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# Platypus The Extraordinary Story Of How A Curious

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*Platypus The  
Extraordinary Story Of  
How A Curious*

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## NEAL LAYLAH

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### What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?

University of Chicago Press

A major new book overturning our assumptions about how evolution works Earth's natural history is full of fascinating instances of convergence: phenomena like eyes and wings and tree-climbing lizards that have evolved independently, multiple times. But evolutionary biologists also point out many examples of contingency, cases where the tiniest change—a random

mutation or an ancient butterfly sneeze—caused evolution to take a completely different course. What role does each force really play in the constantly changing natural world? Are the plants and animals that exist today, and we humans ourselves, inevitabilities or evolutionary flukes? And what does that say about life on other planets? Jonathan Losos reveals what the latest breakthroughs in evolutionary biology can tell us about one of the greatest ongoing debates in science. He takes us around the globe to meet the researchers who are solving the deepest mysteries of life on Earth through their work in experimental

evolutionary science. Losos himself is one of the leaders in this exciting new field, and he illustrates how experiments with guppies, fruit flies, bacteria, foxes, and field mice, along with his own work with anole lizards on Caribbean islands, are rewinding the tape of life to reveal just how rapid and predictable evolution can be. *Improbable Destinies* will change the way we think and talk about evolution. Losos's insights into natural selection and evolutionary change have far-reaching applications for protecting ecosystems, securing our food supply, and fighting off harmful viruses and bacteria. This compelling narrative offers a new

understanding of ourselves and our role in the natural world and the cosmos.

Rabbit and His Friends Bloomsbury Publishing

With more than two hundred species distributed from California through Texas and across most of mainland Mexico, Central and South America, and islands in the Caribbean Sea, the Phyllostomidae bat family (American leaf-nosed bats) is one of the world's most diverse mammalian families. From an insectivorous ancestor, species living today, over about 30 million years, have evolved a hyper-diverse range of diets, from blood or small vertebrates, to consuming nectar, pollen, and fruit. Phyllostomid plant-visiting species are responsible for pollinating more than five hundred species of neotropical shrubs, trees, vines, and epiphytes—many of which are economically and ecologically important—and they also disperse the seeds of at least another five hundred plant species. Fruit-eating and seed-dispersing members of this family thus play a crucial role in the regeneration of neotropical forests, and the fruit eaters are among the most abundant mammals in these habitats. Coauthored by leading

experts in the field and synthesizing the latest advances in molecular biology and ecological methods, Phyllostomid Bats is the first overview in more than forty years of the evolution of the many morphological, behavioral, physiological, and ecological adaptations in this family. Featuring abundant illustrations as well as details on the current conservation status of phyllostomid species, it is both a comprehensive reference for these ecologically vital creatures and a fascinating exploration of the evolutionary process of adaptive radiation.

North of Ithaka UNSW Press

Scientifically informed and funny, a firsthand account of Australia's wonderfully unique mammals—and how our perceptions impact their future. Think of a platypus: They lay eggs (that hatch into so-called platypups), produce milk without nipples and venom without fangs, and can detect electricity. Or a wombat: Their teeth never stop growing, they poop cubes, and they defend themselves with reinforced rears. And what about antechinuses—tiny marsupial carnivores whose males don't see their first birthday, as their frenzied sex lives take so much

energy that their immune systems fail? Platypuses, possums, wombats, echidnas, devils, kangaroos, quolls, dibblers, dunnarts, kowaris: Australia has some truly astonishing mammals, with incredible, unfamiliar features. But how does the world regard these creatures? And what does that mean for their conservation? In Platypus Matters, naturalist Jack Ashby shares his love for these often-misunderstood animals. Informed by his own experiences meeting living marsupials and egg-laying mammals during fieldwork in Tasmania and mainland Australia, as well as his work with thousands of zoological specimens collected for museums over the last two-hundred-plus years, Ashby's tale not only explains historical mysteries and debunks myths (especially about the platypus), but also reveals the toll these myths can take. Ashby makes clear that calling these animals "weird" or "primitive"—or incorrectly implying that Australia is an "evolutionary backwater," a perception that can be traced back to the country's colonial history—has undermined conservation: Australia now has the worst mammal extinction rate of any place on

Earth. Important, timely, and written with humor and wisdom by a scientist and self-described platypus nerd, this celebration of Australian wildlife will open eyes and change minds about how we contemplate and interact with the natural world—everywhere.

