

Reading Guide 2

Does Evolution Make Big Changes?

1. Jenkin, Mivart, and Dewar all argue that selection can make small changes but not big ones. What do they have in common? How do they differ?
2. How would Darwin have responded to Dewar's argument about limits to variation?
3. Dewar argues that although evolution may make new species and new genera, it does not make new families or larger taxa:

breeders, although they have been at work for hundreds of years, have not yet been able to produce a new breed which can possibly be deemed to belong to a new family. [Dewar, 1931, ch. 2, p. 8]

What he says here about breeders is still true today. How would a modern evolutionist argue that evolution does make new families?

Ignore Dewar's critique of the theories of de Vries and of Cuénot. These are obsolete, so we will not spend time on them.

Bibliography

Douglas Dewar. *Difficulties of the Evolution Theory*. E. Arnold and Co., London, 1931.