






16.4 Evidence of Evolution

Lesson Objectives

-  Explain how geologic distribution of species relates to their evolutionary history.
-  Explain how fossils and the fossil record document the descent of modern species from ancient ancestors.
-  Describe what homologous structures and embryology suggest about the process of evolutionary change.
-  Explain how molecular evidence can be used to trace the process of evolution.
-  Explain the results of the Grants' investigation of adaptation in Galápagos finches.

Lesson Summary

Biogeography **Biogeography** is the study of where organisms live now and where they and their ancestors lived in the past. Two biogeographical patterns are significant to Darwin's theory:

- ▶ The first is a pattern in which closely related species differentiate in slightly different climates. The Galápagos tortoises and finches follow this pattern.
- ▶ The second is a pattern in which very distantly related species develop similarities in similar environments. The rheas, ostriches, and emus fall into this pattern.

The Age of Earth and Fossils

- ▶ Radioactive dating techniques have confirmed that Earth is ancient—approximately 4.5 billion years old.
- ▶ Recent fossil finds document intermediate stages in the evolution of many groups including whales, birds, and mammals.

Comparing Anatomy and Embryology

- ▶ **Homologous structures** are shared by related species and have been inherited from a common ancestor. Similarities and differences among homologous structures help determine how recently two groups shared a common ancestor.
 - Body parts that share a common function, but neither structure nor common ancestry, are called **analogous structures**. Analogous structures do not provide any evidence for evolutionary descent.
 - Homologous structures that are greatly reduced in size or have little to no function are called **vestigial structures**.
 - Many homologous structures develop in the same order and in similar patterns during the embryonic, or pre-birth, stages of related groups. These similarities provide further evidence that the animals share common ancestors.

Genetics and Molecular Biology At the molecular level, the universal genetic code and homologous molecules such as genes and proteins provide evidence of common descent.

Testing Natural Selection Scientists have designed experiments to test natural selection. Observations of Galápagos finches confirm that competition and environmental change drive natural selection.

Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution

DJ Losen



Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution:

Decoding **Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution**: Revealing the Captivating Potential of Verbal Expression

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Table of Contents Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution

1. Understanding the eBook Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution User Reviews and Ratings

- Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution Free and Paid eBooks
 - Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution Public Domain eBooks
 - Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution eBook Subscription Services
 - Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution Compatibility with Devices
 - Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Interactive Elements Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
- 8. Staying Engaged with Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Setting Reading Goals Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Biology Packet Chapter 16 4 Evidence Of Evolution
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources

13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements
 - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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