

Spineless Wonders

The eighteenth century showed little interest in invertebrates, since naturalists had their hands full sorting out mammals, birds, and fish. In 1758, Linnaeus had lumped all invertebrates into just two classes, *Insecta* and *Vermes*, or, roughly, Bugs and Worms. It was the French naturalist Lamarck, in 1809, who expanded the invertebrates into 10 groups, adding such classes as mollusks, crustaceans, polyps (cephalopods), and radiates (echinoderms).

Consequently, the great French scientific exploring expeditions of the 1820s and 1830s specialized in collecting invertebrates, and hundreds of plates documenting these creatures were published in the narrative atlases. Darwin himself spent much of his spare time identifying invertebrate larvae during his Edinburgh University days, and he collected many specimens on board *HMS Beagle*, including the sea hare and the Portuguese Man-o'-War, both of which he studied on the initial crossing of the Atlantic Ocean.



The
Grandeur
of
Life



Above Right: Portuguese Man-o'-War, from Louis Duperrey, *Voyage autour du monde... sur la corvette La Coquille*, Zoology Atlas, 1825-30.

Above: Anemone, from Jules Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de la corvette l'Astrolabe*, Zoology Atlas, 1830-34.

Center Right: Tiger cowrie, from Jules Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de la corvette l'Astrolabe*, Zoology Atlas, 1830-34.

Below Right: Sea hare, from Jules Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de la corvette l'Astrolabe*, Zoology Atlas, 1830-34.

