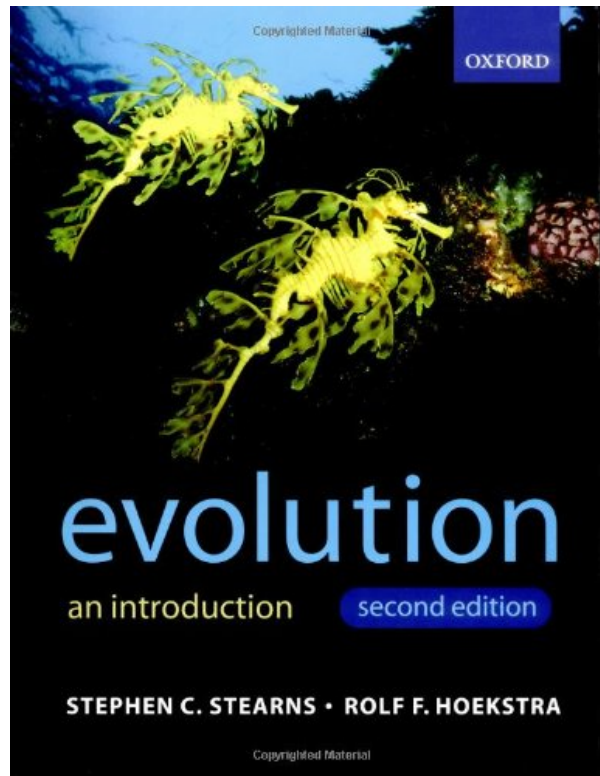
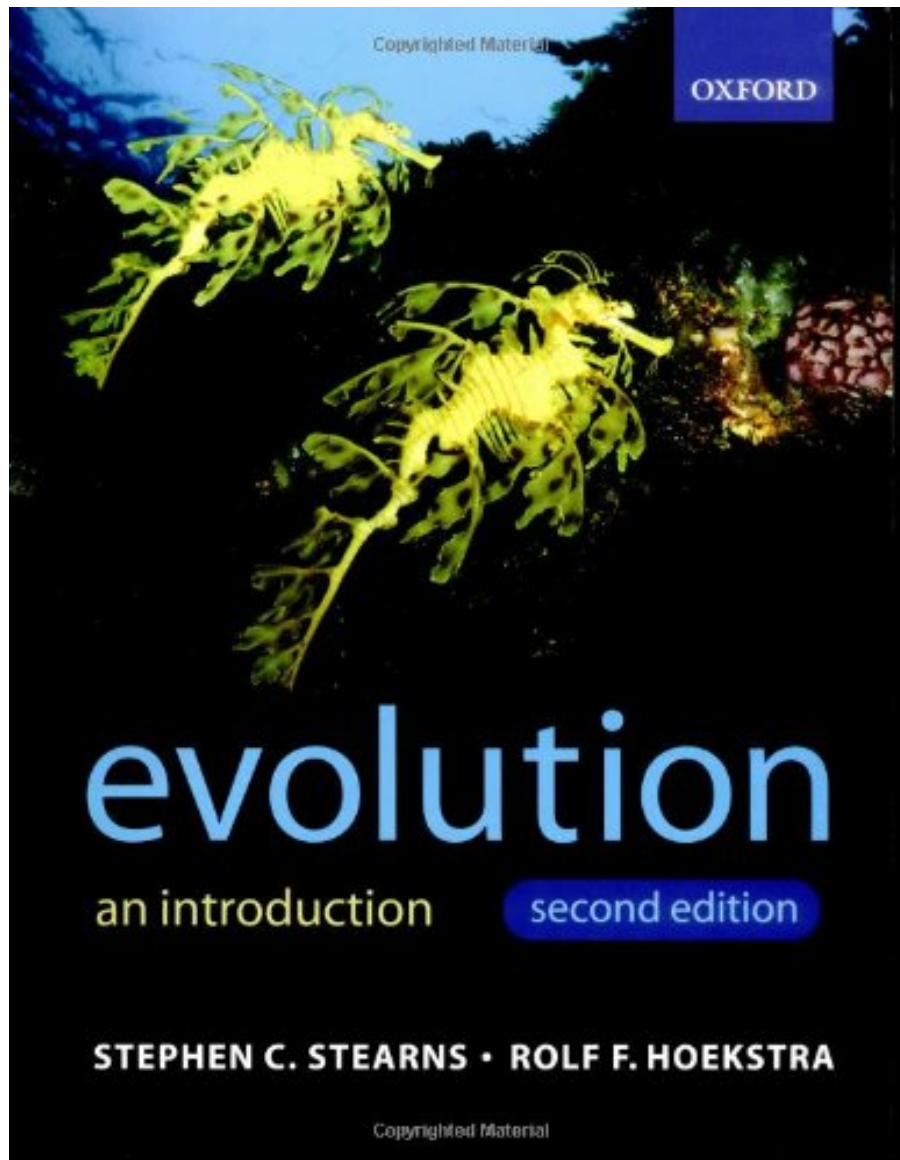


