



The Annotated *Origin*: A Facsimile of the First Edition of *On the Origin of Species*

By Charles Darwin

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The Annotated *Origin*: A Facsimile of the First Edition of *On the Origin of Species* By Charles Darwin

Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* is the most important and yet least read scientific work in the history of science. Now James T. Costa, experienced field biologist, theorist on the evolution of insect sociality, and passionate advocate for teaching Darwin in a society in which a significant proportion of adults believe that life on earth has been created in its present form within the last 10,000 years, has given a new voice to this epochal work. By leading readers line by line through the *Origin*, Costa brings evolution's foundational text to life for a new generation.

The Annotated Origin is the edition of Darwin's masterwork used in Costa's course at Western Carolina University and in Harvard's Darwin Summer Course at Oxford. A facsimile of the first edition of 1859 is accompanied by Costa's extensive marginal annotations, drawing on his extensive experience with Darwin's ideas in the field, lab, and classroom. This edition makes available an accessible, useful, and practical resource for anyone reading the *Origin* for the first time or for those who want to reread it with the insights and perspective that a working biologist can provide.

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Editorial Review

Review

On the Origin of Species has too long been one of those worthy books whose fate is to be lauded but unread. Jim Costa's deft commentary—an authoritative and engaging mix of history and science—will change that. The *Origin* is forbidding and inaccessible no longer—it has evolved! *The Annotated Origin* restores, for modern readers, the freshness and excitement that made it a bestseller when it first appeared. Charles Darwin, I'm sure, couldn't wish for a better 200th birthday present. (Andrew Berry, editor of *Infinite Tropics: An Alfred Russel Wallace Anthology*)

Despite being 150 years old, the *Origin* is a living text for biologists. It is full of unsurpassed natural history observations, a model of careful scientific argument that still can catch the imagination with the grandeur of the views it puts forward. Jim Costa has provided an exceptionally lucid explanation. (Janet Browne, author of *Charles Darwin: The Power of Place*)

Brilliant. (Bernd Heinrich, author of *The Snoring Bird: My Family's Journey through a Century of Biology*)

The Annotated Origin is a culminating and, in an original manner of its own, the most useful of the centennial Darwin publications. It gives you the choice of reading page by page the original *Origin*, or its modern interpretation, or both together. (Edward O. Wilson)

Jim Costa does a wonderful job of annotating Darwin's groundbreaking classic *On the Origin of Species*. In more than 900 notes, he explains, expands, contextualizes and updates much of what Darwin had to say about evolution and its causes... Costa's thoughtful and informative notes enable readers to gain a much fuller appreciation for Darwin's genius and breadth of knowledge—a fine tribute in the great scientist's bicentennial year. (*Publishers Weekly* 2009-03-09)

Clearly worth attention... Costa makes use of his experience as a field naturalist and his knowledge of the modern literature of evolutionary biology to illumine many passages in Darwin's work. (Richard C. Lewontin *New York Review of Books* 2009-05-28)

Everyone knows about [*On the Origin of Species*], but I venture to guess that few non-scholars have actually read it. Now, along comes James T. Costa with this facsimile. The index to the new edition, and especially Costa's wonderful annotations, make this classic text not only approachable, but positively inviting... Biologists will probably enjoy this book, but it is a particular gift to laypeople, especially to biology teachers. They can take excerpts from the book into their classes and show their students how Charles Darwin arrived at his insightful and revolutionizing idea. (Dudley Barlow *Education Digest* 2009-11-01)

The Annotated Origin should be on the shelf of every practitioner of the life sciences. James T. Costa has rendered a valuable service to the profession by making the single most influential work in the history of biology both accessible and relevant to modern readers. Costa is aware that most students of biological science have at best merely glanced at Darwin's great book, but certainly have never read it through. By making visible what he calls the breathtaking sweep of Darwin's method, he has made a compelling argument for taking a page from Darwin's playbook in making the case for biological evolution... Darwin has sometimes been portrayed as a plodding scientist, a good observer whose second-rate status is masked by the pregnancy of the grand idea he stumbled upon. Costa's work is a wonderful refutation of this portrait. No

one who follows Costa through *The Annotated Origin* can possibly doubt Darwin's exceptional stature. There is no better tribute he could have made for this celebration of Darwin's 200th birthday and the 150th anniversary of the publication of his masterpiece. (Frederick Gregory *BioScience* 2009-11-01)

