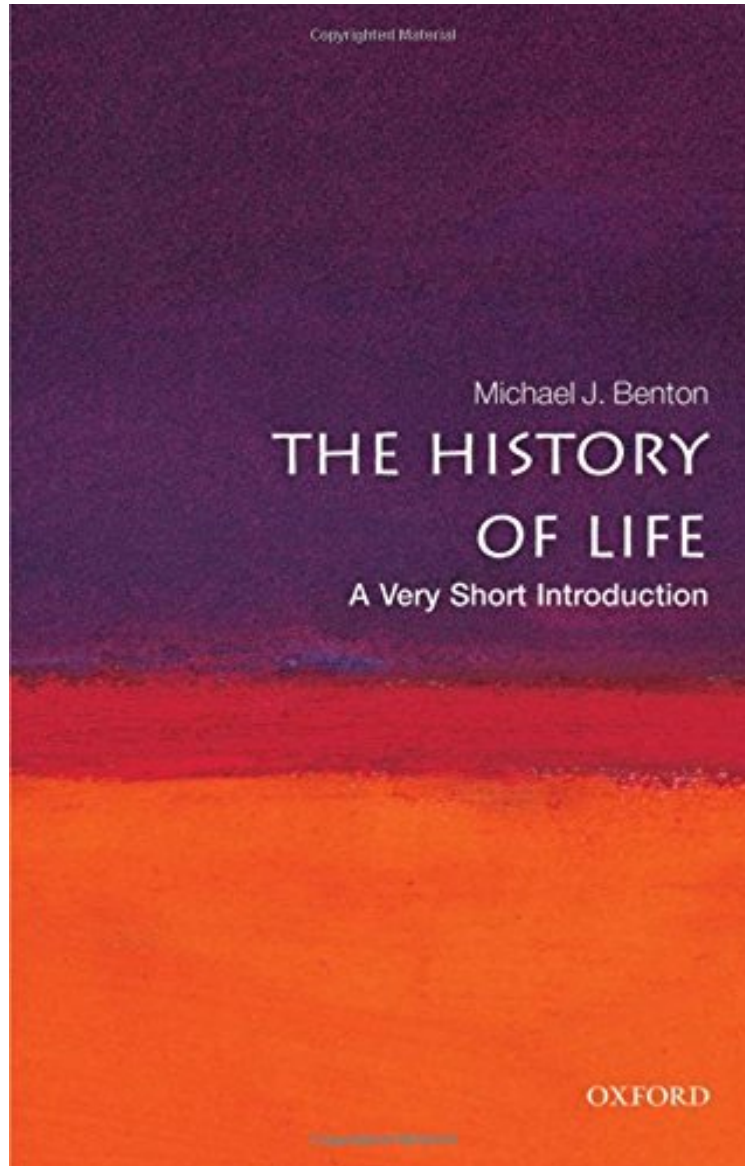


[Free] The History of Life: A Very Short Introduction

The History of Life: A Very Short Introduction

Michael J. Benton

*audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC*



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#186372 in Books imusti 2008-12-15Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 4.40 x .60 x 6.80l, .35 #File Name: 0199226326144 pagesOxford University Press USA | File size: 78.Mb

Michael J. Benton : The History of Life: A Very Short Introduction before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The History of Life: A Very Short Introduction:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good overview of early life on EarthBy BPrevGood overview of early life on Earth, described in chronology. For slightly more in-depth coverage of the same material, one could read "Life On a Young Planet" which is also very good and written a bit more personally by its author.The book focuses

primarily on early microbial life on earth through the Cambrian period when life starts getting a bit more "animal" and charismatic. It looks like there are separate "A Very Short Introduction" books dealing with dinosaurs and the animal kingdom if you are looking for reading on those subjects, which are not really covered here or the intended subject matter. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Lots of Great Reading Here By RockHound This is a topic that many shy away from, as it seems like it would be too difficult for the average bear, but Benton presents it all in a concise and entertaining manner that is very accessible, even if you don't have a biology or paleontology background. It's a fascinating subject, and Benton has a great sense of humor - the very understated Brit type. Highly recommend it, and I read it in only a few settings. He covers a lot of things and yet it all flows easily and is very understandable and well written. There's a reason he's so well-known in the field of paleontology - he really knows his stuff and is able to present it in a concise manner anyone can understand. Really opens one's eyes to the true mysteries of how we all came to be. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting, and not too complicated By Magical Dragon Interesting book about the eras of life. I like the theories how dna and cells formed from a soup of natural chemicals in water heated by volcanic vents. He talks about how various life forms progressed through the ages from simple cells to corals, early sea creatures, walking onto land, the Permian extinction which killed 96% of all species, and of course humans. Was easy for a non scientist to understand. The only drawback is that it didn't have pictures of the life forms, plants and animals talked about, so I had to keep running to my computer for images.

Here is the extraordinary story of the unfolding of life on Earth, told by Michael J. Benton, a world-renowned authority on biodiversity. Ranging over four billion years, Benton weaves together the latest findings on fossils, earth history, evolutionary biology, and many other fields to highlight the great leaps that enabled life to evolve from microbe to human--big breakthroughs that made whole new ways of life possible--including cell division and multicellularity, hard skeletons, the move to land, the origin of forests, the move to the air. He describes the mass extinctions, especially the Permian, which obliterated 90% of life, and he sheds light on the origins of human beings, and of the many hominids that went before us. He ends by pointing out that studying the past helps us to predict the future: what happens if the atmosphere warms by 5 degrees? What happens if we destroy much of the biodiversity on Earth? These things have happened before, Benton notes. We need only look to the distant past to know the future of life on Earth. About the Series: Combining authority with wit, accessibility, and style, Very Short Introductions offer an introduction to some of life's most interesting topics. Written by experts for the newcomer, they demonstrate the finest contemporary thinking about the central problems and issues in hundreds of key topics, from philosophy to Freud, quantum theory to Islam.

About the Author Michael J. Benton is Head of the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Bristol. He has written some fifty books, ranging from children's dinosaur and palaeontology books to standard textbooks.