voyage. Linnaeus who developed the classification system of naming organisms encouraged the discovery of new organisms. Sometimes plants and animals were named after the founder or famous naturalists.
2. Specimens were collected to assess the natural wealth of 'far flung lands'. The British government was keen to find the reputed 'great southern continent' as their relations with America had deteriorated and they were considering colonising elsewhere. Plants and animals used by native people were documented as they were potentially of use to future colonisers.
3. Plant and animal specimens were fashionable back in England and fetched high prices through dealers and auctions – particularly shells.

HMB *Endeavour*

HMB *Endeavour* carried the famous scientist Sir Joseph Banks and his entourage, including his two greyhounds! Also carried on board HMB *Endeavour* was botanist and doctor Daniel Solander whose main duty was to preserve plant specimens and write scientific notes. Other scientists and assistants on board HMB *Endeavour*, included: Charles Green (astronomer); John Reynolds (artist); Sydney Parkinson (artist); Alexander Buchan (artist); Herman Sporing (secretary and artist); William Monkhouse (surgeon); William Perry (surgeon's servant); Thomas Jones (surgeon's servant); Peter Briscoe, James Roberts, George Dalton, Thomas Richmond (servants and field assistants). Two servants were of African descent; the remaining assistants were of European background.

HMS *Resolution I* and HMS *Adventure*

HMS *Resolution I* carried on board the naturalists Johann Reinhold Forster and his eldest son George Reinhold Forster (aged 18). Joseph Banks was scheduled to sail on HMS *Resolution I*, but he was dissatisfied with the refitting of the ship and having to reduce the number of assistants he was allowed to take. As a result, Banks withdrew from the voyage and Johann & George Reinhold Forster were appointed. Johann was reputedly a difficult man to work with. George was acknowledged widely as a very skilled draughtsman. Even the official artist on board HMS *Resolution I* – William Hodges was impressed with George's talent. Their fellow naturalist on board Anders Sparrman also wrote highly of George's illustrations.

HMS Resolution II

The purpose of HMS *Resolution* II's voyage was to find a passage from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean around North America. Any scientific observations were to be performed by James Cook, lieutenant James King (who succeeded Cook when he died) and William Bayly the astronomer who sailed on HMS *Adventure* with HMS *Resolution* I.

On HMS *Resolution* II, Cook was reluctant to carry another botanist due to his bad experience with the Forsters. David Nelson was a gardener at Kew Gardens and was employed by Joseph Banks to collect specimens. There are very few specimens collected by David Nelson remaining, although it is known he collected *Kokia drynarioides* from Hawaii (depicted in the Botany Bound exhibit).

Also – the Cleveley brothers on HMS *Resolution* drew a few plants and animals. John Cleveley was chosen by Banks to go on HMS *Resolution* I and was also on HMS *Resolution* II. Only six of his paintings survive from HMS *Resolution* II. His younger brother James Cleveley was HMS *Resolution*'s carpenter and had some artistic skill. Only two of his natural history paintings survive.

HMS Bounty

The purpose of the HMS *Bounty* voyage was to transport breadfruit from Tahiti to the United Kingdom – not to explore new territories or find new specimens. David Nelson (who also sailed on HMS *Resolution* II) was employed as botanist to tend the breadfruit during the voyage. Other crew of scientific background on HMS *Bounty* included William Brown (gardener) and Thomas Ledward (acting surgeon).

Nelson was certainly well liked by Cook, Bligh and crew on board both ships. He had a gentle nature and great enthusiastic vigour for his work. Even when the mutiny was occurring on HMS *Bounty*, Nelson was ordered below deck so he would not be involved. Nelson was set adrift with Bligh after the mutiny (see HMS *Bounty*'s journey support notes for more information). He survived the trip in the longboat until they arrived safely at Batavia, Timor, but died five weeks later from an inflammatory disease in 1789. Eating poisonous berries that he could not identify possibly caused his death.