



### Constant Duméril's *Zoologie Analytique* was published in 1805

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André Marie Constant Duméril (1774–1860) was at first an anatomist: on August 7, 1799, he was appointed chief of the anatomical works at the Paris Faculty of Medicine. As such, he helped Georges Cuvier in his anatomical researches, and from 1797 onwards he copied out his lectures; later, starting from 1802, he took the place of Cuvier to teach Natural History. Cuvier was grateful and stimulated him to work at the Paris Museum. Cuvier was convincing and effective: on June 16, 1803, he could offer Duméril a position as assistant of Lacepède<sup>1</sup>, who was head of the herpetological and ichthyological department of zoology. In his turn, Duméril had to be thankful, and he wrote a *Traité d'Histoire Naturelle* (1804), in which his “friend” Cuvier was greatly acknowledged; the author made clear that this work was a Cuvier's “order”.

The following year, Duméril prepared a second book, which only treated zoology, the *Zoologie Analytique*. Thanks to Duméril's copious correspondence, which is presently accessible through a book (Froissart 1984) and an internet site (*Correspondance familiale*, <<http://correspondancefamiliale.ehess.fr>>), we have first hand data about his activities. During the second half of 1805, Constant Duméril was in mission in Spain as physician, with Nicolas René Dufriche Desgenettes (1762–1837), to study an epidemic of yellow fever. The decree for this mission was signed on 17 prairial an XIII (June 6, 1805) by Napoléon, in Milan. The party was ready to leave on July, by stage coach: a last letter from Paris was written by Duméril on 25 messidor an XIII (July 14). The team stayed some days in Bordeaux and left it on July 22; on 7 thermidor an XIII (July 26), Duméril enjoyed Bayonne; they arrived in Madrid on August 10. In September they left Madrid for Toledo, Cordoba (September 17, foreword of *Zoologie Analytique*), Ecija (September 20, dedication to Lacepède) and Sevilla. Duméril and Desgenettes were back in Paris only on December 21. So one may wonder when Duméril could find time to work on his book. Actually the answer was given by himself in another letter of messidor an XIII (June 19 or later) to his father (Froissart 1984: 69): “*J'ai voulu terminer mon ouvrage avant de quitter Paris. J'ai encore à peu près trois pages à écrire pour finir le texte proprement dit. Je ferai passer l'introduction quand je l'aurai composée. Le cousin Dumont se charge de revoir les sept ou huit feuilles qui restent à composer. La publication de cet ouvrage n'aura lieu que pendant mon absence, c'est le seul regret que j'éprouve*”. On July 14, Duméril wrote: “*Ce n'est que d'hier que mon*

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1. There are some discrepancies about Lacepède's name. His full name before the Révolution was Bernard Germain Etienne Médard de la Ville-sur-Ilлон, comte de La Cepède (1756-1825). During the Terreur period, as noble, he left Paris (1793) to live in its suburb, and simultaneously changed his name for Lacepède. The perilous days gone away, he came back (1794) and entered the Museum (1795), keeping the name Lacepède. He always signed himself Lacepède then, but many references changed his name into Lacépède, and this version is the commonest today, possibly because Lacépède is easier to pronounce than Lacepède. Actually various combinations were proposed. For instance Duméril (1804) wrote Lacépède, the dedication of the *Zoologie Analytique* was addressed “À Monsieur de la Cépède”, and in the main text Duméril (1805; 1806) used de la Cepède. Zoological names based on his name have either Cepède or, rarely, Lacepède as root: *Gecko cepedianus* Milbert, 1812; *Lophotus lacepedianus* Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1826.
  2. “*I wanted to achieve my work before leaving Paris. I still have about three pages to write to finish the text itself. I will send the introduction when I have done it. My cousin Dumont is in charge of reviewing the seven or eight sheets that remain to be written. The publication of this work will appear during my absence, the only regret I have*”.