

"From the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved."

Charles Darwin, "On the Origin of Species"

Darwin is still evolving

Exhibit at Franklin Institute traces naturalist's life, legacy

BY TOM AIVIL

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER
PHILADELPHIA — Niles Eldredge says the goal was merely to continue a series of New York exhibits on the world's great scientists. First came Leonardo da Vinci, then Albert Einstein. Why not Charles Darwin?

Somewhere along the way, a certain Pennsylvania school board decided that Mr. Darwin's theory of evolution had "gaps" and "problems," and the ensuing media spotlight was brighter than any museum official could have hoped.

"In a sense, it was dumb luck," Dr. Eldredge said. "Darwin" drew a half-million visitors at New York's American Museum of Natural History, where Dr. Eldredge, the exhibit curator, is a celebrated paleontologist. Now the show billed as the broadest ever devoted to the British scientist, is at the Franklin Institute.

Though preparations began before controversy erupted in Dover, the exhibit nevertheless devotes ample space to the debate.

A continuous video loop features various biologists explaining how Mr. Darwin's theory is supported by science, contrary to the concept that the diversity of species is the work of an intelligent designer.

But the bulk of the exhibit is a very personal look at Mr. Darwin himself. It illustrates how he conceived of — and wrestled with — his lasting contribution to modern biology.



PETER TOBA / THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Mr. Darwin was struck by how similar some animals look as embryos — here, a horse.

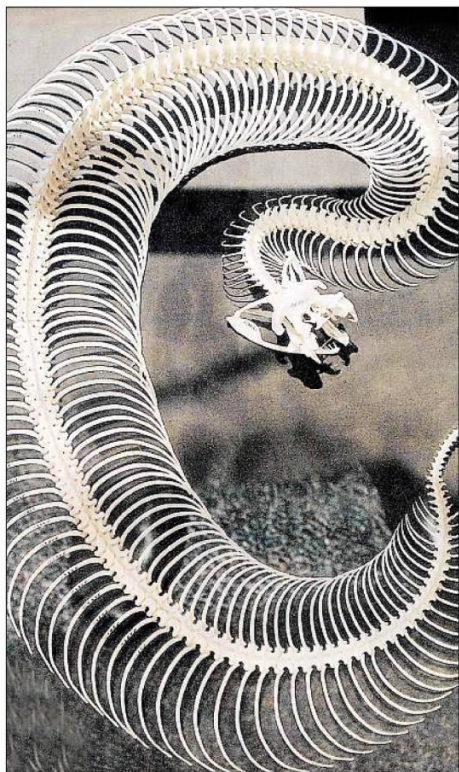
ogy: Living things undergo random mutation, and those best able to obtain food, avoid predators and reproduce will pass their successful traits to future generations.

The story is told in the dramatic fashion of a suspense novel, describing how Mr. Darwin waited two decades to announce his theory to the world.

The publication of Mr. Darwin's theory is nearing its 150th anniversary, yet a recent article in the *Journal of Science* suggests that the Darwin exhibit remains timely.

When presented with the statement that humans "developed from earlier species of animals," just 40 percent of people surveyed in the United States said it was true.

That was the second-lowest percentage of 34 countries surveyed, ahead of only Turkey. No. 1 was Iceland, where more than 80 percent labeled the statement true.



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The skeletal structure of a gaboon viper is part of the Darwin exhibit at the Franklin Institute.

Complete works of Darwin coming to a computer near you

BY RICK WEISS
THE WASHINGTON POST

Call it extreme evolution: Now you can read Charles Darwin's handwritten journals on the Internet, gaze upon digitized images of his original drawings and even listen to podcasts of his works.

Proving that the King of Evolution is still evolving, the University of Cambridge last week announced it is making Mr. Darwin's complete works available free on the Web — 50,000 pages of searchable text and 40,000 images.

Much of the material has never been published before. It was compiled by project director John van Wyhe, who spent four years cajoling libraries and other sources around the world to contribute scans of their holdings. Most text pages are visible as both originals and as transcriptions in modern type.

But why stop there?
"There's no reason why, if you can search and read the text and look at images of the original, you shouldn't be able to download and listen to it as well,"

Mr. van Wyhe said. So with the help of text-recognition software, the material is also available as MP3 audio files that can be burned onto CDs or loaded onto iPods.

Listen up: "It may be said that natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world, every variation, even the slightest; rejecting that which is bad, preserving and adding up all that is good; silently and insensibly working."

Those were the man's words back in

1859, as he took pen to paper and began the work that he would eventually title "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life."

Mr. Darwin recognized natural selection for the ruthless pruner it is. But so far, at least, his family has made the cut. The new Web site was introduced at a ceremony featuring Randal Keynes — Mr. Darwin's great-great grandson.

ON THE NET: www.darwin-online.org.uk