

James Drummond

James Drummond was baptised on 8th January 1788 at Inverarity, near Forfar, Angus Scotland, this being registered in the Parish Records. He died on 27th March 1863, Western Australia

Biography

James' father, Thomas was head gardener at Fotheringham estate in Inverarity and he was the eldest of the four children of Thomas and his wife, Elizabeth Nicol. The other children were Margaret (b. 1788), Euphemia (b. 1790) and Thomas (b. 1793).

The earliest information apart from his date of baptism is that, like so many young Scots who went on to do well in the field of Botany and Horticulture, by 1808, James Drummond was working for Messrs Dickson at Broughton near Edinburgh.

By 1809 Drummond had moved to take over the running of the newly established Cork Botanic Garden in Ireland, a post he held for 20 years. The garden was established by the Cork Institution and was a British government funded garden. One purpose of the garden was the testing and propagation of plants for the benefit of the farmers of southern Ireland. Drummond spent time studying the flora of southern Ireland and discovered the *Spiranthes romanzoffiana* Cham. and *Pinguicula grandiflora* Lam. James Drummond is also credited with raising two rose cultivars that are presumably now lost from cultivation.

In 1810 he was elected an Associate of the Linnean Society of London.

In 1810, James married Sarah Mackintosh, in Cork, Ireland and they had six children; Thomas (b. 1811), Jane (b. 1813), James (b. 1814), John Nicol (b. 1816), Johnston (b. 1820) and Euphemia (b. 1826).

In 1828, the British government withdrew funding for the Cork Botanic Garden and Drummond found himself out of work with a family to support. With the looming establishment of the Swan River Colony in Western Australia, Drummond was offered the honorary post of Government Naturalist but, if it was decided to establish a public garden in the colony, he would be given the salaried post of Superintendent of Government Gardens.

Drummond and family arrived with the *Parmelia*, the second ship to reach the site of the new colony on the 31st May 1829. James, his wife Sarah, their six children aged three years to 18 years along with servant Elizabeth Gamble are shown on the List of Passengers. A temporary settlement was established at Garden Island where Drummond established a garden.

For the next nine years Drummond held various grants of land in Western Australia. Under the colony's land grant conditions, Drummond's investment in the colony was valued at £375, and this figure entitled him to 5000 acres (20 km²) of land. His first grant was 100 acres (0.40 km²) of rich

alluvial soil at Guildford, where the Helena and Swan Rivers meet. He took possession of this land on 16 November 1829, and set about establishing a public nursery. Drummond was refused permission by the Governor, Captain James Stirling, to transfer some of his *own* plants from Garden Island and was told that the storekeeper, John Morgan, had been given control of the Garden Island nursery. James Drummond then abandoned the Guildford site.

Around this time Drummond was given permission to select 1000 acres (4 km²) of his grant on the Swan River. The site is in Ascot, the present-day suburb of Perth, consisting of extensive river frontage and low-lying flats prone to flooding. Later he claimed a grant in the Avon Valley south of Beverley, but then changed his mind and exchanged it for land in the Helena Valley, probably near the present-day site of Mundaring Weir.

In July 1831, Governor Stirling established a Government Garden and nursery adjacent to the temporary Government House. He appointed Drummond to the position of Superintendent with a salary of £100 per year, and allowed him to live in a small house next to the site. The following year, however, Stirling received instructions from the Colonial Office that the position of Government Naturalist should be abolished. Stirling agreed to press for the decision to be overturned, and in the meantime invited Drummond to take over the Government Gardens for his own profit. Stirling returned to England later that year to hold discussions with the Colonial Office in person. On his return in June 1834, Drummond was informed that the Colonial Office had insisted that his post be abolished. On top of his retrenchment, Drummond was instructed to vacate his house next to the Government Gardens as Stirling had decided to build the permanent Government House on the site. The situation degenerated into a quarrel, and Drummond tendered his resignation. He then retired from Perth to his grant in the Helena Valley, where he established a nursery and vineyard.

In 1836, Drummond exchanged his grant on the Helena Valley for land in the Avon Valley, settling at the town of Toodyay. He established a homestead which was named Hawthornden. By February 1838, the homestead was sufficiently established for Drummond's wife and daughter to join him. Initially Drummond worked hard to establish his farm, but later this was increasingly taken over by his sons, Thomas and James.

The second report of the Western Australian Association, issued in 1837 spoke favourably on the growing of vegetables in Western Australia. In 1839 James Drummond began sending descriptions of the botany of Western Australia to England, which appeared in Hooker's *Journal of Botany*, vol. II (1840), vols. I and II (1850), vol. IV (1852), vol. V (1853), and vol. VI (1854). He began with the country round Perth but later went much farther afield.

About 1842-3, Drummond proved that severe stock losses were due to poisonous plants and his observations were published by *The Inquirer*.

In 1846, James Drummond received an honorarium of £200 from the Queen's Bounty for services rendered to botanical science.

