

Ernst Mayr

Quotes

*Science, Society, Population, Two, Evolution, Atheism, Issues, Process,
Understanding, Variation, Doe, Believe, Definitions, Earth, Facts, Fossils,
Nature, Study, Transformation, Heuristics*

Our understanding of the world is achieved more effectively by conceptual improvements than by discovery of new facts

~Ernst Mayr

Indeed, I was unable to find any evidence whatsoever of the occurrence of a drastic evolutionary acceleration and genetic reconstruction in widespread, populous species.

~Ernst Mayr

I have the honesty to say I'm an Atheist. There is nothing that supports the idea of a personal God.

~Ernst Mayr

Life is simply the reification of the process of living.

~Ernst Mayr

The history of science knows scores of instances where an investigator was in the possession of all the important facts for a new theory but simply failed to ask the right questions.

~Ernst Mayr

Evolution as such is no longer a theory for a modern author. It is as much a fact as that the earth revolves around the sun.

~Ernst Mayr

Mathematics is as little a science as grammar is a language.

~Ernst Mayr

A species is a reproductive community of populations reproductively isolated from others that occupies a specific niche in nature.

~Ernst Mayr

According to the concept of transformational evolution, first clearly articulated by Lamarck, evolution consists of the gradual transformation

of organisms from one condition of existence to another.

~Ernst Mayr

most scientific problems are far better understood by studying their history than their logic.

~Ernst Mayr

The major novelty of my theory was its claim that the most rapid evolutionary change does not occur in widespread, populous species, as claimed by Most geneticists, but in small founder populations.

~Ernst Mayr

There is more to biology than rats, *Drosophila*, *Caenorhabditis*, and *E. coli*.

~Ernst Mayr

On Earth, among millions of lineages or organisms and perhaps 50 billion speciation events, only one led to high intelligence ; this makes me believe its utter improbability.

~Ernst Mayr

Evolution thus is merely contingent on certain processes articulated by Darwin: variation and selection.

~Ernst Mayr

Definitions are temporary verbalizations of concepts, and concepts- particularly difficult concepts- are usually revised repeatedly as our knowledge and understanding grows.

~Ernst Mayr

It is curious how often erroneous theories have had a beneficial effect for particular branches of science.

~Ernst Mayr

Evolution ... is opportunistic, hence unpredictable.

~Ernst Mayr

I feel that one species, mankind, doesn't have the right to exterminate

~Ernst Mayr

Living in an entirely different physical as well as biotic environment, such a population would have unique opportunities to enter new niches and to select novel adaptive pathways.

~Ernst Mayr

Isolating mechanisms are biological properties of individuals that prevent the interbreeding of populations that are actually or potentially sympatric.

~Ernst Mayr

New gene pools are generated in every generation, and evolution takes place because the successful individuals produced by these gene pools give rise to the next generation.

~Ernst Mayr

To take an unequivocal stand, it seems to me, is of greater heuristic value and far more likely to stimulate constructive criticism than to evade the issue.

~Ernst Mayr

Scientific progress consists in the development of new concepts.

~Ernst Mayr

It seems to me that for Darwin the pulsing of evolutionary rates was a strictly vertical phenomenon.

~Ernst Mayr

In neither his definition nor the examples illustrating what memes are

does Dawkins mention anything that would distinguish memes from concepts.

~Ernst Mayr

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