

atlas of 120 plates that was issued in plain and handcolored versions. After Bibron's premature death in 1848, Auguste Duméril joined his father in writing the two remaining volumes (seven and nine).

The "Erpétologie Générale" was the first work that gave a comprehensive scientific account of all amphibians and reptiles, including their anatomy, physiology, systematics, and associated literature. In this enormous work some 1393 species are covered. Each is provided with a full synonymy and a detailed description; many are illustrated. By comparison, George A. Boulenger's later (1882-1896) review of the world's herpetofauna, also in nine volumes, covered 8469 species, but his descriptions are far less detailed.

For all the advances inherent in the "Erpétologie Générale," a major defect was the recognition of amphibians as an order of reptiles, a reversion to the arrangement of Alexandre Brongniart (1799). This was adopted in spite of P.-A. Latreille's (1825) separation of amphibians as a class and the accumulating embryological evidence of Karl E. von Baer (1828) and Johannes Müller (1831), a particularly surprising arrangement in view of the breadth of Duméril's knowledge. Besides his interests in higher taxa and anatomy, Duméril was from his boyhood an observer of living animals and, accordingly, was responsible for the creation on the museum grounds of the menagerie of live specimens (in 1838), which permitted many important observations to be made of relevance to systematics.

The death of Gabriel Bibron created a ten-year publication gap during which two separate works were issued that must be regarded as extensions of the "Erpétologie Générale": the "Catalogue Méthodique de la Collection des Reptiles" (1851), a supplement to the volumes already published (one through six; eight), which, although formally authored by both Dumérils, is generally attributed to Auguste Duméril, and the "Prodrome de la Classification des Reptiles Ophidiens" (1853), by Constant Duméril alone, giving a preview of his classification of the snakes in volume seven (published in two parts, 1854). Despite their preoccupation with this grand project, the three authors continued throughout the same period to produce other works on amphibians and reptiles, often incidental to the larger project but sometimes even quite separate from it and of a sizeable and valuable nature.

By the time the "Erpétologie Générale" was finished, Constant Duméril was 80. He had relinquished day-to-day supervision of the laboratory to his son the previous year (1853) and finally retired in 1857. During these last years, still healthy, his interests turned to his first passion, insects. He received many honors, including promotion to Commander of the Legion of Honor just two months before his death, in Paris, on 14 August 1860.

• *References:* "Éloge Historique d'André-Marie-Constant Duméril," by P. Flourens, *Mém. Acad. Sci. Inst. Impér. France*, 35: i-xxii, 1866; "André-Marie-Constant Duméril," anonymous, *Grand Larousse*, 6: 1379, 1870; "André Marie-Constant Duméril, le Père de l'Erpétologie," by J. Guibé, *Bull. Mus. Natl. Hist. Nat.*, ser. 3, 30: 329-341, 1958. • *Portrait and signature:* Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

BIBRON, Gabriel (1806-1848).

Gabriel Bibron, zoologist and collaborator of A.-M.-C. Duméril, was born in Paris in 1806. As the son of a longtime employee of the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, he received his education from the professors at the museum who recognized his propensity for natural history. Consequently, he was appointed to make collections of vertebrates in Italy and Sicily, but the turning point in his life came in 1832 when A.-M.-C. Duméril invited him to become his chief assistant and, later, to collaborate on the monumental treatise "Erpétologie Générale" (1834-1854). He also assisted Duméril in his teaching at the museum and Bibron himself taught natural history at a primary school in Paris, the Collège Municipal Turgot. Unfortunately, Bibron died prematurely, of tuberculosis at the age of 42, in Saint-Alban (Loire), on 27 March 1848.

While A.-M.-C. Duméril's contributions to the "Erpétologie"—overall design and arrangement of the genera—were crucial, Bibron's were no less important. He was responsible for determination of specimens, synonymy, and description of species, including many new ones. Bibron was the first to provide detailed descriptions of reptilian species, sometimes including minutiae of little value; nevertheless, the bulk of the "Erpétologie" which still has value today is its descriptive content. Besides this collaboration with Duméril, Bibron was also well positioned to determine and publish accounts of other collections of

