



How and Why Species Multiply: The Radiation of Darwin's Finches

By Peter R. Grant, B. Rosemary Grant

Princeton University Press, United States, 2011. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 234 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Charles Darwin's experiences in the Galapagos Islands in 1835 helped to guide his thoughts toward a revolutionary theory: that species were not fixed but diversified from their ancestors over many generations, and that the driving mechanism of evolutionary change was natural selection. In this concise, accessible book, Peter and Rosemary Grant explain what we have learned about the origin and evolution of new species through the study of the finches made famous by that great scientist: Darwin's finches. Drawing upon their unique observations of finch evolution over a thirty-four-year period, the Grants trace the evolutionary history of fourteen different species from a shared ancestor three million years ago. They show how repeated cycles of speciation involved adaptive change through natural selection on beak size and shape, and divergence in songs. They explain other factors that drive finch evolution, including geographical isolation, which has kept the Galapagos relatively free of competitors and predators; climate change and an increase in the number of islands over the last three million years, which enhanced opportunities for speciation; and flexibility in the early...



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