Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte De Buffon Encyclopedia Article

Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte De Buffon

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Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte De Buffon

1707-1788

French natural historian and mathematician who is primarily remembered for his encyclopedic Natural History (*Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière,* 44 volumes, 1749-1804), a systematic account of natural history, geology, and anthropology. Buffon was the first naturalist to construct geological history into a series of stages. Although his writings were very popular, Buffon's ideas about geological history, the origin of the solar system, biological classification, the possibility of a common ancestor for humans and apes, and the concept of lost species were considered a challenge to orthodox religious doctrine.