

Biogeography FIFTH EDITION

Though the impact of human beings upon our planet is now widely recognized, understanding its true effect can only be achieved against the wider background of basic biogeography. In the fifth edition of this successful textbook, the authors continue to address the fundamental questions of biogeography: why is there such a huge diversity of living things; what determines their distribution; and have they always occupied their current distribution patterns? However, in this edition, a new question is posed: how is the present activity of human beings affecting these biogeographic patterns and what are the prospects for the future? What are the human impacts on biodiversity; how can island biogeographic theory be applied to conservation problems; what are the effects of overgrazing on grasslands?

The book opens with a discussion of biodiversity: how many plants and animals are there; where are they; and why are they more abundant in some places than in others? Following chapters consider their ecology, and then the origin of diversity through speciation and evolution. Later chapters discuss the major biomes, island biogeography, the past and its influence on the present day distribution of organisms, and finally the techniques for analysing the significance and implications of biogeographic data.

Written in a lucid style with a minimum of mathematics, this book is ideal for all those studying at the interface of the biological, geological and environmental sciences.

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