Paul Kammerer Encyclopedia Article

Paul Kammerer

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1880-1926

Austrian biologist who claimed that he had demonstrated the inheritance of acquired characteristics. Kammerer reported that he had induced the inheritance of pigmented thumb pads in the male midwife toad, which normally lacks such pads. His preserved specimens were examined in 1926 and the pads were found to have been artificially colored with India ink. Kammerer denied having altered his specimens, but he committed suicide shortly after the story became public. The controversy was examined by Arthur Koestler in *The Case of the Midwife Toad* (1971).