



Pillars of Evolution: Fundamental principles of the eco-evolutionary process

Douglas W. Morris, Per Lundberg

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Pillars of Evolution provides a fresh and provocative perspective on adaptive evolution. Readers new to the study of evolution will find a refreshing new insight that establishes evolutionary biology as a rigorous and predictive science, whilst practicing biologists will discover a provocative book that challenges traditional approaches.

The book begins by leading readers through the **mechanics** of heredity, reproduction, movement, survival, and development. With that framework in place, it then explores the numerous ways that traits emerge from the interactions between genetics, development, and the environment. The key message is that adaptive changes in traits (and their underlying allelic frequencies) evolve through the traits' **functions** and their connection with fitness. The complex mappings from genes-to-traits-to-fitness are characterized in the **structure** of evolution. A single "structure matrix" describes why individuals vary in the values of adaptive traits, their ability to perform the function of those traits, and in the fitness they accrue. Fitness depends on how organisms interact with and perceive their environment in time and space. These relationships are made explicit in spatial, temporal, and organizational **scale** that also sets the stage for the crucially important role that ecology always plays in evolution. The ecological hallmarks of density- and frequency-dependent interactions allow the authors to explore new and exciting insights into evolution's **dynamics**. The theories and principles are then brought together in a final synthesis on **adaptation**.

The book's unique approach unites genetic, development, and environmental influences into a single comprehensive treatment of the eco-evolutionary process.

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