*Maverick Mathematician* Island Press  
In 1798, the governor of Australia, John Hunter, came across an odd-looking animal. It was unlike anything he had ever seen. Curious as to the identity of the mysterious creature, he shipped the strange animal to scientists in Great Britain so they could study it. At first, the scientists thought the animal was a hoax. No real animal could look so bizarre. Was it a fish, a bird, or a mammal? No sooner did scientists determine that this rare animal was indeed real than a new set of questions arose that would take scientists over a century to answer. In *Platypus: A Century-long Mystery*, kids follow the work of scientists as they study the platypus and attempt to unravel the mystery surrounding the animal's identity. Large, full-color photos and a narrative text will keep readers turning the pages for more.

**Nature Fast and Nature Slow**

HarperCollins Australia  
"Naturalist and Assistant Director of the Museum of Zoology at the University of Cambridge, Jack Ashby shares his love for the platypus and other Australian mammals, including wombats, echidnas, and kangaroos. Informed by stories of his experiences meeting living marsupials and egg-laying mammals on fieldwork in Tasmania and mainland Australia and his close contact with thousands of zoological specimens collected for museums over the last 200 years, Ashby's book explains historical mysteries and debunks myths about these mammals and especially the platypus—which lays eggs, feeds its young on milk, has venom spurs, and sports a bill that can detect electricity. In evaluating how humans have considered these special mammals, he makes clear that calling these animals "weird" or "primitive"—or incorrectly implying that Australia is an "evolutionary backwater"—has only added to the challenges for their conservation. One outcome of these descriptions is that Australia now has the worst mammal extinction rate of anywhere on Earth. Ashby argues that many of the ways that the world thinks about

Australia's mammals can be traced back to the country's colonial history"--

*This Is How You Lose the Time War*  
Abrams

*Wildlife Spectacles* is an awe-inspiring exploration of the most remarkable displays of animal behavior in North America. Zoologist Vladimir Dinets clearly explains the spectacles, why they happen, and where they can be seen in real life.

*The Last Palestinian* CSIRO PUBLISHING  
The extraordinary story of a biological riddle that confounded scientists for nearly ninety years - the beguiling, elusive platypus.

*I, Mammal* Princeton University Press  
Is philosophy obsolete? Are the ancient questions still relevant in the age of cosmology and neuroscience, not to mention crowd-sourcing and cable news? The acclaimed philosopher and novelist Rebecca Newberger Goldstein provides a dazzlingly original plunge into the drama of philosophy, revealing its hidden role in today's debates on religion, morality, politics, and science. At the origin of Western philosophy stands Plato, who got about as much wrong as one would expect from a thinker who lived 2,400 years ago.

But Plato's role in shaping philosophy was pivotal. On her way to considering the place of philosophy in our ongoing intellectual life, Goldstein tells a new story of its origin, re-envisioning the extraordinary culture that produced the man who produced philosophy. But it is primarily the fate of philosophy that concerns her. Is the discipline no more than a way of biding our time until the scientists arrive on the scene? Have they already arrived? Does philosophy itself ever make progress? And if it does, why is so ancient a figure as Plato of any continuing relevance? Plato at the Googleplex is Goldstein's startling investigation of these conundra. She interweaves her narrative with Plato's own choice for bringing ideas to life—the dialogue. Imagine that Plato came to life in the twenty-first century and embarked on a multicity speaking tour. How would he handle the host of a cable news program who denies there can be morality without religion? How would he mediate a debate between a Freudian psychoanalyst and a tiger mom on how to raise the perfect child? How would he answer a neuroscientist who, about to scan Plato's

brain, argues that science has definitively answered the questions of free will and moral agency? What would Plato make of Google, and of the idea that knowledge can be crowd-sourced rather than reasoned out by experts? With a philosopher's depth and a novelist's imagination and wit, Goldstein probes the deepest issues confronting us by allowing us to eavesdrop on Plato as he takes on the modern world. (With black-and-white photographs throughout.)

*Platypus* Allen & Unwin Australia

Looks at the mystery of the platypus, the small marsupial that stumped the identification skills of English scientists for ninety years.

