

Preface

This year, the first anniversary of *The Year in Evolutionary Biology* review series, we commemorate Darwin's dual anniversaries (of his birth and the publication of the *Origin of Species*) by providing a variety of syntheses and perspectives on particular evolutionary themes. Pigliucci provides arguments for the idea that a new synthesis is imminent and what this might entail; Danilova and Amemiya highlight the evolution of antibodies; and Attolini and Michor illuminate models of cancer evolution. Kassen synthesizes work on microbial evolution to augment the theory of adaptive radiation. Sex is always a "hot topic," and two contributions address it: van Doorn investigates evolutionary consequences of intralocus sexual conflicts, especially for sex determination mechanisms; and Neiman *et al.* revisit the question of whether very old asexual lineages are surprising. Ortiz-Barrientos and colleagues take on the controversial topic of reinforcement in speciation and provide some interesting new insights. Conover *et al.* update us on causes and consequences of co- and counter-gradient variation, drawing together a wide literature that has arisen since the review of Conover and Schultz in 1995. Changes in approaches and conclusions about gene flow and genetically modified crops are addressed in a review by Warwick *et al.* Martin and Briskie provide a focus on predation on bird nestlings and how such selection may affect trait means and their plasticities. We hope these articles are timely and that they are representative of the strength of the field in this year of celebrating the diversity and vigor of evolutionary biology.

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Reference

- Conover, D.O. & E.T. Schultz. 1995. Phenotypic similarity and the evolutionary significance of countergradient variation. *Trends Ecol. Evol.* **10**: 248–252.