

Evolution on islands differs in a number of important ways from evolution on mainland areas. Over millions of years of isolation, exceptional and sometimes bizarre mammals evolved on islands, such as pig-sized elephants and hippos, giant rats and gorilla-sized lemurs that would have been formidable to their mainland ancestors.

This timely and innovative book is the first to offer a much-needed synthesis of recent advances in the exciting field of the evolution and extinction of fossil insular placental mammals. It provides a comprehensive overview of current knowledge on fossil island mammals worldwide, ranging from the Oligocene to the onset of the Holocene.

The book addresses evolutionary processes and key aspects of insular mammal biology, exemplified by a variety of fossil species. The authors discuss the human factor in past extinction events and loss of insular biodiversity. This accessible and richly illustrated textbook is written for graduate level students and professional researchers in evolutionary biology, palaeontology, biogeography, zoology and ecology.

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MICHAEL DERMITZAKIS is emeritus professor in the Department of Geology and Geoenvironment at the University of Athens, Greece, and former vice-rector of the same university. He is a recognized expert in the field of island biogeography of the Aegean Archipelago and the advocate of international research on the palaeoecology of Greek islands.

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