

Robert Fortune: A Plant Hunter in the Orient



Scottish plant collector Robert Fortune became famous among botanists for working and traveling in China and Japan from 1843 to 1861, a time when China forbade Europeans from traveling beyond the confines of a few coastal treaty ports. This is the first full biography of Fortune, and it uses substantial un-studied materials, detailing his travels, collections, and more, and featuring the first maps ever produced that track his collecting itineraries in China. Alistair Watt, a plant hunter himself, brings Fortune to life, showing us how he traveled in disguise in China, and clearing up some misconceptions about his role as a scout for a possible tea industry in the United States. The result is a rounded portrait of an extraordinary man, his times, and his lasting contribution to horticultural knowledge.

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