In 1794 Lamarck divided the whole animal kingdom into vertebrate and invertebrate animals, and founded successively the groups of Crustacea, Arachnida, Annelida, and Radiata. Between 1816 and 1822 he published his celebrated 'Histoire naturelle des Animaux sans Vertèbres.'

His most famous work is the 'Philosophie zoologique,' 1809.

Assuming the spontaneous origin of life, he propounded the doctrine that all animals and plants have arisen from low forms through incessant modifications and changes. In this respect he was in absolute opposition to Cuvier, who upheld the immutability of species, and did his best by absolute silence to suppress the spread of the new doctrine.

Lamarck has explained his views of transformism chiefly in the seventh chapter of the first volume of his ' Philosophie zoologique.'

Organisms strive to accommodate or adapt themselves to new circumstances, or to satisfy new requirements — e.g., climate, mode of