

Georges Léopold Chrétien Frédéric Dagobert Cuvier Encyclopedia Article

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1769-1832

French anatomist considered the father of comparative anatomy. He extended Carolus Linnaeus's classification system by adding the phylum. Stressing similarities in internal structures rather than surface superficialities, he grouped Linnaean classes into four phyla: Vertebrata, Mollusca, Articulata (jointed animals), and Radiata (all others). Cuvier's scheme continues to guide biological classification today. His pioneering work in classifying mammalian and reptilian fossils established vertebrate paleontology, and his studies of fish and mollusks inaugurated modern ichthyology.