

## Editorial

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We at *Evolution: Education and Outreach* continue to celebrate the 200th birthday of Charles Darwin, as well as the 150th anniversary of the publication of his epochal *On the Origin of Species*, with the publication of this issue on transitional fossils, edited by paleontologist Don Prothero. Darwin had had an ambivalent relationship with paleontology—first using fossils to come to his earliest ideas on evolution (“transmutation”—see the “Editor’s Corner” of the present issue). But, by the time he published the *Origin*, Darwin had come to see the fossil record as an embarrassment—so incomplete, so lacking in evidence of transitional forms (with rare exceptions) that it was a hindrance—not at all helpful for establishing his evolutionary views. Darwin devoted an entire chapter in the *Origin* to the “..Imperfections of the Geological Record.”

Yet, when we ask ourselves, as many have been doing in this anniversary year, what do we know now that Darwin did not know?, the answer includes a vastly more detailed and comprehensive knowledge of the fossil record of the

history of life. We now have a stunning array of fossil sequences documenting the stage-by-stage transition from one group to another; this issue is the “handy-dandy” guide to many of the most powerful examples of evolutionary sequences thus far discovered in the fossil record. As with our recent issue on the evolution of complexity, “focused” on the evolution of eyes, this current compilation of “transitional fossils” is destined to become an “instant classic”—the source that teachers and evolutionary biologists will turn to time and again.

We are proud to announce that *Evolution: Education and Outreach* has recently received Honorable Mention in the category Journal/Social Sciences and Humanities from the Association of American Publishers PROSE Awards. This is high praise and welcome recognition of our early success in achieving our goal: to bring the professional evolutionary scientific research community into closer and more productive touch with K-16 teaching. This award strengthens our resolve as we move forward towards new heights!

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