

biology



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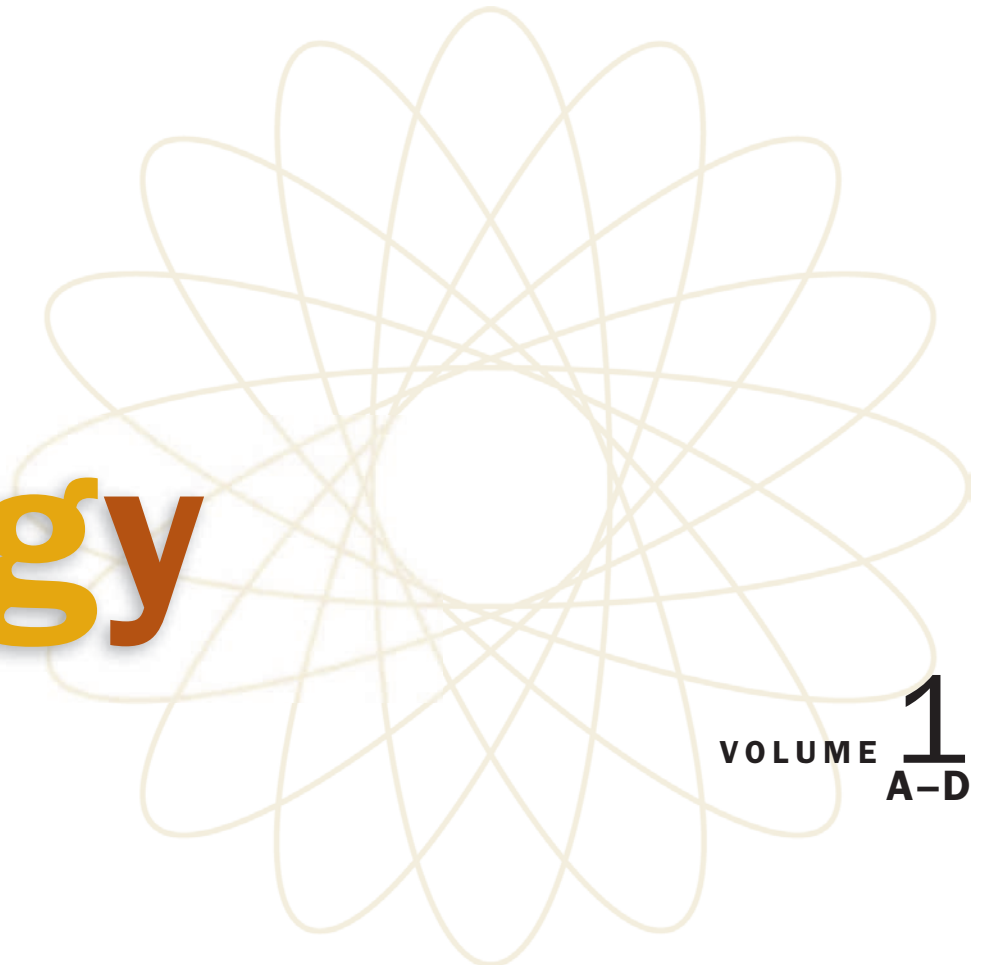
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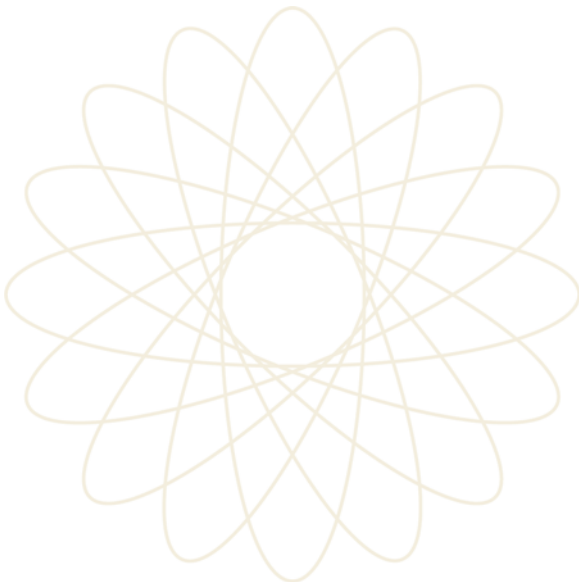
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VOLUME **1**
A-D

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Preface

The scope of biology is so vast it can be dizzying. Upwards of 50 million species of living things exist on Earth. Within each species, the number of creatures can range from the alarming (only a handful of Yangtze River dolphins exist), to the worrisome (our own species numbers six billion and counting), to the astonishing (five hundred quadrillion individual wheat plants emerge and die every year). But numbers alone can't tell the tale, because life at every level is a process and a pattern, from the development of a single creature to the evolution of a whole species, and from the expression of a single gene to the nutrient cycling of an entire ecosystem. The human body contains about fifty trillion cells, every one of which draws on its store of thirty thousand genes to make the pattern of proteins that control it and make it unique. Within the human brain, one hundred billion neurons make one hundred trillion connections, which combine to make the pattern of thoughts, memories, and feelings that make each of us unique.

