



Introduction to Paleobiology and the Fossil Record

Michael Benton, David A. T. Harper

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This book presents a comprehensive overview of the science of the history of life. Paleobiologists bring many analytical tools to bear in interpreting the fossil record and the book introduces the latest techniques, from multivariate investigations of biogeography and biostratigraphy to engineering analysis of dinosaur skulls, and from homeobox genes to cladistics.

All the well-known fossil groups are included, including microfossils and invertebrates, but an important feature is the thorough coverage of plants, vertebrates and trace fossils together with discussion of the origins of both life and the metazoans. All key related subjects are introduced, such as systematics, ecology, evolution and development, stratigraphy and their roles in understanding where life came from and how it evolved and diversified.

Unique features of the book are the numerous case studies from current research that lead students to the primary literature, analytical and mathematical explanations and tools, together with associated problem sets and practical schedules for instructors and students.

“...any serious student of geology who does not pick this book off the shelf will be putting themselves at a huge disadvantage. The material may be complex, but the text is extremely accessible and well organized, and the book ought to be essential reading for palaeontologists at undergraduate, postgraduate and more advanced levels—both in Britain as well as in North America.” Falcon-Lang, H., *Proc. Geol. Assoc.* 2010

“...this is an excellent introduction to palaeontology in general. It is well structured, accessibly written and pleasantly informativeI would recommend this as a standard reference text to all my students without hesitation.” David Norman *Geol Mag* 2010

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