

Johann Friedrich Gmelin

Johann Friedrich Gmelin (8 August 1748 – 1 November 1804) was a German naturalist, chemist, botanist, entomologist, herpetologist, and malacologist.

Education

Johann Friedrich Gmelin was born as the eldest son of Philipp Friedrich Gmelin in 1748 in Tübingen. He studied medicine under his father^[1] at University of Tübingen and graduated with a Master's degree in 1768, with a thesis entitled: *Irritabilitatem vegetabilium, in singulis plantarum partibus exploratam ulterioribusque experimentis confirmatam*, defended under the presidency of Ferdinand Christoph Oetinger,^[2] whom he thanks with the words *Patrono et praeceptore in aeternum pie devenerando, pro summis in medicina obtinendis honoribus*.

Career

In 1769, Gmelin became an adjunct professor of medicine at University of Tübingen. In 1773, he became professor of philosophy and adjunct professor of medicine at University of Göttingen. He was promoted to full professor of medicine and professor of chemistry, botany, and mineralogy in 1778. He died in 1804 in Göttingen and is buried there in the Albani cemetery with his wife Rosine Louise Gmelin (1755–1828, née Schott).

Johann Friedrich Gmelin when young became a respected colleague of Carl Linnaeus, probably when Linnaeus was visiting the Netherlands or northern Germany around 1770, and collected plants "Persia" on his behalf.^{[3][4]} Later in life he published several textbooks in the fields of chemistry, pharmaceutical science, mineralogy, and botany. He also edited and published the posthumous 13th edition of *Systema*

Johann Friedrich Gmelin



Born	8 August 1748 Tübingen, <u>Holy Roman Empire</u>
Died	1 November 1804 (aged 56) Göttingen, <u>Electorate of Brunswick-Lüneburg</u>
Citizenship	<u>German</u>
Alma mater	<u>University of Tübingen</u>
Known for	Textbooks on chemistry, pharmaceutical science, mineralogy, and botany
Spouse	Rosine Louise Gmelin (1755–1828, née Schott)
Father	<u>Philipp Friedrich Gmelin</u>
Relatives	<u>Leopold Gmelin</u> (son)
	Scientific career
Fields	<u>Naturalist</u> , <u>botanist</u> , and <u>entomologist</u>
Institutions	<u>University of Göttingen</u> <u>University of Tübingen</u>
Thesis	<i>Latin: Irritabilitatem vegetabilium, in singulis plantarum partibus</i>

Naturae by Carl Linnaeus from 1788 to 1793. This contained descriptions and scientific names of many new species, including birds that had earlier been catalogued without a scientific name by John Latham in his *A General Synopsis of Birds*^[5]. Gmelin's publication is cited as the authority for over 290 bird species^[6] and also a number of butterfly species.^[7]

Legacy

Among his students were Georg Friedrich Hildebrandt, Carl Friedrich Kielmeyer, Friedrich Stromeyer, and Wilhelm August Lampadius. He was the father of Leopold Gmelin.

He described the redfin pickerel in 1789. In the scientific field of herpetology, he described many new species of amphibians and reptiles.^[8] In the field of malacology, he described and named many species of gastropods.

The plant genus *Gmelina* was named after J.F. Gmelin (or possibly J.G. Gmelin, or both) by Linnaeus.

The abbreviation "Gmel." is also found.^[10]

Doctoral advisor

Doctoral students

Author abbrev. J.F.Gmel.
(botany)

Author abbrev. Gmelin
(zoology)

*exploratam ulterioribusque
experimentis confirmatam*

Philipp Friedrich Gmelin
Ferdinand Christoph Oetinger

Georg Friedrich Hildebrandt
Friedrich Stromeyer
Carl Friedrich Kielmeyer
Wilhelm August Lampadius
Vasily Severgin

Publications

- Gmelin, Johann Friedrich; Ferdinand Christoph Oetinger (1768). *Irritabilitatem vegetabilium, in singulis plantarum partibus exploratam ulterioribusque experimentis confirmatam*. Thesis Tübingen. OCLC 10717434 (<https://search.worldcat.org/oclc/10717434>).
- *Allgemeine Geschichte der Gifte*, 2 Vol., 1776/77 Digital edition (<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:hbz:061:2-148875>) of the University and State Library Düsseldorf.
- *Allgemeine Geschichte der Pflanzengifte*, 1777
- *Allgemeine Geschichte der mineralischen Gifte*. Nürnberg: Raspe, 1777. Digital edition (<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:hbz:061:2-169274>) of the University and State Library Düsseldorf.
- *Johann Friedrich Gmelins ... Einleitung in die Chemie zum Gebrauch auf Universitäten*. Nürnberg: Raspe, 1780. Digital edition (<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:hbz:061:2-25118>) of the University and State Library Düsseldorf.
- *Einleitung in die Pharmacie*. Nürnberg: Raspe, 1781. Digital edition (<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:hbz:061:2-27361>) of the University and State Library Düsseldorf.
- *Beyträge zur Geschichte des teutschen Bergbaus*, 1783
- *Über die neuere Entdeckungen in der Lehre von der Luft, und deren Anwendung auf Arzneikunst, in Briefen an einen Arzt, von J. F. Gmelin*, 1784
- *Grundsätze der technischen Chemie*, 1786



