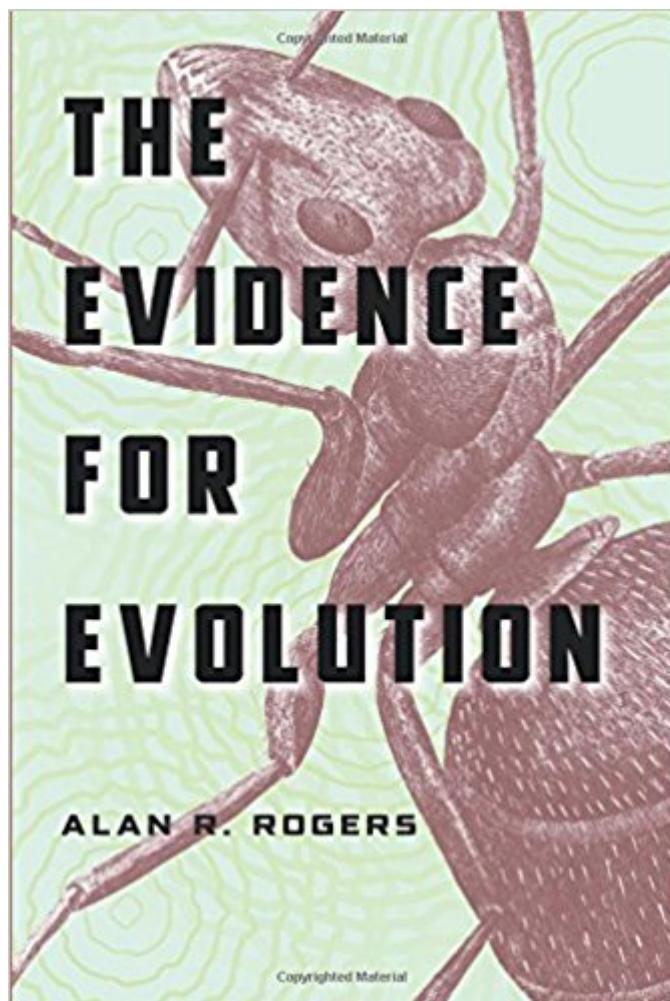


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# The Evidence For Evolution



## Synopsis

According to polling data, most Americans doubt that evolution is a real phenomenon. And it's no wonder that so many are skeptical: many of today's biology courses and textbooks dwell on the mechanisms of evolution—natural selection, genetic drift, and gene flow—but say little about the evidence that evolution happens at all. How do we know that species change? Has there really been enough time for evolution to operate? With *The Evidence for Evolution*, Alan R. Rogers provides an elegant, straightforward text that details the evidence for evolution. Rogers covers different levels of evolution, from within-species changes, which are much less challenging to see and believe, to much larger ones, say, from fish to amphibian, or from land mammal to whale. For each case, he supplies numerous lines of evidence to illustrate the changes, including fossils, DNA, and radioactive isotopes. His comprehensive treatment stresses recent advances in knowledge but also recounts the give and take between skeptical scientists who first asked “how can we be sure” and then marshaled scientific evidence to attain certainty. *The Evidence for Evolution* is a valuable addition to the literature on evolution and will be essential to introductory courses in the life sciences.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Lucid, compact, up-to-date, and highly readable.” (Ross H. Nehm, Ohio State University BioScience) “The Evidence for Evolution is a fine advocate’s case for Darwin’s theory.” (Michael J. Behe, Lehigh University Review of Metaphysics) “The volume is clearly written and presents helpful examples for readers. In

addition to providing an excellent introduction for general readers, this book will be of use in a variety of introductory courses on biology or as a supplement to a more general treatment of evolutionary theory. (Chris Zarpentine, University of Utah Quarterly Review of Biology) [A] fresh and splendid little book. (Warren D. Allmon Reports of the National Center for Science Education) Alan Rogers addresses the political controversy over the theory of evolution (there is no longer any scientific controversy) in the best scientific spirit: with evidence and logic. For anyone with an open mind, a curiosity about the natural world, and a desire to see controversies settled with evidence rather than rhetoric, this is an invaluable contribution and a fascinating read. (Steven Pinker, Harvard University) This work is novel and significant because of the growing misunderstanding of the concepts of evolution. Rogers does a great job of presenting the creationists' arguments and providing some of the best evidence to counter those arguments. He brings the full arsenal of what modern science has to offer, but also does so in a respectful manner that is accessible to a broad audience without condescending language. This is exactly the kind of message that evolutionary biologists should be sending. (Christina Richards, University of South Florida) An elegant little 128-page book by a veteran University of Utah scientist that explains and defends the theory of evolution. (Roger Ebert)

