

Contents

Preface	xv
Acknowledgements	xix
Abbreviations	xxi
1 Introduction: defining nature	1
1.1 How little we know	1
1.2 Pressing questions	2
1.3 The hierarchy of nature	2
1.4 Biodiversity	4
1.5 Myths to bust	4
1.6 Further information	5
1.6.1 Recommended reading	5
References	5
Part I: Species	
2 What is a species?	9
2.1 The big question	9
2.2 Species concepts	10
2.2.1 Nominalistic	10
2.2.2 Morphological	11
2.2.3 Biological	12
2.2.4 Phylogenetic	13
2.2.5 Genetic	14
2.3 Solving the riddle	16
2.4 Coda: Species richness	17
2.5 Conclusions	17
2.5.1 Recommended reading	17
2.5.2 Questions for the future	17
References	17

3 The history of life	19
3.1 The big question	19
3.2 Sources of evidence	19
3.2.1 The fossil record	19
3.2.2 Molecular evidence	20
3.3 A brief history of diversity	20
3.4 Uneven diversity	24
3.5 Conclusions	25
3.5.1 Recommended reading	26
3.5.2 Questions for the future	26
References	26

4 How many species are there?	29
4.1 The big question	29
4.2 How can we not know?	29
4.3 Discovery rates	30
4.4 Scaling	32
4.5 Sampling-based methods	33
4.6 Other organisms	36
4.7 Wrapping up	36
4.8 Conclusions	37
4.8.1 Recommended reading	38
4.8.2 Questions for the future	38
References	38

Part II: Diversity

5 Measuring diversity	43
5.1 The big question	43
5.2 Scales of diversity	43
5.3 Species richness	43
5.4 Believing in estimates	46
5.5 A SAD story	47
5.6 Diversity of species	49
5.7 Other measures of diversity	51

5.8 β diversity	53
5.9 Case study: The Binatang project	54
5.10 Conclusions	57
5.10.1 Recommended reading	57
5.10.2 Questions for the future	57
References	57
6 Niches	61
6.1 The big question	61
6.2 Historical background	61
6.3 Back to basics	63
6.4 Birth and death rates	63
6.5 The ZNGI	66
6.6 Impact vectors	67
6.7 Supply points	67
6.8 Coexistence	68
6.9 The evidence	71
6.10 Implications	73
6.11 Conclusions	76
6.11.1 Recommended reading	77
6.11.2 Questions for the future	77
References	77
7 Patterns in species richness	79
7.1 The big question	79
7.2 Area	79
7.3 Local and regional species richness	81
7.4 Local patterns in species richness	85
7.4.1 Elevation	85
7.4.2 Depth	88
7.4.3 Peninsulas and Bays	88
7.4.4 Isolation	89
7.4.5 Mid-Domain Effects	89
7.5 Congruence	89
7.6 Assembling a model	90
7.7 Conclusions	91

7.7.1 Recommended reading	91
7.7.2 Questions for the future	92
References	92
8 Drivers of diversity	95
8.1 The big question	95
8.2 Coexistence or co-occurrence?	95
8.3 Energy and resources	95
8.4 Diversity begets diversity	101
8.4.1 Heterogeneity in space	101
8.4.2 Heterogeneity in time	103
8.5 Disturbance	104
8.6 Top-down control	105
8.7 Expanding our model	109
8.8 Conclusions	110
8.8.1 Recommended reading	110
8.8.2 Questions for the future	111
References	111
9 Does diversity matter?	113
9.1 The big question	113
9.2 Ecosystems	113
9.3 What shape is the relationship?	115
9.4 Field experiments	117
9.5 Other measures of diversity	121
9.6 Multifunctionality	122
9.7 The real world	125
9.8 Species richness and productivity	126
9.9 Conclusions	127
9.9.1 Recommended reading	127
9.9.2 Questions for the future	128
References	128
Part III: Communities	
10 Organisation at the community scale	133
10.1 The big question	133
10.2 Definitions	133

10.3	Communities in the field	134
10.4	Quantitative approaches	135
10.5	Community structure	137
10.6	Food chains	140
10.7	Food webs	142
10.8	Complexity and stability	145
10.9	Trophic cascades	147
10.10	SAD again	148
10.11	Complex systems	151
10.12	Unified neutral theory	153
10.13	Metabolic theory of ecology	155
10.14	Conclusions	156
10.14.1	Recommended reading	157
10.14.2	Questions for the future	157
	References	157
11	Stability	161
11.1	The big question	161
11.2	Stable states	161
11.3	Changing environments	164
11.4	Hysteresis	165
11.5	Predicting changes	167
11.6	Coral reefs	169
11.7	Shifting baselines	170
11.8	Conclusions	173
11.8.1	Recommended reading	174
11.8.2	Questions for the future	175
11.9	Coda: the seduction of Gaia	175
	References	176
12	Changes through time	179
12.1	The big question	179
12.2	Succession	179
12.3	Succession and niche theory	180

