

*Michauxia*

*Campanulaceae*

*Michauxia* commemorates a French botanist and explorer, André Michaux (1746-1803), who is especially remembered for being a prodigious plant collector. From 1779-1780 he studied and collected plants in England, the Auvergne in France, the Pyrenees and northern Spain. Then in 1782 the French Government sent him on a botanical expedition to Persia (now Iran) and he returned home not only with many new plants which were introduced to French botanic gardens but also a herbarium. After becoming royal botanist in 1785 Michaux was sent to the United States by Louis XVI (1754-1793) to collect plants suitable for cultivation in France. There he based himself in Charleston (South Carolina) where he bought property in 1786 and maintained a garden from which, until 1796, he made forays into the North American continent (covering the United States, Canada and Nova Scotia). On these trips he was accompanied by his son, François André Michaux (1770-1855) and they collected plants and seeds that were sent back to France. While Michaux stayed in North America he not only introduced many plants there from all over the world but also described and named many new North American species. In 1797 he was shipwrecked as he finally returned home to France and lost much of his plant collection (not the only plant collector to experience such a disaster). In 1800 he was one of the botanists who joined the French Baudin Expedition which set off in two ships. They reached Mauritius after seven extremely uncomfortable months and Michaux, who is said to have had an argument with the captain (either Nicolas Thomas Baudin (1754-1803) or his colleague on the other vessel), left the expedition at this point. (In actual fact seven sailors did likewise possibly because of the illness and privation they had experienced in the preceding months.) From Mauritius Michaux travelled to Madagascar to study the Island's flora but he became ill with a tropical fever and died there. His published works included *Histoire des chênes de l'Amérique* (1801) and *Flora Boreali-Americana* (1803).