In December 1851 Drummond reported that he and his son had just "returned from a long and interesting journey of eighteen months' duration" 300 miles to the north of Perth. Later on he speaks of a journey some 60 miles to the east. About this period his youngest son was speared by aborigines in his sleep while camping near the Moor River.

In 1855 he declined the post of botanist in (Sir) Augustus Gregory's expedition to northern Australia because of advancing years. In his old age he held open house at Hawthornden on Saturday evenings when he lectured on natural history.

In 1860 Drummond was in correspondence with Darwin who had written asking for information relating to the fertilization of *Leschenaultia formosa*.

He died at his home on 27 March 1863, survived by his widow, three sons and two daughters and was buried in the family grave plot at Hawthornden.

The Australian Dictionary of Biography has a description of James Drummond and his expeditions at <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/drummond-james-1995> (last viewed June 2013).

'Old James Drummond, with his two white packhorses and kangaroo dogs, was a familiar figure throughout the colony. Described as a plain but agreeable old man, his dour Scottish face was framed by bushy white whiskers. He usually walked everywhere, his horses being laden with stores on the way out and specimens on the way home. When his knapsack and pockets were filled with plants his white head was bared and his hat was crammed to the brim.'

References and Further Reading

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- <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/drummond-james-1995> (last viewed June, 2013)
- <http://plants.jstor.org/person/bm000151087> (last viewed June, 2013)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Drummond_\(botanist\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Drummond_(botanist)) (last viewed June, 2013).

James Drummond major events

August 1839 Career position - Expedition for 1st collection at Rottnest Island

1840 Career position - Expedition for 2nd collection at Albany and Cape Riche

1841 – 1844 Career position - Pioneered the Victorian Plains

1842 Taxonomy event - Description of *Eucalyptus macrocarpa* Hook. (1842), Drummond collected the type

1843 Career position - Expedition for 3rd collection at Sterling Ranges and Albany

1846 Award - Queen's Bounty Honorarium awarded for services rendered to botanical science

1846 – 1847 Career position - Expedition for 4th collection at Sterling Ranges, Cape Riche, Salt River and West Mount Barren

1847 Taxonomy event - Description of *Eucalyptus goniantha*, Drummond collected the type

1847 – 1848 Career position - Expedition for 5th collection at Mount Caroline and Albany

1850 – 1851 Career position - Expedition for 6th collection at Champion Bay

1852 Taxonomy event - Description of *Eucalyptus erythronema* Turez. (1852), Drummond collected the type

1867 Taxonomy event - George Bentham named *Eucalyptus drummondii* Benth. (1867) in his honour, Drummond collected the type

1867 Taxonomy event - Description of *Eucalyptus leptopoda* Benth. (1867), Drummond collected the type

Publications

James Drummond did not formally publish many reports. The following are noted from other authors:

1810 – A catalogue of the plants of the county of Cork

1823 – A botanical textbook

Various papers on Irish plants

Various reports in newspapers and journals of W.A.

Associated Plants

It has been estimated that James Drummond collected about 3500 numbers for each of his subscribers in addition to other sets and a great number of species not sent overseas. His specimens are now in twenty-five herbaria; seven in the British Isles, twelve in other parts of Europe, three in the United States, and three in Australia at Melbourne, Perth and Canberra. He named several Western Australian plants and 119 were named after him. Although about a third of these have since been reduced to synonymy, the remainder are a fitting memorial to that most 'enterprising and indefatigable man'.

List of Species named by James directly or by William Henry Harvey using James' manuscript names

- *Rhodanthe atrosanguinea* J.Drumm.
- *Geococcus* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Geococcus pusillus* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Platyptelea* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Platyptelea clematidea* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Hemistephus* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Huttia* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Macropidia* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Macropidia fumosa* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Loudonia flavescens* J.Drumm.
- *Dicrastylis* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Cheyenia* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Cheyenia pulchella* J.Drumm.
- *Comesperma scoparium* J.Drumm.
- *Hakea victoria* J.Drumm.
- *Sanfordia* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Sanfordia calycina* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Symphyopetalon* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Symphyopetalon* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Symphyopetalon corraeoides* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Urocarpus* J.Drumm. ex Harv.
- *Urocarpus phebalioides* J.Drumm. ex Harv.

A significant number of plant species indigenous to West Australia have been named 'drummondii' after James. These can be checked by going to Florabase the Western Australian Herbarium's online database (<http://florabase.dec.wa.gov.au/search/advanced> - last viewed June 2013) and searching the Flora under the Find menu using the criteria; Species: drummondii and Current: yes. This yields 93 records of species and subspecies, many with photographs shown.

Memorials

- Duke Street, Reservoir Lookout, Toodyay, 6566
- Mount Drummond, West Australia
- Drummond Nature Reserve, established 1993
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drummond_Nature_Reserve (web site visited 2013)
- The Drummond Vault, one of the four vaults of the Western Australian Herbarium is named in honour of his major contributions to WA botany.