William Dandridge Peck Encyclopedia Article

William Dandridge Peck

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William Dandridge Peck

1763-1822

American naturalist who was among the first to study etymology in the United States. Graduating from Harvard College, Peck farmed in Maine where he collected specimens of indigenous animals and plants. In a 1794 paper he classified fish he found in New Hampshire, considered one of the first American scientific zoological publications. Peck focused on insects detrimental to agriculture in New England and their economic impact. Selected chair of natural history at Harvard, Peck taught applied entomology classes and established a botanical garden.