

The Great Tree of Life

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A clear, essential treatise on the Tree of Life, illustrating its historical and cultural connections as well as its many applications

The Great Tree of Life is a concise, approachable treatment that surveys the concept of the Tree of Life, including chapters on its historical use and cultural significance. The "Tree of Life" is a metaphor used to describe the relationships between organisms, both living and extinct and including our own species, as first noted by Charles Darwin. This book expounds on this exciting research and covers how to build an evolutionary tree of relationships. It also demonstrates the enormous utility of the Tree of Life in a variety of applications, including drug discovery, curing disease, crop improvement, conservation biology and ecology, and responding to the challenges of climate change, and discusses the significant ongoing threats to the Tree of Life due to the demands of a growing human population. Lastly, the book stresses the need to find effective ways to "teach" the importance of the Tree of Life to our children, as well as the general public, both to preserve the Tree and to ensure the survival of our own species.

The Great Tree of Life is a key aid to improving our understanding of species relationships and will be of use to researchers, practitioners, academics, and students in biology, ecology, and evolutionary biology and any others interested in understanding the challenges to and opportunities for further conserving and restoring the Earth's biodiversity.

Key Features

- Provides a single reference describing the properties, history, and utility of the Tree of Life
- Introduces phylogenetics and its applications in an approachable manner

Dr. Douglas E. Soltis is a Distinguished Professor in the Florida Museum of Natural History and the Department of Biology at the University of Florida. He has over 400 published papers and eight books. He was president of the Botanical Society of America (1999-2000) and has received the Centennial Award and the Distinguished Fellow Award from the Botanical Society of America, the Asa Gray Award from the American Society of Plant Taxonomists, the Stebbins Medal from the International Association for Plant Taxonomy, and the Darwin-Wallace Medal from the Linnean Society of London.

Dr. Pamela S. Soltis is a Distinguished Professor and Curator in the Florida Museum of Natural History at the University of Florida. She has over 400 published papers and eight books. She served as president of the Society of Systematic Biologists (2004-07), the Botanical Society of America (2006-09), is currently the President-Elect of the American Society of Plant Taxonomists, and has received the Centennial Award and the Distinguished Fellow Award from the Botanical Society of America, the Asa Gray Award from the American Society of Plant Taxonomists, the Stebbins Medal from the International Association for Plant Taxonomy, and the Darwin-Wallace Medal from the Linnean Society of London.



ACADEMIC PRESS

An imprint of Elsevier
elsevier.com/books-and-journals

ISBN 978-0-12-812553-3



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