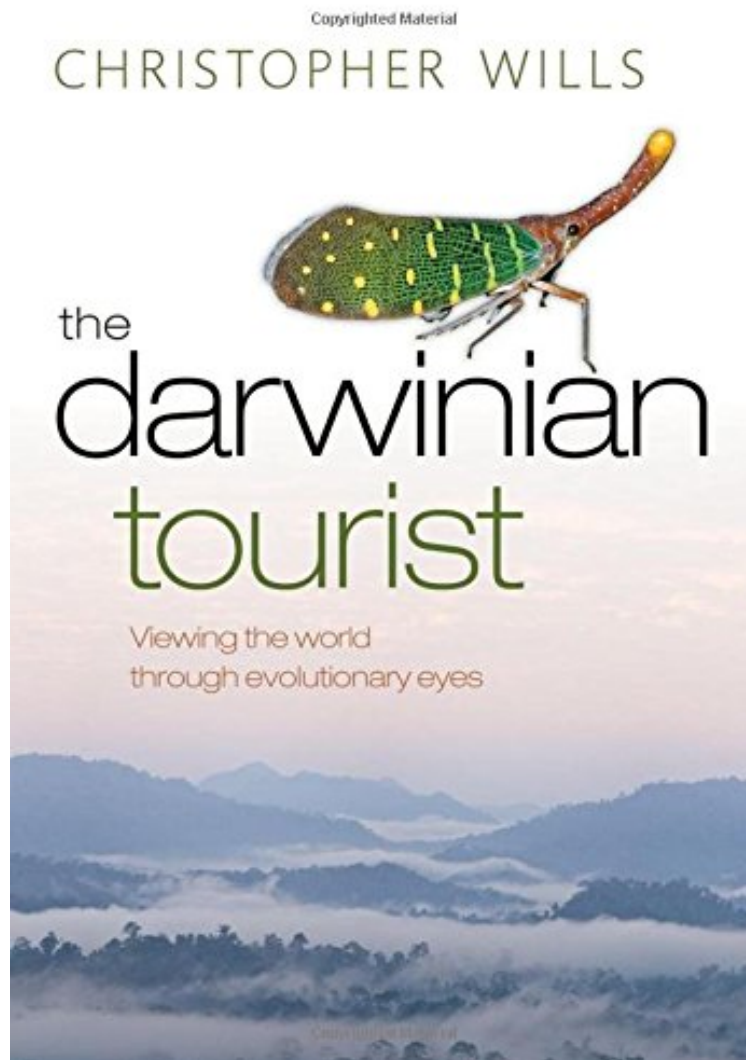


(Pdf free) The Darwinian Tourist: Viewing the World Through Evolutionary Eyes

The Darwinian Tourist: Viewing the World Through Evolutionary Eyes

Christopher Wills

*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1968769 in Books 2010-11-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.10 x 1.30 x 9.801, 2.45 #File Name: 0199584389288 pages | File size: 20.Mb

Christopher Wills : The Darwinian Tourist: Viewing the World Through Evolutionary Eyes before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Darwinian Tourist: Viewing the World Through Evolutionary Eyes:

16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. A Feast for the Mind and Eyes By Bill Baity Travel to exotic locales in this marvelous book with Chris Wills as adventurous guide and interpreter of our world and how it, and we, got to be what we are. He is also a nerveless and skilled photographer who will bring the world to you, even when