*Bird Brother* BQB Publishing

Unfamiliar Familiars is a comprehensive and humorous handbook to finding and caring for the unconventional animal companion. This guide will help you find the animal best suited to your personality and particular magical needs. Animals include a narwhal (strong in clairvoyance and fencing), an albatross (best for sea-faring witches), or an earthworm (for garden-based magic and fish summoning).

- Features real-world facts with a playful,

magical spin • Includes a helpful quiz for finding your own familiar • Brimming with suggested names, strengths, weaknesses, and more Forget the toads and black cats: Every witch is unique, so shouldn't you have a familiar as one-of-a-kind and extraordinary as yourself? Unfamiliar Familiars is an entertaining and educational guide to a menagerie of magical, less-appreciated creatures that may just become your ideal partner in the arcane arts. • Filled with quirky, charming watercolor illustrations • Perfect for anyone who wants to find their own familiar, just as they love learning about their own horoscope, zodiac reading, or Pottermore Patronus • Sure to delight animal lovers who have a sense of humor • You'll love this book if you love books like Sad Animal Facts by Brooke Barker; Basic Witches: How to Summon Success, Banish Drama, and Raise Hell with Your Coven by Jaya Saxena and Jess Zimmerman; and The Wild Unknown Animal Spirit Deck and Guidebook by Kim Krans.

**Plato and a Platypus Walk Into a Bar...** Chronicle Books

Ann Moyal tells of her life's work in

Australian science history, and the many important people she met along the way.

*City of Kings* JHU Press

Winner of the Goldsmith Book Prize by the Harvard Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy *Manipulating the Masses* tells the story of the enduring threat to American democracy that arose out of World War I: the establishment of pervasive, systematic propaganda as an instrument of the state. During the Great War, the federal government exercised unprecedented power to shape the views and attitudes of American citizens. Its agent for this was the Committee on Public Information (CPI), established by President Woodrow Wilson one week after the United States entered the war in April 1917. Driven by its fiery chief, George Creel, the CPI reached every crevice of the nation, every day, and extended widely abroad. It established the first national newspaper, made prepackaged news a quotidian aspect of governing, and pioneered the concept of public diplomacy. It spread the Wilson administration's messages through articles, cartoons, books, and advertisements in newspapers and

magazines; through feature films and volunteer Four Minute Men who spoke during intermission; through posters plastered on buildings and along highways; and through pamphlets distributed by the millions. It enlisted the nation's leading progressive journalists, advertising executives, and artists. It harnessed American universities and their professors to create propaganda and add legitimacy to its mission. Even as Creel insisted that the CPI was a conduit for reliable, fact-based information, the office regularly sanitized news, distorted facts, and played on emotions. Creel extolled transparency but established front organizations. Overseas, the CPI secretly subsidized news organs and bribed journalists. At home, it challenged the loyalty of those who occasionally questioned its tactics. Working closely with federal intelligence agencies eager to sniff out subversives and stifle dissent, the CPI was an accomplice to the Wilson administration's trampling of civil liberties. Until now, the full story of the CPI has never been told. John Maxwell Hamilton consulted over 150 archival collections in the United States and Europe to write this

revealing history, which shows the shortcuts to open, honest debate that even well-meaning propagandists take to bend others to their views. Every element of contemporary government propaganda has antecedents in the CPI. It is the ideal vehicle for understanding the rise of propaganda, its methods of operation, and the threat it poses to democracy.

*Platypus Matters* University of Chicago Press

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A

"thrilling" (The New York Times), "dazzling" (The Wall Street Journal) tour of the radically different ways that animals perceive the world that will fill you with wonder and forever alter your perspective, by Pulitzer Prize-winning science journalist Ed Yong "One of this year's finest works of narrative nonfiction."—Oprah Daily ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR: The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Time, People, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Slate, Reader's Digest, Chicago Public Library, Outside, Publishers Weekly, BookPage ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR: Oprah Daily, The New Yorker, The Washington Post, The Guardian, The Economist, Smithsonian Magazine,

