

**Somerville College
Biological Sciences
Michaelmas Term 2019
1st year reading list**

Compulsory

Charles Darwin (1859) *The Origin of Species* 1st Edition

You **must** read this book because the first tutorial is based on the contents. You will need to read this in silence to enjoy the prose and to understand it. The 1st edition is the best one to start with. Please do not assume that because this book was written over 150 years ago that it is no longer central to our understanding of how life evolves. "The Annotated Origin" annotated by James T. Costa is an excellent edition of this published by The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press ISBN 978-0-674-06017-3

Suggestions

You will not have time to read all of these, but they are suggestions not only from the teaching staff but also from past students. You may find yourself disagreeing with some of the views expressed by the authors – this is a Good Thing!

Try to read one of these:

- Richard Southwood (2003) *The History of Life*
- Ernst Mayr (1997) *This is Biology – the science of the living world*

If you still have time, then these are also recommended

- David Beerling (2007) *The Emerald Planet – how plants changed Earth's history*
- Nick Lane (2015) *The vital question – why is life the way it is?*
- Chris D Thomas (2017) *Inheritors of the Earth – how nature is thriving in an age of extinction*

Any of the Oxford University Press *Very Short Introductions* are worth reading and in particular

- The Animal Kingdom
- Plants
- The Anthropocene

We look forward to welcoming you to Somerville in October. We can be contacted on this email if you have any questions before you come up: timothy.walker@some.ox.ac.uk

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