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Cradle of Life recounts the relatively brief history of the beginnings of the scientific field of paleobiology from questions posed by Darwin, to the latest discoveries of Schopf himself.

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Breaking news that recent discoveries may push back traces of the earliest forms of life on earth to a

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remarkable 3.77 billion years ago brings new relevance to Cradle of Life: The Discovery of Earth's Earliest Fossils, by J. William Schopf, a dazzling exploration of how science was able to overcome substantial obstacles to look back to the very edges of the dawn of life on our planet.

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Today the Cradle of Humankind (or Cradle of Life) is a World Heritage Site and discoveries are still being made there. A joint venture of the National Geographic Society and the University of Witwatersrand in 2013 led to the discovery of 1,200 specimens of a still unidentified hominin species.

~~The Cradle of Life—Pieces of Africa~~

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According to existing archaeological and fossil evidence, however, the Cradle of Humankind is the Afar Triangle in East Africa, which is often referred to as the Cradle of Humanity. [6] [7] The Sterkfontein Caves were the site of the discovery of a 2.3-million-year-old fossil *Australopithecus africanus*

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(nicknamed " Mrs. Ples "), found in 1947 by Robert Broom and John T. Robinson .

~~Cradle of Humankind—Wikipedia~~

Cradle of Life: The Discovery of Earth's Earliest Fossils: Schopf, J. William: Amazon.sg: Books

~~Cradle of Life: The Discovery of Earth's Earliest Fossils ...~~

Storyline Off the coast of the volcanic island of Santorini, the intrepid archaeologist, Lara Croft, makes the unexpected discovery of a throbbing golden orb able to guide its holder to the mythical Pandora's Box.

~~Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life (2003)—IMDb~~

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We have long known that fossils of sophisticated marine life-forms existed at the dawn of the Cambrian Period, but until recently scientists had found no traces of Precambrian fossils. The quest to find such traces began in earnest in the mid-1960s and culminated in one dramatic moment in 1993 when William Schopf identified fossilized microorganisms three and a half billion years old.

One of the greatest mysteries in reconstructing the history of life on Earth has been the apparent absence of fossils dating back more than 550 million years. We have long known that fossils of sophisticated marine life-forms existed at the dawn of the Cambrian Period, but until recently scientists had found no traces of Precambrian fossils. The quest to find such traces began in earnest in the mid-1960s and culminated in one dramatic moment in 1993 when William Schopf identified fossilized microorganisms three and a half billion years old. This startling find opened up a vast period of time--some eighty-five percent of Earth's history--to new research and new ideas about life's beginnings. In this book, William Schopf, a pioneer of modern paleobiology, tells for the first time the exciting and fascinating story of the origins and earliest evolution of life and how that story has been unearthed. Gracefully blending his personal story of discovery with the basics needed to understand the astonishing science he describes,

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Schopf has produced an introduction to paleobiology for the interested reader as well as a primer for beginning students in the field. He considers such questions as how did primitive bacteria, pond scum, evolve into the complex life-forms found at the beginning of the Cambrian Period? How do scientists identify ancient microbes and what do these tiny creatures tell us about the environment of the early Earth? (And, in a related chapter, Schopf discusses his role in the controversy that swirls around recent claims of fossils in the famed meteorite from Mars.) Like all great teachers, Schopf teaches the non-specialist enough about his subject along the way that we can easily follow his descriptions of the geology, biology, and chemistry behind these discoveries. Anyone interested in the intriguing questions of the origins of life on Earth and how those origins have been discovered will find this story the best place to start.

Within the long-lost Temple of Luna, Lara Croft discovers the key to the deadliest weapon ever created: a plague which was brought to earth long ago in the legendary Pandora's Box. But Lara soon realises she isn't the only one to have made this discovery. A terrorist group, whose only agenda is destruction, has also learnt of the weapon's existence. The only man who can help her stop the terrorists is the one man to whom she has ever trusted her heart: Terry Sheridan, a former Royal Marine, now a mercenary who sells his deadly skills to the highest bidder. He betrayed Lara once before and it almost cost her life. Now, with the fate of the world hanging in the balance, Lara Croft must trust Sheridan once again. And watch him closely, lest he betray her - and civilisation itself - one last, catastrophic time.

Extinction is the ultimate fate of all biological species - over 99 percent of the species that have ever inhabited the Earth are now extinct. The long fossil record of life provides scientists with crucial

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information about when species became extinct, which species were most vulnerable to extinction, and what processes may have brought about extinctions in the geological past. Key aspects of extinctions in the history of life are here reviewed by six leading palaeontologists, providing a source text for geology and biology undergraduates as well as more advanced scholars. Topical issues such as the causes of mass extinctions and how animal and plant life has recovered from these cataclysmic events that have shaped biological evolution are dealt with. This helps us to view the biodiversity crisis in a broader context, and shows how large-scale extinctions have had profound and long-lasting effects on the Earth's biosphere.

The Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site situated in the heart of the Magaliesberg Biosphere Reserve is the jewel in South Africa's evolutionary crown: an area 'of outstanding universal value', it has attracted world-wide interest and furnished key evidence about where, when and how we came to be. The greater Magaliesberg area is peppered with some 200 caves and has a unique geology, history and biodiversity. For decades now, specialists have been combing the area to uncover evidence of our heritage. In his spectacular new title, Vincent Carruthers guides readers along a timeline, from the birth of our planet through to developments of the twenty first century. Along the way he documents the formation of our landscapes and the emergence of life, the rise of hominins, the stone and iron ages, early settlement, migrations, wars and modern developments in the Magaliesberg – the entire evolution of life up to the present, as we know it. Vividly illustrated with photographs, maps and diagrams, Cradle of Life portrays the intrigue and importance of the site, taking readers on a magical journey of discovery. Sales points: Authoritative handling of a complex topic; lavishly illustrated with colourful photos and diagrams; chronological detailing of key events from the beginning of time up to the modern age;

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accessible and appealing to a wide range of users, from visitors to students, enthusiasts and academics

In this fascinating history of scientific speculation about intelligent extraterrestrial life from Plutarch to Hawking Basalla traces the influence of one speculation on the next showing an unbroken but twisting chain of ideas passed from one scientist to another, and from science to popular culture.

