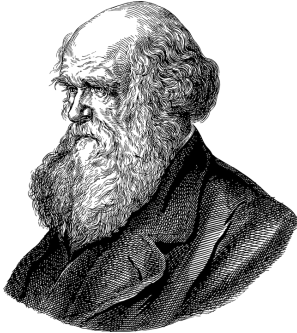




British Hills Knowledge Base



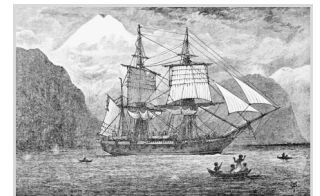
Charles Darwin



Charles Darwin was born in Shropshire, England, in 1809. He grew up in a time of great social and scientific change, as the industrial revolution spread across Britain, Europe, and beyond.

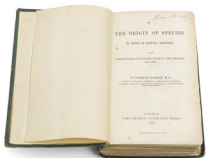
Darwin was interested in the natural world from a young age. At university, he demonstrated a great interest in theories of the creation of both the earth and life. He studied both biology and geology with passion.

Between 1831 and 1836, Darwin travelled on the *HMS Beagle* around much of the world. He sent research and letters back to England as he travelled, recording his observations of fossils, rock formations, plant distribution, and animal species and behaviour. This made him famous even before he returned, and Darwin claimed his first real training in natural history was on this voyage.



HMS Beagle

In the years after his voyage, Darwin developed his most famous achievement: describing the theory of evolution through natural selection. This is the process of change in hereditary characteristics of organisms over generations. The process of artificial selection, in which people bred animals for specific traits such as colour and size, was understood. However, the idea that this occurred in nature, without a guiding power, was revolutionary.



On the Origin of Species

On 24th November 1859, Darwin published *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. This book was written for a general audience, not specialist scientists, and is still today considered one of the foundations of the life sciences. In 1871 he published *The Descent of Man*, which directly discussed natural selection in humans, and argued that all humans were the same species, regardless of race - an idea debated at that time.

Upon his death in 1882, Darwin was buried in Westminster Abbey, where he lies among other great names such as Newton, Hawking, Stephenson, and Livingstone.