It is interesting to think about what Darwin didn't know. He didn't know about genetics, about continental drift, or about the age of the earth. He had never seen a species change, and he had no idea whether it was even possible for a species to split in two. He knew of no transitional fossils and of almost no human fossils. It is hardly surprising that people in the 1860s found so many ways to attack the theory. Evolution skeptics have invented lots of arguments, and I trace each of them back to their source. It turns out that all of them were introduced during the 1860s. Take for example the one that asks "what good is half an eye?" That was introduced in 1866 by the man who taught mathematics and botany to Darwin's sons. In those years, evolution skeptics proposed several arguments that were hard to refute, so it is easy to understand why so many people were skeptical. We have learned a lot in the past 150 years and are no longer ignorant about any of the issues I listed at the top. So why are people still skeptical? I suspect that most people are simply not familiar with the evidence. There is no way to make the case in a few paragraphs, or in a television interview. That is why I wrote this book. I have tried to write a book that is short, inexpensive, and easy to read. I couldn't assume that readers would take my word for anything, so I never say "trust me"--I explain everything. How well did I succeed? You be the judge.

Took an anthro class from Rogers at the University of Utah and had to buy this book. Cogent, though the arguments sometimes require the smallest bit of biological literacy to understand, which I could see being problematic given that this book is primarily intended for those who aren't entirely convinced of the case for evolution. Buy it for your idiot creationist friends.

thanks

Alan Rogers, a world-class population geneticist and evolutionary ecologist, has finally done what other writers on the topic of evolution have failed to do: write a short, precise, convincing book on why scientists believe evolution actually happens. One doesn't, I believe, even require a university-level education in biology under one's belt in order to profitably read this book and learn about specific traits that biologists are quite sure were the product of natural selection winnowing out unfit genetic variants (given environmental conditions) and blindly choosing only the genetic variants that conferred survival or reproductive benefits upon organisms. Evolution is not just a theory, it is a fact of life on Earth (and probably off Earth as well) that happens over and over and will continue to happen far into the future. The types of evidence Alan presents here (both morphological and genetical) should convince any skeptic that we biologists aren't just shooting in the dark, we are making hypotheses and testing them with field data and controlled experiments. In addition, Alan demonstrates how evolutionarily-informed hypotheses can be compared with hypotheses that make different predictions and we can assess which hypotheses have the most support. Finally, I hope it can profitably be read by creationists and rain the light of alethia down upon their heads.

At only 102 pages in the main text, this book gets one's attention. What did he decide to include and what got left out? How does this book compare to other writers who attempt to explain the evidence for evolution to the public with their recently published works - for example Dawkins, Miller and Coyne? There are 10 short chapters, so the book is an easy read. Chapter 2 describes microevolution, although he never uses the term that I recall. Chapter 3 will be a favorite of readers since it discusses evidence for macroevolution; he covers whale fossils and then combines the fossil evidence with whale transposon data to show how genetics and fossils come together to conclusively demonstrate macroevolution, confirming each other with a very nice and unique touch. Chapter 5 is unique as it discusses adaptive peaks and valleys and how species can cross them.

His garden hose analogy is wonderfully applied to the recurrent laryngeal nerve and vas deferens anatomy. Other topics discussed include island biogeography in Chapter 6 with Rogers returning to the cladogram as evidence for evolution, and repeating the format used in the transposon discussion. Everyone should read his discussion of isochrons in Chapter 7 and how we know the ancient age of our earth and fossils. As he did with the whales, Rogers combines the fossil record for human evolution with the newer genetic data showing how transposons confirm the human fossil record in Chapter 8. There is an Index and Bibliography. I don't recall much if any mention of ERVs, Human Chromosome 2 fusion, nor atavisms which are important to consider in the context of the transposon data he presents. If you're short on time, read this one. If you can, read both Rogers and Coyne (Why Evolution Is True).

Outstanding Purchase!

Brand new. So nice

Rogers is brilliant at providing the evidence for evolution in such an easy to understand & concise manner. ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT!

I loved the course I took from Rogers, this book summarizes a lot of what you can read from Darwin to Dawkins but makes the language of the study of evolution very accessible. I would recommend it for students from 6th Grade to grad school and for anybody who wants a refresher introduction to how evolution happens and is observed.

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