



Extinction and Evolution: What Fossils Reveal About the History of Life

Niles Eldredge

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"This book is a splendidly illustrated and thoughtfully constructed account of one of the greatest ideas ever conceived by the human mind -- evolution. Eldredge has cleverly combined our knowledge of living organisms with instructive insights into the fossil record to convincingly argue that evolution is, indeed, the grand unifying idea of biology." -- Donald C. Johanson, Founder of the Institute of Human Origins, and author of *From Lucy to Language*

Extinction and Evolution recounts the work and discoveries of Niles Eldredge, one of the world's most renowned paleontologists, whose research overturned Charles Darwin's theory of evolution as a slow and inevitable process, as published in *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. Darwin had concluded that evolutionary changes happened very slowly over millions of years. Eldredge's work, however, convinced him that Darwin was wrong and that major evolution of life forms does not happen to any significant degree until after a mass extinction event, thus disproving the traditional view of evolution.

Eldredge's groundbreaking work is now accepted as the definitive statement of how life as we know it evolved on Earth. This book chronicles how Eldredge made his discoveries and traces the history of life through the lenses of paleontology, geology, ecology, anthropology, biology, genetics, zoology, mammalogy, herpetology, entomology and botany. While rigorously accurate, the text is accessible, engaging and free of jargon.

Extinction and Evolution features 160 beautiful color plates that bridge the gap between science and art, and show more than 200 different fossil specimens, including photographs of some of the most significant fossil discoveries of recent years. This is a book with appeal to a broad general audience, including natural history readers and students.

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