

<<物种起源>>

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作者：达尔文

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内容概要

WHEN ON board H.M.S. Beagle, as naturalist, I was much struck with certain facts in the distribution of the organic beings inhabiting South America. and in the geological relations of the present to the past inhabitants of that continent. These facts, as will be seen in the latter chapters of this volume, seemed to throw some light on the origin of species--that mystery of mysteries, as it has been called by one of our greatest philosophers. On my return home. it occurred to me. in 1837, that something might perhaps be made out on this question by patiently accumulating and reflecting on all sorts of facts which could possibly have any bearing on it. After five years' work I allowed myself to speculate on the subject and drew up some short notes; these I enlarged in 1844 into a sketch of the conclusions, which then seemed to me probable: from that period to the present day I have steadily pursued the same object. I hope that I may be excused for entering on these personal details, as I give them to show that I have not been hasty in coming to a decision.

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作者简介

1809年2月12日，达尔文出生于英国一座古老城市施鲁斯伯里的一个医生家庭。

1818年，达尔文进入一所旧式学校学习，寄宿七年。
从小就热爱大自然的他，非常喜欢采集矿物和制作动植物标本，观察各种鸟类，到城外郊游。

1831年5月，达尔文从剑桥大学毕业。

1831年12月，英国政府组织了“贝格尔号”军舰的环球考察，达尔文经人推荐，以“博物学者”的身份，自费搭船，开始了漫长而又艰苦的环球考察活动。

每到一地，达尔文总要进行认真的考察研究，采访当地的居民，有时请他们当向导。他不辞辛苦，爬山涉水，采集矿物和动植物标本，挖掘生物化石，发现了许多原来没有记载的新物种。
他白天收集资料，晚上又忙着记录观察日记。

达尔文随船横渡太平洋，经过澳大利亚，越过印度洋，绕过好望角，于1836年10月回到英国。在历时五年(1831—1836)的环球考察中，达尔文积累了大量的资料。

回国后，他一面整理这些资料，一面查阅大量书籍，为他的生物进化理论寻找根据，开始对物种起源问题进行全面的系统研究。

1859年11月，科学巨著《物种起源》一书出版了。
这是达尔文一生中最光辉的年代。
他关于生物进化的基本思想，是在他乘“贝格尔”号作环球旅行时产生的。
经过二十年的深思熟虑和艰苦劳动，通过对大量事实的研究和收集，达尔文终于在僻静的唐恩小镇，将这些思想整理成文。

《物种起源》的出版，在欧洲乃至整个世界都引起轰动。
它的出版标志着在十九世纪人们对生物界和人类在生物界中的地位的看法发生了深刻的变化——这种观念变化就像哥白尼在十六世纪指出地球在宇宙中的位置而引起的变化一样。
这引起了当时保守的科学家们(而这些人却是占绝大多数)对达尔文学说的猛烈攻击。

因此，为捍卫进化论学说，他不得不同各种流派和言论进行了十几年的理论斗争。

1868年达尔文发表了《动物和植物在家养下的变异》等巨著，以不可争辩的事实和严谨的科学论断，进一步阐述了他的进化论观点，提出物种的变异和遗传、生物的生存斗争和自然选择的重要论点。