It's entirely possible?I think it's likely?that when the overwhelming and heartwarming cascade of attention to the 2009 anniversary of Darwin's 1809 birth and 1859 publication of *On the Origin of Species* has at last subsided, the palm for Best in Show will go to James Costa's beautifully-produced and scrupulously, joyously annotated version of the *Origin*. The idea is so simple that it flies considerably below the fray of mammoth biographies and shrill pie-fights with the so-called 'New Atheists': take the text of one of the most seminal and subversive books ever written, and add a thoroughly informed and entertaining running commentary. This is exactly what Costa does, and it bears all the marks of being a labor of love... This is the finest book of its kind ever produced. It should tide you over quite well until 2059. (Steve Donoghue *Open Letters Monthly* 2009-10-29)

I should like to recommend the best, and most informative book to emerge from the [Darwin Year] extravaganza. It merits reading with complete attention, for it is also a fairly honest book, presenting Darwin in his historical context, and in the evolution of his own thinking, while drawing lines of connection, wherever they can be found, between the original insights and the best lab and field work of 'neo-Darwinism' today. The book is by James T. Costa, entitled *The Annotated Origin*. The first edition of *Origin of Species* is reprinted on wide pages with annotations down the outside columns. There are supplementary aids, including an excellent biographical directory of Darwin's predecessors and contemporaries. No one seriously interested in Darwinian phenomena should dare not to buy this book. (David Warren *Ottawa Citizen* 2009-09-27)

Able edited by James Costa, *The Annotated Origin* contains many of the annotations that the original *Origin of Species* lacked, and provides the reader with a comprehensive grounding in the natural history that Darwin marshaled in support of his revolutionary theory. (Allen MacNeill *EvolutionList.blogspot.com* 2009-11-11)

Costa has placed a facsimile of the first edition of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* side-by-side with a thorough page-by-page commentary. He applies his considerable experience as a field biologist in addressing critical passages in Darwin's work. Previous efforts to annotate important books concentrated mainly on works of literature, but this effort examines one of the most important books in the history of science... Costa's annotations provide enormously helpful information about all of Darwin's editions of the *Origin*, and students from all levels of the natural sciences and the history of science will welcome this work. (J. S. Schwartz *Choice* 2010-01-01)

One of the beauties of this finely-crafted tour of Darwin's *Origin* is that you can wander through it at will and still find a firmly-connected story of biology... When you read the original Darwin, the beauty of his prose makes you almost ignore his logic. Costa crisply navigates the currents of Darwin here, as he does steadily throughout his book... Costa teaches clearly, interestingly and relentlessly to the end... [An] illuminating book. I suggest making this book a required reference source in evolution classes. (Joseph L. Fail, Jr. *Evolution: Education and Outreach* 2010-09-01)

We have long had the simple facsimile of the all-important first edition of the *Origin*, published by the same press (Harvard) with a short introduction by the eminent evolutionist Ernst Mayr. Now we have a much expanded work, with the most interesting comments and brief essays by a first-class biologist lined up on the pages against the original text. (Michael Ruse *Quarterly Review of Biology* 2010-03-01)

A masterful, refreshing, thoroughly enjoyable and sometimes novel perspective on Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*... With copious notes placed in the large margins of a beautiful facsimile of the first

edition, Costa provides an eclectic but extraordinarily useful and insightful series of cross-references, natural history trivia, updates, expansions and comparisons to modern data, historical context, methodology, philosophy and biographical details. This book is no mere coffee-table showpiece... This lovingly created work must be rated as one of the most important resources available for Darwin scholarship and education. (David H. A. Fitch *Nature Cell Biology* 2010-05-01)

About the Author

James T. Costa is Executive Director of Highlands Biological Station and Professor of Biology at Western Carolina University.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Latasha Sutterfield:

The e-book with title *The Annotated Origin: A Facsimile of the First Edition of On the Origin of Species* has lot of information that you can find out it. You can get a lot of help after read this book. This specific book exist new know-how the information that exist in this publication represented the condition of the world at this point. That is important to yo7u to understand how the improvement of the world. This kind of book will bring you throughout new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book on your smart phone, so you can read the item anywhere you want.

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