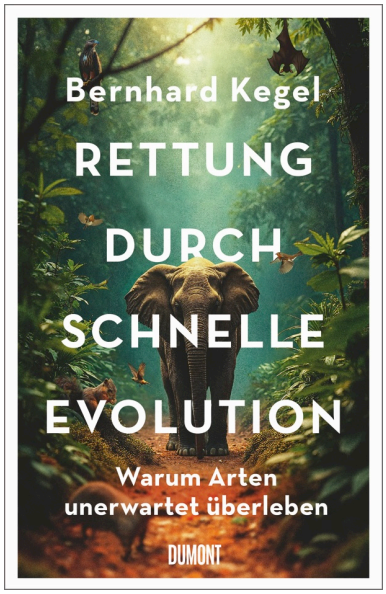


by Bernhard Kegel
DuMont Verlag
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Non-Fiction

Rescued by Rapid Evolution: Why Species Survive Unexpectedly

Rettung durch Schnelle Evolution. Warum Arten unerwartet überleben

review

A fascinating and accessible exploration of one of biology's most surprising discoveries, 'Rescued by Rapid Evolution' argues that evolution is happening far more quickly than previously believed. Drawing on cutting-edge scientific research from around the world, Bernhard Kegel examines how animals, plants and even microbes are adapting to unprecedented environmental change, offering a timely and hopeful perspective on the future of life on Earth.

Rather than presenting evolution as a process unfolding over millions of years, Kegel demonstrates how species are responding to climate change, habitat loss and human intervention within just a few generations. Each chapter focuses on a different organism, from guppies and coal tits to elephants, flowers and microscopic bacteria, revealing the remarkable strategies through which life adapts to survive. Some species evolve new physical characteristics, such as elephants born without tusks in response to poaching, while others alter their behaviour or reproductive strategies. Flowers deprived of insect pollinators begin to self-pollinate, birds adjust their body size in response to changing climates and food sources, and mammals exploit previously hidden genetic diversity to cope with rapidly changing environments. Together, these case studies reveal

evolution not as an abstract scientific principle but as a dynamic, ongoing process that is unfolding all around us.

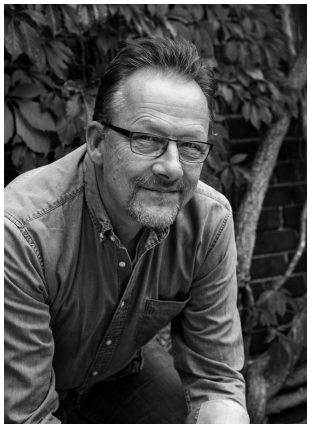
While the realities of biodiversity loss and climate change remain central to the book, Kegel resists fatalism. Instead, he asks what the remarkable adaptability of living organisms can teach us about coexistence and the future of conservation. Without downplaying the severity of the environmental crisis, he argues that nature possesses an extraordinary capacity for innovation, provided species are given sufficient opportunity to adapt. The result is an optimistic yet scientifically rigorous account that challenges many long-held assumptions about evolution while highlighting the urgency of protecting the conditions that make adaptation possible.

Kegel writes with exceptional clarity, translating complex evolutionary biology into engaging prose for a general readership. Each chapter combines vivid examples, recent scientific discoveries and clear explanations of the underlying research, making sophisticated ideas readily accessible without sacrificing scientific precision.

Both an authoritative introduction to contemporary evolutionary science and an inspiring contribution to environmental writing, Kegel's enthusiasm for his subject is infectious. 'Rescued by Rapid Evolution' will appeal to readers of Jonathan Losos's *Improbable Destinies*, Thor Hanson's *Hurricane Lizards and Plastic Squid* and Ed Yong's *An Immense World* for its engaging exploration of how life continually adapts to an ever-changing world through the lens of cutting-edge evolutionary science.

Find out more:
https://www.dumont-buchverlag.de/buch/bernhard-kegel-rettung-durch-schnelle-evolution-9783755800835-t-7754

about the author



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Bernhard Kegel was born in 1953, studied Chemistry and Biology at the Free University of Berlin, and then worked as a researcher, an ecological consultant, and a lecturer. Since 1993, he has published numerous novels and works of nonfiction. He has been the recipient of several journalism awards. His most recently publications with DuMont are *Die Natur der Zukunft* (‘Nature in the future’) (2021) and *Mit Pflanzen die Welt retten* (‘How to save the world with plants’) (2024); the latter was nominated for the 2025 German Nonfiction Prize.

Previous works: *Die Ameise als Tramp*, Ammann Verlag 1999; *Epigenetik*, DuMont Buchverlag (2009); *Tiere in der Stadt*, DuMont Buchverlag (2013); *Die Herrscher der Welt*, DuMont Buchvarelg (2015); Die GeEsundmacher, DuMont Buchverlag (2017); *Ausgestorben, um zu bleiben*, DuMont Buchverlag (2018); *Ausgestorbene Tiere*, DuMont Buchverlag (2021); *Die Natur der Zukunft*, DuMont Buchverlag (2021); *Mit Pflanzen die Welt retten*, DuMont Buchverlag (2024).

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