Tomb in the Albani cemetery in Göttingen

- *Caroli a Linné, equitis aurati de stella polari, ... Systema naturae per regna tria naturae, secundum classes, ordines, genera, species, cum characteribus, differentiis, synonymis, locis. Editio decima tertia, aucta, reformata*, Lipsiae [Leipzig], Georg Emanuel Beer, 1788–1793
- *Grundriß der Pharmazie*, 1792
- *Apparatus Medicaminum tam simplicium quam praeparatorum et compositorum in Praxeos Adiumentum consideratus*, Ps. 2, T. 1 – Ps. 2, T. 2., 1795–1796. Digital edition (<http://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:061:2-170414>) of the [University and State Library Düsseldorf](#).
- *Geschichte der Chemie*, 1799
- *Allgemeine Geschichte der thierischen und mineralischen Gifte*, 1806

See also

- [Category:Taxa named by Johann Friedrich Gmelin](#)

References

1. Mainz, Vera V.; Gregory S. Girolami (1998). "Genealogy Database Entry: Gmelin, Johann Friedrich" (<http://web-genealogy.scs.illinois.edu/Info/gmelinjf.pdf>) (PDF). *School of Chemical Sciences Web Genealogy*. University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. Retrieved 19 April 2019.
2. "'Irritabilitas vegetabilium in singulis plantarum partibus explorata, ulterioribusque experimentis confirmatam publice proponet' – Viewer | MDZ" (<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb10958646?page=3>). *www.digitale-sammlungen.de*.
3. Joseph Kastner, *A world of naturalists*, 1977, Alfred A Knopf, New York; page 35.
4. Wilfrid Blunt, 1971 *The Compleat Naturalist. A life of Linnaeus*, Collins, London; page 190 letter of Linnaeus 20 December 1771 to John Ellis: "The younger Gmelin is still in Persia" "younger distinguishes him from his father [Philipp Friedrich Gmelin](#), who had recently died
5. Latham, John; Dwight, Jonathan; Tucker, Marcia Brady; Library of Congress, former owner DSI (1781). *A general synopsis of birds* (<http://archive.org/details/generalsynopsi3111785lath>). Smithsonian Libraries. London : Printed for Benj. White.
6. "IOC World Bird List – Version 15.2" (<https://www.worldbirdnames.org/new/>). *www.worldbirdnames.org*. Retrieved 24 April 2026.
7. Vane-Wright, R. I. (1975). "The butterflies named by J. F. Gmelin (Lepidoptera: Rhopalocera)" (<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278728690>). *Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History), Entomology*. **32** (2): 17–64.
8. The Reptile Database. *www.reptile-database.org*.
9. International Plant Names Index. *J.F.Gmel* (<https://www.ipni.org/search?q=author%20std%3AJ.F.Gmel.>).
10. See for instance: [Audubon, John James](#) (1831) – *Ornithological Biography : Volume 1*, p. 232. Online available at [wikisource](#).

External links

- [Gmelin's chemical genealogy](http://web-genealogy.scs.illinois.edu/Info/gmelinjf.pdf) (<http://web-genealogy.scs.illinois.edu/Info/gmelinjf.pdf>)
- [Johann Friedrich Gmelin](https://mathgenealogy.org/id.php?id=76485) (<https://mathgenealogy.org/id.php?id=76485>) at the [Mathematics Genealogy Project](#)
- [Johann Friedrich Gmelin](https://portal.dnb.de/opac.htm?method=simpleSearch&cqlMode=true&q) (<https://portal.dnb.de/opac.htm?method=simpleSearch&cqlMode=true&q>)

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- Global Ant Project — World Ant Taxonomists: Johann Friedrich Gmelin (1748–1804) (<https://archive.today/20130112190036/http://gap.entclub.org/taxonomists/Gmelin/index.html>)
 - "Author Details for Johann Friedrich Gmelin" (<http://www.ipni.org/ipni/idAuthorSearch.do?id=3203-1>) (HTML). *International Plant Names Index*. International Organization for Plant Information (IOPI).
 - books by Johann Friedrich Gmelin (<https://archive.org/search.php?query=Johann%20Friedrich%20Gmelin%20AND%20mediatype%3Atexts>) at Internet Archive
 - Zoologica (<http://gdz.sub.uni-goettingen.de/>) Göttingen State and University Library
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