

## **ABOUT HOW MUTIS IS MORE THAN A STREET IN RIVAS**

Probably many of you live or walk everyday along *Celestino Mutis Street*, in Rivas Vaciamadrid, and you don't know quite well who he was.

Around 1763 **Jose Celestino Mutis** proposed to the king of Spain, Carlos III, to undertake a botanical expedition in order to study American flora and fauna. He had to wait for 20 years to obtain the permission, and this was how he started what has been called the "rediscovery". He undertook three botanical expeditions.

In 1783, under the direction of Mutis, the Royal Botanical Expedition began to the New Kingdom of Granada (current Republics of Colombia, Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela, besides regions of the North of Peru and Brazil, and the West of Guyana). The exploration covered approximately 8000 square kilometres, using as axis the river Magdalena.

Celestino died in 1808 in Santa Fe of Bogotá; therefore this year the second centenary of his death is commemorated. The Botanical Garden of Madrid has celebrated in his honour different acts.

Our students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade of Primary have participated in one of the workshops, where they were turned into explorers for one day. They had the opportunity to observe the plants and they learned how to find the tracks of all the botanical material that they could gather from the soil. They put in common their observations and later they were taught how to make a "sheet" of a plant, and the information that should be included in a herbarium. Leo, our traveller squirrel along parks and gardens of several European countries, accompanied us in this adventure.