

Translated by Hugh Elliot

With Introductory Essays by
David L. Hull and
Richard W. Burkhardt, Jr.



Jean Baptiste Lamarck is remembered primarily as a pre-Darwinian evolutionist who proposed the inheritance of acquired characters to explain evolutionary change. But this narrow view of Lamarck does not do justice to his conception of organic change, nor does it indicate how Lamarck's views on organic change related to the rest of his biological thinking.

This edition of Lamarck's most famous treatise, the *Zoological Philosophy*, provides an opportunity to reconsider this major work of nineteenth-century biology. It includes as well Lamarck's "Introductory Discourse" of 1800 and Cuvier's infamous "Biographical Memoir," an attack on Lamarck that has been the source of common misconceptions about his work. Introductory essays by David L. Hull and Richard W. Burkhardt, Jr., discuss Lamarck's contributions in the context of his time and reassess their significance for the development of evolutionary theory.

"The questions we choose to ask about Lamarck today are inevitably a function of our present understanding of the nature of science and how science has developed. This understanding is it-

self culturally and historically conditioned. It is also bound to change over time in such a way that the questions we ask today are not likely in the future to be considered the only questions worth asking. Whatever questions one brings to the consideration of Lamarck's work, however, one will have to confront Lamarck's own writings. That is what justifies the republication of Lamarck's *Philosophie zoologique* and his 'Introductory Discourse' of 1800."—from the Introduction by Richard W. Burkhardt, Jr.

Jean Baptiste Lamarck (1744–1829) was a member of the French Academy of Sciences and was noted for his study and classification of invertebrates as well as for his evolutionary theories.

Richard W. Burkhardt, Jr., is professor in the Department of History at the University of Illinois, Urbana. **David L. Hull** is Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He is also the editor of the *Science and Its Conceptual Foundations* series, published by the University of Chicago Press.