

On 1 February 2008 at 5 a.m., a fire ripped through Deyrolle, a historic entomology and taxidermy shop in the heart of Paris. Its collections of thousands of butterflies and rare insects, stuffed animals from all over the world and minerals, built up since it opened in 1831, went up in smoke, only surviving in the memories of generations of dreamers fascinated by their motionless beauty. Stuffed, mounted and classified, the specimens of a wide range of species conserved by this world-renowned institution were at best singed and at worst reduced to ashes. That which man and science had taken from the natural cycle of life and death and fixed forever was partially brought back to its original destiny: the fading and disappearance that awaits any creature. Time had been made to stand still, and nature had resumed its rights. These photographs effectively bring closure to a process of creation, conservation and destruction.

The index of 33.000 latin names (letter A) of the order Lepidoptera (butterflies) in this book has been taken from the website www.catalogueoflife.org, whose aim is to establish a complete record of every known species of living organism on Earth by the year 2011.

This taxonomic catalogue is a compilation of 52 databases from around the world, and brings together contributions from over 3.000 specialists. Over 250.000 butterfly species have so far been recorded.

The information presented is, in the following order: genres, species, name of person or group who first described the species, and date of first publication.