head-on with a whale shark or komodo dragon. The book starts with a dive in northern Indonesian waters and encounters with shape-shifting cuttlefish and squid, among many others. Reflecting on the very different evolutions of the eyes of humans and cuttlefish (their vision is far sharper) brings on realization of the immense family tree of all living beings on Earth. You will gain insights every few pages, such as the evidence for a long, slow (we are talking 3000 million years here!) fuse to the so-called "Cambrian explosion" of life forms. Subsequent chapters detail how natural selection shifts frequencies of various gene varieties (alleles) in addition to the mutations caused by radiation, viruses and DNA copying mistakes. Rather than a grand design, we are all the beneficiaries of nature's re-purposing body structures and gene duplications to live, or extract energy from the ecosystem, to put it another way. Being caught underwater during a nearby, but fortunately mild, earthquake is grounds for considering the importance of tectonic plate movements. Darwin had a similar experience: a much bigger quake, but on dry land. Crustal movements isolate animal populations, leading to speciation, and then may bring them near each other, as at the Wallace Line. or even together, as in the reconnection of North and South America. Among many other animal and plant families, these two cases notably involve placental mammals and marsupials. Did I mention the beautiful photographs? The evolution of new species is discussed further in chapters 4 and 5, and in the latter we visit the author's work as a scientist, verifying models of plant distribution from massive data sets. It seems there is truth in the old saying "seedlings cannot grow in the shade of the mighty oak" (this is sometimes muttered by disgruntled post-doctoral assistants) but it is not completely due to the shade - parasitic organisms, fungi and viruses are more abundant around the parent tree. The last three chapters concern the human story - our still-unfolding understanding of our ancestors (or cousins?) over the last 2 million years: Homo erectus, Neanderthals and Hobbits (OK, homo floresiensis.) The focus here is on the Great Migration; out of Africa with difficulty, down the daunting Near East coast into India, down part of Indochina, island-hopping (perhaps) across Indonesia and into Australia. Again, many beautiful photographs to go with the lucid explanations and thought-provoking insights. Along the way, there is coverage of our domestication of animals and their role in our increasing domination of the planet. It will survive a good bit longer - will we? This book caps an interesting year of reading, including On the Origin of Species: The Illustrated Edition, Your Inner Fish: A Journey into the 3.5-Billion-Year History of the Human Body [Your Inner Fish], and Evolution in Four Dimensions: Genetic, Epigenetic, Behavioral, and Symbolic Variation in the History of Life (Life and Mind: Philosophical Issues in Biology and Psychology) among others, and I heartily recommend them all. 7 of 9 people found the following review helpful. The Darwinian Tourist By Charles M. Eaton A wonderful read, fantastic photos, the most up-to-date information on evolution, ecology and the environment. I read this book on the beach in Zihuatanejo, Mexico, and couldn't put it down! Only Wills can make density-dependent selection in tropical rain forests seem not only intriguing, but understandable...and his sections on human evolution and migration are not to be missed! 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Who Knew? By Susie Parker Fascinating adventures and scientific information.

In this magnificently illustrated book, Christopher Wills takes us on a series of adventures. From the underwater life of Indonesia's Lambeh Strait to a little valley in northern Israel, to an earthquake in the coral reef off the island of Yap and the dry valleys of western Mongolia, Wills demonstrates how ecology and evolution have interacted to yield the world we live in. Each chapter features a different location and brings out a different and important message. With the author's own stunning photographs of the wildlife he discovered on his travels, he draws out the evolutionary stories behind the wildlife and shows how our understanding of the living world can be deepened by a Darwinian perspective. Wills demonstrates how looking at the world with evolutionary eyes leaves us with a renewed sense of wonder about life's astounding present-day diversity, along with an appreciation of our evolutionary history.

.com Product Description: In The Darwinian Tourist, biologist Christopher Wills takes us on a series of adventures--exciting in their own right--that demonstrate how ecology and evolution have interacted to create the world we live in. Some of these adventures, like his SCUBA dives in the incredibly diverse Lembeh Strait in Indonesia or his encounter with a wild wolf cub in western Mongolia, might have been experienced by any reasonably intrepid traveller. Others, like his experience of being hammered by a severe earthquake off the island of Yap while sixty feet down in the ocean, filming manta rays, stand far outside the ordinary. With his own stunning color photographs of the wildlife he discovered on his travels, Wills not only takes us to these far-off places but, more important, draws out the evolutionary stories behind the wildlife and shows how our understanding of the living world can be deepened by a Darwinian perspective. In addition, the book offers an extensive and unusual view of human evolution, examining the entire sweep of our evolutionary story as it has taken place throughout the Old World. The reader comes away with a renewed sense of wonder about the world's astounding diversity, along with a new appreciation of the long evolutionary history that has led to the wonders of the present day. When we lose a species or an ecosystem, Wills shows us, we also lose many millions of years of history. Published to coincide with the International Year for Biodiversity, The Darwinian Tourist is packed with globe-trotting exploits, brilliant color photography, and eye-opening insights into the evolution of humanity and the natural world. Take a Look Inside The Darwinian Tourist With his own stunning color photographs of the wildlife he encountered, Wills not only takes us to these far-off places but,

more important, draws out the evolutionary stories behind the wildlife and shows how our understanding of the living world can be deepened by a Darwinian perspective. A manta ray, *Manta birostris*, off the coast of Yap, a remote Micronesian island. Mantay rays roam throughout the tropical waters of the world, typically around coral reefs, and are known for their gentle nature. After filming this, Wills was caught up in an underwater earthquake.