Genesis: The Evolution of Biology presents a history of the past two centuries of biology, suitable for use in courses, but of interest more broadly to evolutionary biologists, geneticists, and biomedical scientists, as well as general readers interested in the history of science. The book covers the early evolutionary biologists-Lamarck, Cuvier, Darwin and Wallace through Mayr and the neodarwinian synthesis, in much the same way as other histories of evolution have done, bringing in also the social implications, the struggles with our religious understanding, and the interweaving of genetics into evolutionary theory. What is novel about Sapp's account is a real integration of the cytological tradition, from Schwann, Boveri, and the other early cell biologists and embryologists, and the coverage of symbiosis, microbial evolutionary phylogenies, and the new understanding of the diversification of life coming from comparative analyses of complete microbial genomes. The book is a history of theories about evolution, genes and organisms from Lamarck and Darwin to the present day. This is the first book on the general history of evolutionary biology to include the history of research and theories about symbiosis in evolution, and first to include research on microbial evolution which were excluded from the classical neo-Darwinian synthesis. Bacterial evolution, and symbiosis in evolution are also excluded from virtually every book on the history of biology.

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The permutation of basic atoms—nitrogen, hydrogen, oxygen, carbon and phosphorus?into the biomolecules DNA and RNA, subsequently evolved in cells and brains, defining the origin of life and intelligence, remains unexplained. Equally the origin of the genetic information and the intertwined nature of ‘hardware’ and ‘software’ involved in the evolution of bio-molecules and the cells are shrouded in mystery. This treatise aims at exploring individual and swarm behaviour patterns which potentially hint at as yet unknown biological principles. It reviews theories of evolution with perspectives from the earth sciences, commencing with the earliest observed records of life. This is followed by reviews and discussion of the building blocks of life, marine and terrestrial communities, the arthropods, birds and finally humans. It is suggested that, further to the mutation/natural selection processes established by Darwin and Wallace, an understanding of the evolution of intelligence remains little understood. A directionality of evolutionary trajectories is evident, not least the purposeful thinking process of humans as well as animals. It is not clear how directional intelligence, manifested for example by the collective intelligence of arthropod colonies, has evolved from mutation/natural selection processes. Potential clues for the understanding of life and evolution are provided by Aristotle’s dictum of “the whole being greater than the sum of the parts”, Niels Bohr’s principle of quantum complementarity and George Ellis’ theory of top-down causality. Inherent in the question of the origin of life is an anthropocentric bias, related to the self-referential Anthropic Principle and theological paradigms of man’s supposed dominion over all other species. The Anthropic Principle, however, should be capable of being circumvented using the scientific falsification method, assuming universal verified constants of physics. The phenomenon of the human mastery of fire and the splitting of the atom, leading to the seventh major mass extinction of species, remains incomprehensible.

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Christopher Wills and Jeffrey Bada examine the enduring mysteries surrounding life's origin: did life arise on Earth or on some other planet? What did the earliest primitive organisms look like? Were they based on RNA, DNA, or on something we would hardly recognize today? The authors examine the latest research - in fields ranging from molecular biology to astronomy - on questions surrounding life's origins. They untangle a century of contentious debate and explore many theories, assessing the probability of everything from asteroids and Martian rocks to 'primordial soup' and volcanic vents. They then present their own elegant and compelling scenario: life arose not in the subterranean depths, as many believe, but on Earth's tumultuous surface, where a primitive form of natural selection spawned the first genetic material, perhaps in the form of a proto-virus. The book ends with a whirlwind tour of one of the most exciting scientific endeavours - the search for extra-terrestrial life.

The solar system has always been a messy place in which gravity wreaks havoc. Moons form, asteroids and comets crash into planets, ice ages commence, and dinosaurs disappear. By describing the dramatic consequences of such disturbances, this authoritative and entertaining book reveals the fundamental interconnectedness of the solar system--and what it means for life on Earth. After relating a brief history of the solar system, Alan Rubin describes how astronomers determined our location in the Milky Way. He provides succinct and up-to-date accounts of the energetic interactions among planetary bodies, the generation of the Earth's magnetic field, the effects of other solar-system objects on our climate, the moon's genesis, the heating of asteroids, and the origin of the mysterious tektites. Along the way, Rubin introduces us to the individual scientists--including the famous, the now obscure, and the newest generation of researchers--who have enhanced our understanding of the galactic neighborhood. He shows how scientific discoveries are made; he discusses the uncertainty that presides over the

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boundaries of knowledge as well as the occasional reluctance of scientists to change their minds even when confronted by compelling evidence. This fresh historical perspective reveals science as it is: an imperfect but self-correcting enterprise. Journeying to the frontiers of knowledge, Rubin concludes with the exciting realm of astrobiology. He chronicles the history of the search for life on Mars and describes cutting-edge lines of astrobiological inquiry, including panspermia (the possible transfer of life from planet to planet), the likelihood of technologically advanced alien civilizations in our galaxy, and our probable responses to alien contact. Authoritative and up-to-date but also entertaining and fluidly written, *Disturbing the Solar System* will appeal to any reader who has ever picked up a rock or gazed at the moon with a sense of wonder.

The stewards of Earth, these organisms transformed the chemistry of our planet to make it habitable for plants, animals, and us.

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