



# Extinctions in the History of Life

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Extinction is the ultimate fate of all biological species - over 99 percent of the species that have ever inhabited the Earth are now extinct. The long fossil record of life provides scientists with crucial information about when species became extinct, which species were most vulnerable to extinction, and what processes may have brought about extinctions in the geological past. Key aspects of extinctions in the history of life are here reviewed by six leading palaeontologists, providing a source text for geology and biology undergraduates as well as more advanced scholars. Topical issues such as the causes of mass extinctions and how animal and plant life has recovered from these cataclysmic events that have shaped biological evolution are dealt with. This helps us to view the biodiversity crisis in a broader context, and shows how large-scale extinctions have had profound and long-lasting effects on the Earth's biosphere.



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