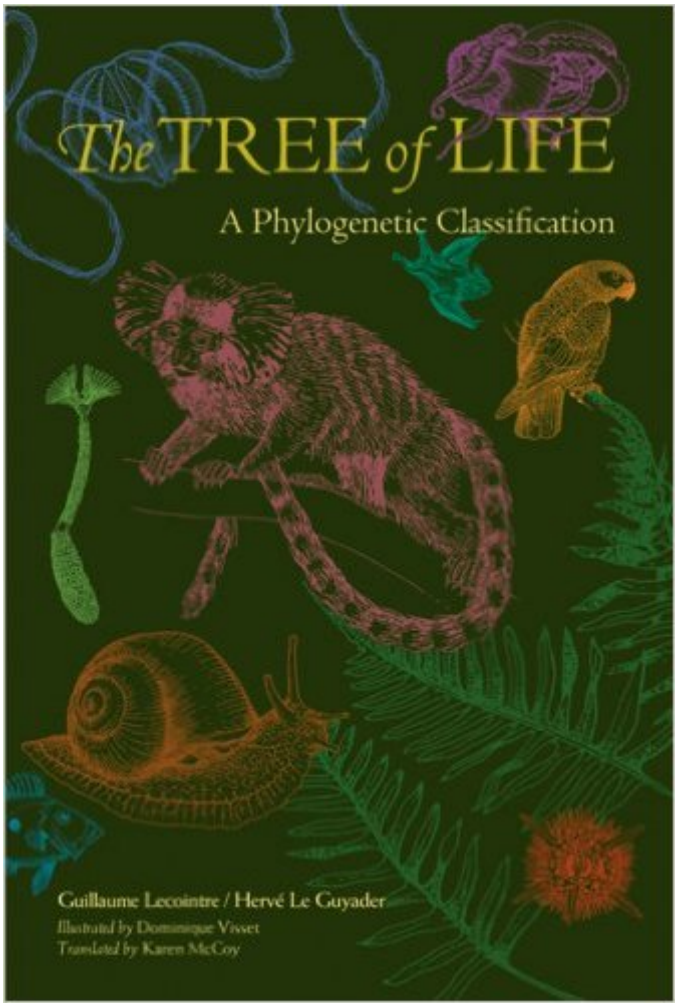
The Tree Of Life: A Phylogenetic Classification (Harvard University Press Reference Library)



Synopsis

Did you know that you are more closely related to a mushroom than to a daisy? That crocodiles are closer to birds than to lizards? That dinosaurs are still among us? That the terms "fish," "reptiles," and "invertebrates" do not indicate scientific groupings? All this is the result of major changes in classification, whose methods have been totally revisited over the last thirty years.Modern classification, based on phylogeny, no longer places humans at the center of nature. Groups of organisms are no longer defined by their general appearance, but by their different individual characteristics. Phylogeny, therefore, by showing common ancestry, outlines a tree of evolutionary relationships from which one can retrace the history of life.This book diagrams the tree of life according to the most recent methods of classification. By showing how life forms arose and developed and how they are related, The Tree of Life presents a key to the living world in all its dazzling variety.,

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The Tree of Life" is a thorough modern phylogenetic classification of life on this planet. This book is great for anyone interested in how different organisms are really related, from single-celled organisms up to humans and our close relatives. Anyone who has ever thought it strange that we should group turtles, crocodilians and dinosaurs together as "reptiles", but exclude birds (and mammals), will likely be interested in this book. The book is comprehensive, detailed, and well illustrated, and remarkably well-priced.This book covers the whole range of life on Earth, though

primates and other mammalian groups are given far more thorough treatment than bacteria and archaeans. Each section provides a description of the distinguishing features of the relevant group, with examples of some of the members, information on the fossil record, and plenty of illustrations.The main drawback with such a work is, of course, that the field is changing rapidly and it is close to impossible to ever be fully up-to-date. Another minor, but slightly annoying, problem is that a number of errors have crept into the English translation, so, for example, "Pliocene" appears as "Pilocene" in many places in the book.*Nonetheless, the scope of "The Tree of Life", the detailed description and the abundant illustrations make this an invaluable reference work for those interested in biological classification.*Note: I assume that these errors are absent from the original French text.

WOW! This is an excellent and superbly organized presentation of the phylogenetic relationships of 'all' organisms. Cross-referencing is simple with common name and Latin name indices. Shading, drawings and color are used effectively to highlight relationships. An inserted summary is so useful that it is worth the price alone. No biologist (cellular, organismic or whatever) should be without this book --- and it is amazingly inexpensive.

This is the one every biology teacher should read thoroughly. Biodiversity taching in highschool is clearly outdated, and this book may be used as a solid reference to structure highschol courses and books. "Magnifique".

This book is truly a work of art in layout, design and presentation of line drawings and scientific content. It is one of the best scientific presentations I have seen and anyone remotely interested in this subject needs to check this excellent reference.

Excellent choice for history of life enthusiasts. Pitched at High School Teachers and instructors for 100-200 level college courses. Unlike many tree diagrams, this book contains page after page of well drawn illustrations of the innovations that occurred as each taxon evolved. Weak on fish and flowering plants. A more difficult book might be Valentine "on the origin of phyla" for animals. Conversely, a good survey is Cowan, "History Of Life".

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