

Praise for the New Edition:

"... the *History of Life* is a superb book which has no peer among published texts describing the macroevolution of life on Earth, and the abiotic and biotic factors that have influenced the evolutionary history of living organisms."

Robert McMahon, University of Texas at Arlington

"His material is accessible to even the uninitiated, but is still able to include fairly nuanced arguments. Cowen's gentle wit is much appreciated. This is a wonderful text, written in an engaging style by an author with both deep and broad knowledge of the history of life."

Emily Buchholtz, Wellesley College

The living world today contains all kinds of creatures that do unexpected things – we have come to expect that there were complex and unusual ways of life in the past, and that evolution took some unexpected turns at times. Entertainingly written for students, the fourth edition of *History of Life* takes you to the edge of current knowledge.

This text is aimed at students and anyone interested in the history of life on our planet. It explores the "whys" of events that occurred and, in this newest edition, it takes a closer look at the evolution of the physical earth and the strong interactions between organisms and environment. The book's coverage includes geography, climate, atmosphere, ocean, and land (a changing stage) while following the interplay between organisms. Also new to this edition is a devoted website (www.blackwellpublishing.com/cowen), which explores additional environmental factors and supplemental topics, and provides interactive exercises, a detailed glossary, key links, and all art in downloadable form. The art is also available to instructors on CD-ROM.

Richard Cowen learned how to write and to think critically at Cambridge University, and how to teach and think creatively at the University of California, Davis. He received a Distinguished Teaching Award in 1993 and designed the course "History of Life" there. The book was written specifically for that course, and has gone on to become a best-selling textbook.

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