Prospect (UK), Globe & Mail, Esquire, Mental Floss, Marginalian, She Reads, Kirkus Reviews, Library Journal The Earth teems with sights and textures, sounds and vibrations, smells and tastes, electric and magnetic fields. But every kind of animal, including humans, is enclosed within its own unique sensory bubble, perceiving but a tiny sliver of our immense world. In *An Immense World*, Ed Yong coaxes us beyond the confines of our own senses, allowing us to perceive the skeins of scent, waves of electromagnetism, and pulses of pressure that surround us. We encounter beetles that are drawn to fires, turtles that can track the Earth's magnetic fields, fish that fill rivers with electrical messages, and even humans who wield sonar like bats. We discover that a crocodile's scaly face is as sensitive as a lover's fingertips, that the eyes of a giant squid evolved to see sparkling whales, that plants thrum with the inaudible songs of courting bugs, and that even simple scallops have complex vision. We learn what bees see in flowers, what songbirds hear in their tunes, and what dogs smell on the street. We listen to stories of pivotal discoveries in the field, while

looking ahead at the many mysteries that remain unsolved. Funny, rigorous, and suffused with the joy of discovery, *An Immense World* takes us on what Marcel Proust called "the only true voyage . . . not to visit strange lands, but to possess other eyes." WINNER OF THE ANDREW CARNEGIE MEDAL • FINALIST FOR THE KIRKUS PRIZE • FINALIST FOR THE NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD • LONGLISTED FOR THE PEN/E.O. WILSON AWARD

**The Ancestor's Tale** Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

The Australian Museum presents the full text of a fact sheet entitled "Platypus." The fact sheet discusses platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*), a mammal in Australia. The fact sheet also highlights what the fossils show about platypus, the evolutionary history of the platypus, and the implications for conservation of the platypus.

*The Sloth Lemur's Song* Rob J. Hayes  
In this explosive debut novel, W. Aaron Vandiver takes readers into the South African Bush, with its stunning landscapes, its dazzling and deadly wildlife, and its dark underbelly of violence. Against this

dramatic backdrop, *Under a Poacher's Moon* tells an unflinching story of two people who fight desperately to save Africa's wildlife, sometimes with tragic unintended consequences, as they search for passion and meaning in a dangerous and unpredictable world. Anna Whitney travels to Mzansi, a remote safari lodge located deep in the wilds of South Africa, hoping to get as far away from home and her troubled life as possible. The perilous beauty of the land captures her imagination, but when she hears the haunting late-night cries of an injured rhino, her escapist fantasies collide with brutal reality. She and Chris, a safari guide wrestling with his own secret demons, find themselves embroiled in a war on Africa's wildlife. They are pulled into a struggle that brings them face-to-face with shocking acts of violence, rogue officials, armed gangs, vicious wild predators, and their own deepest fears. It is a conflict that threatens to destroy them, or lead them toward a new and better life together. Platypus Houghton Mifflin Harcourt  
Humans are mammals. Most of us appreciate that at some level. But what does it mean for us to have more in

common with a horse and an elephant than we do with a parrot, snake or frog? After a misdirected football left new father Liam Drew clutching a uniquely mammalian part of his anatomy, he decided to find out more. Considering himself as a mammal first and a human second, Liam delves into ancient biological history to understand what it means to be mammalian. In his humorous and engaging style, Liam explores the different characteristics that distinguish mammals from other types of animals. He charts the evolution of milk, warm blood and burgeoning brains, and examines the emergence of sophisticated teeth, exquisite ears, and elaborate reproductive biology, plus a host of other mammalian innovations. Entwined are tales of zoological peculiarities and reflections on how being a mammal has shaped the author's life. *I, Mammal* is a history of mammals and their ancestors and of how science came to grasp mammalian evolution. And in celebrating our mammalian-ness, Liam Drew binds us a little more tightly to the five and a half thousand other species of mammal on this planet and reveals the deep roots of many

traits humans hold dear. *Plato at the Googleplex* Smithsonian \* HUGO AWARD WINNER: BEST NOVELLA \* NEBULA AND LOCUS AWARDS WINNER: BEST NOVELLA \* “[An] exquisitely crafted tale...Part epistolary romance, part mind-blowing science fiction adventure, this dazzling story unfolds bit by bit, revealing layers of meaning as it plays with cause and effect, wildly imaginative technologies, and increasingly intricate wordplay...This short novel warrants multiple readings to fully unlock its complexities.” —Publishers Weekly (starred review) From award-winning authors Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone comes an enthralling, romantic novel spanning time and space about two time-traveling rivals who fall in love and must change the past to ensure their future. Among the ashes of a dying world, an agent of the Commandment finds a letter. It reads: Burn before reading. Thus begins an unlikely correspondence between two rival agents hellbent on securing the best possible future for their warring factions. Now, what began as a taunt, a battlefield boast, becomes something more. Something epic.