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'..a nice, slim, inexpensive, up-to-date, user-friendly textbook pitched at exactly the right level...Stearns and Hoekstra excel both on presentation and content. The uncluttered pages and numerous sub-headings are inviting...The questions at the end of each chapter are thought provoking...the best undergraduate evolution textbook available.' George F Turner, Head of Biochemistry, University of Southampton/The Times Higher Education Supplement, February 2000

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The second edition of *Evolution* introduces the basic mechanisms of microevolution, natural selection, and macroevolutionary processes such as speciation and extinction. It also examines key events in evolution throughout the geological record and discusses coevolution and evolutionary medicine. In addition, the text discusses unsolved problems and looks ahead to future developments in this dynamic field.

The text is organized into five parts. Part One introduces the basic mechanisms of microevolution: selection, inheritance, and development. Part Two considers how natural selection has designed organisms for reproductive success. Part Three explores macroevolutionary processes such as speciation and extinction. Part Four examines key events in evolution throughout the geological record. Part Five discusses coevolution and evolutionary medicine, which integrate and contrast micro- and macroevolution. The book closes with a chapter that recapsulates major issues, discusses unsolved problems, and looks ahead to future developments in this dynamic field.

Evolution, Second Edition, is ideal for introductory undergraduate courses in evolutionary biology. A companion website contains downloadable images from the text, interactive simulations to help students explore the subject in a hands-on manner, and additional study questions with answers. Access it at <http://www.oup.com/uk/booksites/content/0199255636/>.

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13 of 14 people found the following review helpful.

Should be read in conjunction with lectures available free on iTunes.

By Richard Murray

I bought this book after listening to about half of Mr. Stearns' 36 lectures on evolution which are available free through iTunes U as one of the Open Yale courses. My hope is that some of the illustrations that Mr. Stearns is using in his lectures (which a listener cannot see), will be in the textbook. If you, like me, are not a biologist, you might want to dip your toe in the water by listening to the lectures before tackling the book. I am very impressed with both.

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Highly Detailed and Approachable

By Charlotte Lenox

This book has been a joy to read for a variety of reasons, but I must agree that it takes time to grasp all of the concepts presented, and prospective reader ought to have a devoted interest in the subject--I would not recommend this book as an introduction of any kind. Based on the depth and complexity of the information this book contains, I would recommend it for a senior undergraduate level course, or even a graduate level course.

Here's the thing: Even though the title states that this is an introduction to evolution, you really need to have some foundational understanding of biology, statistics, geology, genetics, and chemistry in order to fully grasp everything Stearns and Hoekstra are saying. They do a fantastic job of defining terms, sometimes more than once throughout the text, and all of the highlighted terms can be found in the glossary in the back, but many other terms from the subjects listed are not readily defined and assume the reader knows them already. Luckily, they do include an appendix on genetics if you need a refresher.

But what I love most about this book, despite its difficulty (I've had to read some passages multiple times), is the depths to which it dives in terms of details. I'm reminded of a child constantly asking "Why? Why?" every time something is explained, and Stearns/Hoekstra continue to answer those "why's."

The contents of the book are logically organized, and the subheadings read almost like vignettes; Stearns/Hoekstra use numerous, concrete examples to illustrate the concepts they present, and the content itself is chunked in a more organic rather than linear fashion. They ask questions, and proceed to answer them, or explain why they can't. They provide a wide variety of perspectives and theories concerning evolutionary research. Because of this organization, not a single portion of the book is dull or boring--it's simply packed with information.

Overall, I very highly recommend this book as a definitive text on evolution, as long as readers are aware of the need for basic knowledge in a variety of life science subjects, and are willing to spend a great deal of time reading and rereading. This book is well worth the effort, and I never thought there could be so much to learn about evolution!

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

thorough and clear explanation of an interesting subject

By Larry P. Witmer

This is the main textbook that Prof. Stearns uses for his course on Evolutionary Biology, which can be found on the Open Yale website. The 36 lectures there can be downloaded and watched in conjunction with reading his textbook. I have found Prof. Stearns to be a great lecturer, able to make his complex subject matter easy to be understood by someone like myself who is not a biologist. His textbook is a great complement to the lectures as it also is written in a clear and understandable fashion. Used together, this textbook and the Open Yale lectures provide a wonderful opportunity for self-education for anyone really interested in learning more about the fascinating subject of evolution and its current scientific status.

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