The Father of Entomology

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. – Isaiah 7:18

More than 150 years after his death in 1850, William Kirby is still known as one of the first scientists to devote his life to the study of insects. Let us add that he was also devoted to something else. Shortly before publishing his first major work on the bees of England, Kirby wrote the following:

"The author of Scripture is also the author of Nature: and this visible world, by types indeed, and by symbols, declares the same truths as the Bible does by words. To make the naturalist a religious man – to turn his attention to the glory of God, that he may declare his works, and in the study of his creatures may see the loving-kindness of the Lord – may this in some measure be the fruit of my work…"

Between 1815 and 1826, Kirby and fellow British entomologist William Spence coauthored the four-volume *An Introduction to Entomology: or Elements of the Natural History of Insects*. These books are still regarded as the foundational work in the field of entomology. In 1835, Kirby wrote *The History, Habits and Instincts of Animals*. In the first chapter – titled "Creation of Animals" – he writes that the existence of animals testifies to the existence of their Creator.

If William Kirby, the father of entomology, had lived nine years longer to see the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*, we're quite sure he would have been an outspoken opponent.


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