Something romantic. Something that could change the past and the future. Except the discovery of their bond would mean the death of each of them. There's still a war going on, after all. And someone has to win. That's how war works, right? Cowritten by two beloved and award-winning sci-fi writers, *This Is How You Lose the Time War* is an epic love story spanning time and space.

**Manipulating the Masses** The History Press

The koala is both an Australian icon and an animal that has attained 'flagship' status around the world. Yet its history tells a different story. While the koala figured prominently in Aboriginal Dreaming and Creation stories, its presence was not recorded in Australia until 15 years after white settlement. Then it would figure as a scientific oddity, despatched to museums in Britain and Europe, a native animal driven increasingly from its habitat by tree felling and human settlement, and a subject of relentless hunting by trappers for its valuable fur. It was not until the late 1920s that slowly emerging protective legislation and the enterprise of private protectors came to its aid. This book

surveys the koala's fascinating history, its evolutionary survival in Australia for over 30 million years, its strikingly adaptive physiognomy, its private life, and the strong cultural impact it has had through its rich fertilisation of Australian literature. The work also focuses on the complex problems of Australia's national wildlife and conservation policies and the challenges surrounding the environmental, economic and social questions concerning koala management. Koala embraces the story of this famous marsupial in an engaging historical narrative, extensively illustrated from widely sourced pictorial material.

#### The Written Penguin

A nose for digging? Ears for seeing? Eyes that squirt blood? Explore the many amazing things animals can do with their ears, eyes, mouths, noses, feet, and tails in this interactive guessing book, beautifully illustrated in cut-paper collage, which was awarded a Caldecott Honor. This title has been selected as a Common Core Text Exemplar (Grades K-1, Read Aloud Informational Text).

**Sexuality and Socialism** Pantheon  
Sexuality and Socialism is a remarkably

accessible analysis of many of the most challenging questions for those concerned with full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. Inside are essays on the roots of LGBT oppression, the construction of sexual and gender identities, the history of the gay movement, and how to unite the oppressed and exploited to win sexual liberation for all. Sherry Wolf analyzes different theories about oppression—including those of Marxism, postmodernism, identity politics, and queer theory—and challenges myths about genes, gender, and sexuality. "Sexuality and Socialism is the most intelligent and enlightened discussion on sexuality to come from the Left in a long time. No other work that comes to my mind explains the history of sexuality and sexual repression in the United States as comprehensively and compellingly."—Ron Jacobs, *Dissident Voice* "Sherry Wolf: Lesbian, Activist, Communist & Badass-ist... spoke to a pre-National Equality March rally. She. Blew. It. Up."—Austin Chronicle "Sherry speaks with such eloquence and plain common sense that I can't help but want to know more about

her ideas and convictions."—Derek Washington, "In the LV" radio host, Director of LGBT Outreach, Clark County Democratic Black Caucus "The icons of the new generation of activists are people like Lady Gaga, Dustin Lance Black, Judy Shephard, Lt. Daniel Choi (ret.) and Sherry Wolf (author of *Sexuality and Socialism*)."—Don Gorton, Join the Impact Board Member "Surprisingly funny, very readable and a fitting tome for a new movement in these troubled times."—Dave Zirin for *Progressive's Best Books of 2009* "‘What humans have constructed they can tear down.’ This is the powerful insight of this rare book that is at once politically important, theoretically and historically sophisticated, and clearly written. *Sexuality and Socialism* is enlivened in its engagement with a number of controversies, including those over the alleged biological determination of homosexuality, the myth of Black homophobia, and the consequences of postmodernist theories for the politics of gay liberation. Above all else, Wolf puts forward a cogent defense of the Marxist tradition—long and wrongly reviled as homophobic in itself—as a way



to explain how LGBT oppression arose and what we can do to put it to bed.”—Dana Cloud, University of Texas at Austin Sherry Wolf is the associate editor of the International Socialist Review. She was on

the executive committee of the National Equality March Oct. 11, 2009 and has written for publications including the Nation, MRZine, Counterpunch, Dissident

Voice, and Socialist Worker and speaks frequently across the country on the struggle for LGBT liberation as well as a wide range of social and economic justice issue.