Gustave Gaspard De Coriolis Encyclopedia Article

Gustave Gaspard De Coriolis

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Gustave Gaspard De Coriolis

1792-1843

French physicist who first derived the fictitious forces, known as the centrifugal and Coriolis forces, that appear to act on bodies in a rotating frame of reference like Earth. The Coriolis force—also known as the Coriolis effect or acceleration—acts perpendicular to the motion of the body in the rotating frame, causing a sidewise deflection. It plays a role in many dynamical problems on Earth's surface, including the circulation of cyclones, the trajectories of long-range ballistic missiles, and the precession of a pendulum.