1868年2月，达尔文开始撰写《人类起源及性的选择》等著作——虽然这时候的他体弱而多病。

1882年4月19日，这位伟大的科学家因病逝世。

由于达尔文一生对生物科学做出了划时代的贡献，人们将他葬在伦敦的威斯敏斯特寺院中堂的北廊，和杰出的科学家牛顿葬在同一个地方。

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The same law which has determined the relationship between the inhabitants of islands and the nearest mainland, is sometimes displayed on a small scale, but in a most interesting manner, within the limits of the same archipelago. Thus each separate island of the Galapagos Archipelago is tenanted, and the fact is a marvellous one, by many distinct species; but these species are related to each other in a very much closer manner than to the inhabitants of the American continent, or of any other quarter of the world. This is what might have been expected, for islands situated so near to each other would almost necessarily receive immigrants from the same original source, and from each other. But how is it that many of the immigrants have been differently modified, though only in a small degree, in islands situated within sight of each other, having the same geological nature, the same height, climate, etc.? This long appeared to me a great difficulty: but it arises in chief part from the deeply-seated error of considering the physical conditions of a country as the most important; whereas it cannot be disputed that the nature of the other species with which each has to compete, is at least as important, and generally a far more important element of success. Now if we look to the species which inhabit the Galapagos Archipelago, and are likewise found in other parts of the world, we find that they differ considerably in the several islands. This difference might indeed have been expected if the islands have been stocked by occasional means of transport—a seed, for instance, of one plant having been brought to one island, and that of another plant to another island, though all proceeding from the same general source. Hence, when in former times an immigrant first settled on one of the islands, or when it subsequently spread from one to another, it would undoubtedly be exposed to different conditions in the different islands, for it would have to compete with a different set of organisms; a plant, for instance, would find the ground best-fitted for it occupied by somewhat different species in the different islands, and would be exposed to the attacks of somewhat different enemies. If, then, it varied, natural selection would probably favour different varieties in the different islands. Some species, however, might spread and yet retain the same character throughout the group, just as we see some species spreading widely throughout a continent and remaining the same. The really surprising fact in this case of the Galapagos Archipelago, and in a lesser degree in some analogous cases, is that each new species after being formed in any one island, did not spread quickly to the other islands. But the islands, though in sight of each other, are separated by deep arms of the sea, in most cases wider than the British Channel, and there is no reason to suppose that they have at any former period been continuously united. The currents of the sea are rapid and deep between the islands, and gales of wind are extraordinarily rare; so that the islands are far more effectually separated from each other than they appear on a map. Nevertheless, some of the species, both of those found in other parts of the world and of those confined to the archipelago, are common to the several islands; and we may infer from the present manner of distribution that they have spread from one island to the others. But we often take, I think, an erroneous view of the probability of closely allied species invading each other's territory, when put into free intercommunication. Undoubtedly, if one species has any advantage over another, it will in a very brief time wholly or in part supplant it; but if both are equally well fitted for their own places, both will probably hold their separate places for almost any length of time. Being familiar with the fact that many species, naturalised through man's agency, have spread with astonishing rapidity over wide areas, we are apt to infer that most species would thus spread; but we should remember that the species which become naturalised in new countries are not generally closely allied to the aboriginal inhabitants, but are very distinct forms, belonging in a large proportion of cases, as shown by Alph. de Candolle, to distinct genera. In the Galapagos Archipelago, many even of the birds, though so well adapted for flying from island to island, differ on the different islands; thus there are three closely allied species of mocking-thrush, each confined to its own island. Now let us suppose the mocking-thrush of Chatham Island to be blown to Charles Island, which has its own mocking-thrush; why should it succeed in establishing itself there? We may safely infer that Charles Island is well stocked with its own species, for annually more eggs are laid and young birds hatched than can possibly be reared; and we may infer that the mocking-thrush peculiar to Charles Island is at least as well fitted for its home as is the species peculiar to Chatham Island. Sir C. Lyell and Mr. Wollaston have communicated to me a remarkable fact

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bearing on this subject; namely, that Madeira and the adjoining islet of Porto Santo possess many distinct but representative species of land-shells, some of which live in crevices of stone; and although large quantities of stone are annually transported from Porto Santo to Madeira, yet this latter island has not become colonised by the Porto Santo species: nevertheless, both islands have been colonised by some European land-shells, which no doubt had some advantage over the indigenous species. From these considerations I think we need not greatly marvel at the endemic species which inhabit the several islands of the Galapagos Archipelago not having all spread from island to island. On the same continent, also, pre-occupation has probably played an important part in checking the commingling of the species which inhabit different districts with nearly the same physical conditions. Thus, the south-east and south-west corners of Australia have nearly the same physical conditions, and are united by continuous land, yet they are inhabited by a vast number of distinct mammals, birds, and plants; so it is, according to Mr. Bates, with the butterflies and other animals inhabiting the great, open, and continuous valley of the Amazons. The same principle which governs the general character of the inhabitants of oceanic islands, namely, the relation to the source whence colonists could have been most easily derived, together with their subsequent modification, is of the widest application throughout nature. We see this on every mountain-summit, in every lake and marsh. For Alpine species, excepting in as far as the same species have become widely spread during the Glacial epoch, are related to those of the surrounding lowlands; thus we have in South America, Alpine humming-birds, Alpine rodents, Alpine plants, etc., all strictly belonging to American forms; and it is obvious that a mountain, as it became slowly upheaved, would be colonised from the surrounding lowlands. So it is with the inhabitants of lakes and marshes, excepting in so far as great facility of transport has allowed the same forms to prevail throughout large portions of the world. We see the same principle in the character of most of the blind animals inhabiting the caves of America and of Europe. Other analogous facts could be given. It will, I believe, be found universally true, that wherever in two regions, let them be ever so distant, many closely allied or representative species occur, there will likewise be found some identical species; and wherever many closely-allied species occur, there will be found many forms which some naturalists rank as distinct species, and others as mere varieties; these doubtful forms showing us the steps in the process of modification.

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