12.4	Examples of succession	182
12.5	Disturbance	184
12.6	Modelling succession	185
12.7	Regeneration	187
12.8	Plants and animals	188
12.9	Case study: Mpala, Kenya	188
12.10	Conclusions	190
12.10.1	Recommended reading	190
12.10.2	Questions for the future	190
	References	191
13	Changes through space	193
13.1	The big question	193
13.2	Community assembly	193
13.2.1	Competitive exclusion	194
13.2.2	Historical processes	196
13.2.3	Habitat checkerboards	197
13.2.4	Chance and contingency	198
13.3	Metacommunities	199
13.4	Dispersal limitation	204
13.5	Combining environment and dispersal	208
13.6	Conclusions	210
13.6.1	Recommended reading	210
13.6.2	Questions for the future	210
	References	210
Part IV: Biogeography		
14	Global patterns of life	215
14.1	The big question	215
14.2	Biogeography	215
14.3	Phytogeography	217
14.4	Ecoregions	222
14.5	Empirical approaches	223
14.6	The oceans	225
14.7	Fresh water	228

14.8	Conclusions	228
14.8.1	Recommended reading	229
14.8.2	Questions for the future	229
	References	229
15	Regional species richness	233
15.1	The big question	233
15.2	Climate and productivity	234
15.3	Other processes	236
15.4	Scale and productivity	238
15.5	Latitudinal gradients	240
15.6	Centres of origin	243
15.7	Regional species–area relationships	244
15.8	Confounding effects	244
15.9	Conclusions	245
15.9.1	Recommended reading	246
15.9.2	Questions for the future	246
	References	246
16	Latitudinal gradients	249
16.1	The big question	249
16.2	Hypotheses	249
16.3	Geographic area	249
16.4	Climatic stability	251
16.5	Productivity	252
16.6	Niche size	253
16.7	Evolutionary speed	254
16.8	Out of the tropics	257
16.9	Conclusions	261
16.9.1	Recommended reading	262
16.9.2	Questions for the future	262
	References	262
17	Earth history	265
17.1	The big question	265
17.2	Geological history	265
17.3	Continental drift	266

17.4	Echoes of Pangæa	269
17.5	Climatic effects	272
17.6	Ice ages	274
17.7	Sea level	278
17.8	Extinctions	278
17.9	Conclusions	281
	17.9.1 Recommended reading	283
	17.9.2 Questions for the future	283
	References	283
18	Dispersal	287
18.1	The big question	287
18.2	Range expansion	287
18.3	Mechanisms of dispersal	289
18.4	Barriers	290
18.5	Case studies	292
	18.5.1 New Zealand	292
	18.5.2 Madagascar	295
18.6	Conclusions	299
	18.6.1 Recommended reading	300
	18.6.2 Questions for the future	300
	References	300
19	Life on islands	303
19.1	The big question	303
19.2	Types of island	303
19.3	Island biotas	305
19.4	Evolution of endemics	305
19.5	Size changes	307
19.6	Reproduction and dispersal	310
19.7	Super-generalists	311
19.8	Endemic communities	312
19.9	Disharmony	312
19.10	Assembly rules	314

19.11	Island species richness	314
19.12	The equilibrium model of island biogeography	317
19.13	Testing the theory	319
19.14	Conclusions	320
19.14.1	Recommended reading	320
19.14.2	Questions for the future	320
	References	320
20	Reinventing islands	323
20.1	The big question	323
20.2	A critique of EMIB	323
20.3	Rival hypotheses	326
20.4	Disturbance	326
20.5	Relaxation	329
20.6	Extinctions	331
20.7	Invasions	331
20.8	A new theory?	332
20.9	Evolution	333
20.10	Conclusions	338
20.10.1	Recommended reading	338
20.10.2	Questions for the future	338
	References	338
21	What is a natural system?	341
21.1	The big question	341
21.2	Lessons learnt	342
21.2.1	Ecological processes are scale dependent	342
21.2.2	All interactions are nested	342
21.2.3	There is no such thing as the balance of nature	342
21.2.4	Everything is contingent	343
21.3	Processes not systems	343
	References	344
Appendix A	Diversity analysis case study: Butterfly conservation in the Rocky Mountains	345
A.1	Software resources	345
A.2	Calculations	346

A.3 Synthesis

A.4 Conclusions

References

Glossary

Index

350

351

352

353

359