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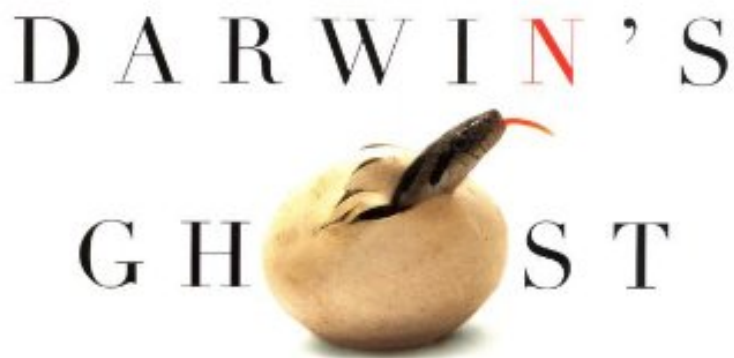
Darwin's Ghost: The Origin of Species Updated

Steve Jones

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A *New York Times* Notable Book


"There are few better or more entertaining accounts of the evolutionary process in print today than *Darwin's Ghost*."
— *The New York Times Book Review*



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Steve Jones : Darwin's Ghost: The Origin of Species Updated before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Darwin's Ghost: The Origin of Species Updated:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Still worth reading 15 years later By Claude Lambert The progress in biology is so fast that you can wonder if any book published in 1999 is worth reading today. I was pleased to read this one. The author has a great sense of humor and a vast knowledge to share. It is a valuable attempt to get Darwin's theory in tune with science of the end of 20th century. And I am grateful that I can understand what it says. I can

understand it because the arguments are clear and the style is low-key. There is a price to pay for this: for the specialist, it is sometimes sadly inaccurate. In the rare fields that I know something of, like dating using radioactive decay and the evolution of the earth's crust, the explanations are confusing and unsatisfactory. It is one case among four or five where a descriptive style would be more efficient than a narrative style. Another problem arises from the will of the author to follow the plan of Darwin's Origin. The plan follows a 19th century logic: it does not fit very well what we know today. I find books on evolution generally disappointing: I read 10 in the past year and I haven't found the perfect book yet. It is probably because the field of evolution is so vast: geology, geological history, stratigraphy, paleontology, radiometric dating, molecular and ecological genetics, genomics: who can keep up in all these fields? This book is 80 percent good, interesting and fun to read. Note: I don't think that anybody should be afraid of evolution: humans create new species all the time, why do we want to tell God how to create man? It is not our place, of course.

0 people found the following review helpful. Great for any bio student
 By Summer Peila
 The way Jones words some things is laughable, he gets way to poetic, but putting that aside this book is a much easier read than Origin and is full of example after example relating to each topic. It was very helpful and very educational, occasionally hilarious
 2 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Better Than the Original!
 By Jedidiah Carosaari
 Having read only snippets of The Origin of Species I found this book invaluable. It laid out the arguments and descriptions of evolution all in one place, in a very readable format. It is naturally superior to Origin in that it is an update of 150 years of science, especially genetics and plate tectonics. But this isn't a mere rewriting in modern English or with modern scientific arguments added in. As Jones himself states, it is more a rewriting of the *ideas* within Origin, in Jones' voice and with his own arguments. Steve Jones writes with a wonderful style, similar to dearly departed Stephen Jay Gould, merging science with popular culture and limitless trivia. (My friends are quickly getting tired of me quoting much of the trivia from the book- like the percentage of genetic variation between individuals and "races", or the male ability to lactate!) I must however disagree with Jones on one point- Darwin was not a great writer. Summaries and the final chapter of The Origin are reprinted here- and with good reason!- Darwin's arguments were profound and instrumental, and should be included in his own words in part in a book that is a rewriting of those ideas. But Darwin's wordiness and vagueness only serve to highlight both his much superior abilities as a scientist, and Jones' much superior writing skill.

Charles Darwin's The Origin of Species is probably the best-known, least-read book. One of the most important achievements of the past millennium, it did for biology what Galileo did for astronomy: made it into a single science rather than a collection of unrelated facts. Important though Origin remains, its examples and intricate Victorian prose are now a century and a half old. They are ripe for renewal and reaffirmation. Writing as "Darwin's ghost," eminent geneticist Steve Jones updates this seminal work and restates evolution's case for the 21st century. Jones is a writer of engaging wit and dazzling erudition and has been called "the British Carl Sagan." Using modern examples- the AIDS virus, the puzzles of sexual selection, the physiology and psychology of pets, and the unparalleled genetic success of our own species- he shows the power and immediacy of Darwin's great argument and makes us appreciate how it makes life make sense. Eye-opening and entertaining, filled with astonishing facts, amusing anecdotes, and the very latest research, Darwin's Ghost is contemporary science writing at its very best.

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 From the Inside Flap
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