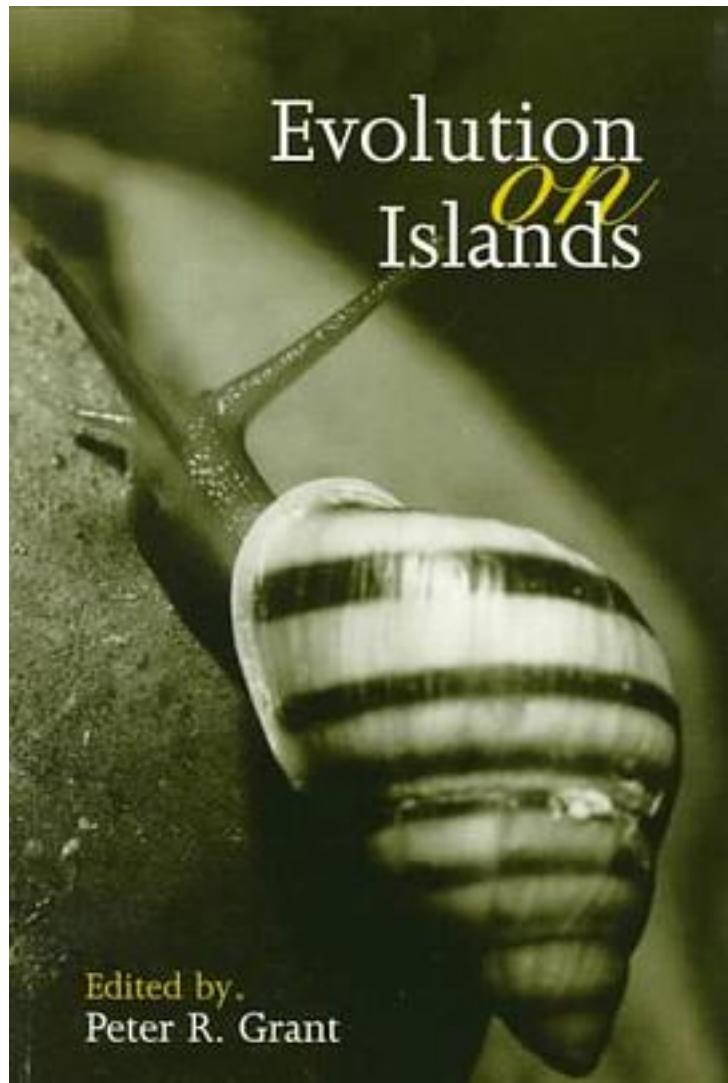


Evolution on Islands



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The study of patterns and processes of evolution on islands has played an important role in the development of general theories of how and why evolution occurs. Small, discrete pieces of the environment, islands are frequently isolated from the continental processes of gene flow. They are often inhabited by unique species, like the Komodo dragon, dodos, or daisies as tall as trees. They may display remarkable rapidity of diversifying evolution - nearly 1000 species of fruit-fly were formed in the Hawaiian archipelago in only a few million years. Thus, it is easy to see why islands have been referred to as 'natural experiments'. Such studies are continuing to yield exciting new fields for investigation as theoreticians attack questions of genetic change in island models and empirical biologists seek explanations of adaptive radiations in archipelagos. This unique book surveys our current knowledge and understanding of island evolution in eighteen chapters written by experts on various aspects of microevolution, speciation, and adaptive radiation. They cover the major trends and processes displayed by plants and animals, on tropical and temperate zone islands, and in lakes and tropical forest refugia. The book closes with a discussion of several unresolved issues that deserve further study. No other book has been published that focuses solely on the evolutionary processes that occur in islands. This will be of interest to all students and researchers in the fields of ecology and evolutionary biology.

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