

## MAXIMILIAN JOHANN NEPOMUK FELLNER (1751–1780) and his “*Prodromus ad historiam fungorum agri Vindobonensis (1775)*”

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**Abstract:** MAXIMILIAN JOHANN NEPOMUK FELLNER, born in Vienna on March 13, 1751 died at the young age of 29 on December 12, 1780. He did not publish any scientific work apart from his printed thesis (FELLNER 1775), which merely gives a historical introduction to mycology. MAXIMILIAN J. N. FELLNER thus has to be omitted as author of scientific plant or fungus taxa. Concerning herbarium specimens he is most probably confused with CHRISTIAN ALEXANDER FELLNER (1800–1883), merchant and collector of plants and ancient weapons at Frankfurt-on-Main.

**Zusammenfassung:** MAXIMILIAN JOHANN NEPOMUK FELLNER wurde am 13. März 1751 in Wien geboren und starb ebenda bereits am 12. Dezember 1780. Abgesehen von seiner gedruckten Dissertation (FELLNER 1775), die eine rein historische Einführung in die Mykologie darstellt, publizierte er nichts. MAXIMILIAN J. N. FELLNER ist somit kein Autor eines Pilz- oder Pflanzentaxons. Herbarbelege betreffend wird er wahrscheinlich mit CHRISTIAN ALEXANDER FELLNER (1800–1883), Händler und Sammler von Pflanzen und alten Waffen in Frankfurt am Main, verwechselt.

Considerable confusion exists in botanical literature regarding life and work of MAXIMILIAN JOHANN NEPOMUK FELLNER, author of “*Dissertatio inauguralis medica sistens Prodromum ad historiam fungorum agri Vindobonensis*” (1775). Based on the inclusion in STAFLEU & COWAN (1976: 822) FELLNER is regarded as author of scientific names of fungi (BRUMMITT & POWELL 1992: 197, KIRK & ANSELL 2008: 22), although not having published any new taxon or combination in his short life.

MAXIMILIAN JOHANN NEPOMUK FELLNER was born in Vienna, on March 13, 1751 as son of JOHANN PAUL FELLNER and his wife MARIA ELISABETH, nee PRÄZOLL. He was baptised at St. Stephen’s cathedral on March 14, 1751 (parish register/Taufbuch 79 St. Stephan, fol. 40r). FELLNER enrolled at the University of Vienna and studied philosophy and medicine. After he took exams on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of August 1774, the public disputation of his thesis (FELLNER 1775) was held on June 2, 1775 (Wienerisches Diarium No. 46, 10. 06. 1775). On June 27, 1775, FELLNER received the doctorate of medicine from the Vienna University (Vienna University Archive/Universitätsarchiv Wien, Matr. X, p. 539, Acta Med. III, p. 262, Acta Med. IV, pp. 27 & 29; STEINER 1972: fol. 308). As early as 1775 he became a member of the Medical Faculty and was appointed professor of physiology at the University of Vienna, most probably due to connections to ANTON VON STÖRCK (1731–1803), the emperor’s personal physician and second president of the Medical Faculty, to whom FELLNER dedicated his

dissertation. On May 14, 1780, FELLNER married MARIA THERESIA VON PICHLER (born 1758) and died in the same year at the age of 29 on December 12 (death register/Sterbebuch 33 St. Stephan, fol. 229v; Bahrleibuch St. Stephan 1780, fol. 388v; Wiener Zeitung No. 101, 16. 12. 1780), leaving back his young wife and a valuable private library on medicine and natural history in his flat at “Waldzeil Nr. 816”, today Wollzeile 1 in the first district of Vienna (Vienna University Archive/Universitätsarchiv, Verlassenschaftsabhandlungen fasc. 95, no. 9; WALZEL 1999).

FELLNER's only publication, the printed thesis of 1775 (Pritzel No. 2860), does not contain any taxonomically relevant description of a plant or fungus, though it is continuously cited in major works on mycology (e.g., CORDA 1842: CXV, STREINZ 1862: 702). Possibly due to its rareness (three copies at Vienna, thereof one at WU, two at Munich and Regensburg, two at London, thereof one at the Natural History Museum, one at Milan and the copy seen by STAFLEU & COWAN at NY are traceable) the book has never been read critically. According to POKORNY (1854: 41) FELLNER planned a concise description and illustration of all species of fungi occurring around Vienna, but did not succeed in publishing more than the very first part, this being merely an introduction to mycology and the history of the discipline. A scan of the WU copy can be found at <http://phaidra.univie.ac.at/o:173061>.

When referring to herbarium specimens of “FELLNER” housed at Frankfurt-on-Main (FR, see LANJOUW & STAFLEU 1957: 193), MAXIMILIAN JOHANN NEPOMUK FELLNER is most probably confused with (CHRISTIAN) ALEXANDER FELLNER (1800-1883), merchant and collector of plants and ancient weapons at Frankfurt. CARL AUGUST EHRENBERG (1801-1849) dedicated *Mammillaria fellneri* to ALEXANDER FELLNER (EHRENBERG 1849: 261), “*Cactus fellneri* Kuntze”, recte *Cactus fellneri* (C. EHRENBERG.) KUNTZE, being just a new combination (KUNTZE 1891: 260) of this name. The genus *Fellneria* FÜCKEL (Fungi Rhenani exsiccata no. 1923, 1867) rather refers to ALEXANDER FELLNER or some member of his extended Frankfurt family, like CONSTANTIN FELLNER (1761-1848), than to MAXIMILIAN J. N. FELLNER. The latter is therefore neither an author of fungus or plant names nor is, to the author's knowledge, any taxon named after him.

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