Frederick Pursh Encyclopedia Article

Frederick Pursh

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Frederick Pursh

1774-1820

German-American botanical traveler whose *Flora Americae Septentrionalis,* a book published in England in 1814, was the earliest attempt to describe the complete flora of North America. Pursh eked out a living working as a gardener for others; he traveled and collected plant specimens throughout the eastern United States, and also studied plants collected in the West by Lewis and Clark. He was making a collection of Canadian plants when he died a pauper in Montreal.