Central Ideas and Vital Details

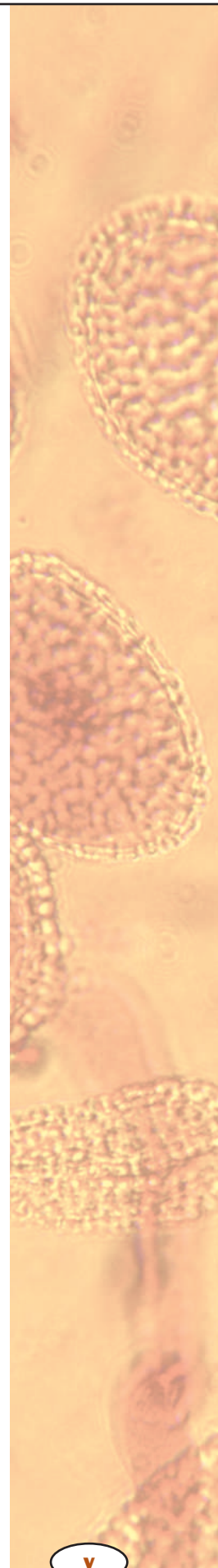
How can a single book, or even a four-volume encyclopedia, encompass so vast a subject? It can't. And in producing *Biology*, we didn't try to cover every topic from Aardvark to *Zyzyva*. Instead, in our 432 entries we present as broad an introduction as possible to the many facets of biology, while concentrating in depth on a smaller number of central ideas and phenomena that are at the heart of all biological processes.

One of our major themes is molecular genetics, which in the last two decades has taken center stage in biology, along with its offspring, biotechnology. In these volumes, students will find detailed and accessible descriptions of the many aspects of these growing disciplines, from genes and chromosomes to cloning and the Human Genome Project. Genes exert their effects through proteins in cells, and we discuss both individual cell processes and the rapidly growing understanding of control mechanisms. Throughout, our emphasis is on clear explanation of the underlying principles, so that students can prepare to understand phenomena that may yet remain undiscovered.

Understanding of human physiology is central to medicine and health, and in *Biology*, we discuss almost every aspect of the human system, including bones, brains, and behavior. We devote special attention to several health issues especially important to students, including smoking, alcohol, and sexually transmitted diseases. Comparative animal physiology and plant physiology are also featured.

★ Explore further in DNA, Nucleus, and Clone

★ Explore further in Development, Immune Response, and Smoking and Health





★Explore further in
Eubacteria, Conifers, and
Conservation

★Explore further in
Grasslands, Population
Dynamics, and Sexual
Selection

The world's biodiversity is being revealed even as it is increasingly threatened, and we survey both of these crucial aspects within our pages. Animal and plant diversity is discussed in many separate entries, and major entries are provided on archaea, eubacteria, fungi, and protists. Up-to-date classification systems are used throughout. We examine the major environmental challenges facing the world today, including global climate change, extinction, desertification, and the growing human population.

“The ecological theater and the evolutionary play” was how one notable biologist described the vital connection between these two major areas in biology. This interplay is explored in entries that range from physiological ecology to human evolution, and in environments from the Arctic tundra to the depths of the oceans. Finally, we examine the history of biology through major entries and capsule biographies, and we look at careers in biology at every level in every field.

Organization of the Material

To aid students and teachers in exploring this vast territory, *Biology* includes individual volume indexes as well as a cumulative index at the end of Volume 4. We also provide a glossary of more than 550 terms with definitions both in the page margin and collected at the end of each volume. Each entry contains suggestions for further reading. A topical index provides a guide to entries by subject, and useful references are provided as frontmatter, including a geologic time scale and tables of metric conversions.

Acknowledgments and Thanks

A work of this scope would be impossible without the dedication and hard work of many people. Our contributors are biologists who have devoted their careers to understanding the living world, and have now devoted many hours to explaining it carefully and clearly enough for a beginning audience. Hélène Potter of Macmillan Library Reference charted a challenging and inspiring course in launching this encyclopedia, and Linda Hubbard, Michelle Harper, Diane Sawinski, and Christine Slovey of the Gale Group provided a sure hand on the tiller during rough weather. Ricki Lewis offered invaluable editorial review when it mattered most.

The editorial advisors for this project have given their time and expertise unstintingly, often far beyond the call of duty. As will be clear from the list of authors, several of them are also gifted and generous authors. They have my deep gratitude for all their work on this encyclopedia. Sadly, Tom Frost, an aquatic ecologist of national stature, did not live to see the completion of this work. His loss was a blow to this project, and even more so to the world of ecology. But he has left his mark on *Biology*, and we dedicate this work to him.

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For Your Reference

The following section provides information that is applicable to a number of articles in this reference work. Included are a metric measurement and conversion table, geologic timescale, diagrams of an animal cell and a plant cell, illustration of the structure of DNA nucleotides, detail of DNA nucleotides pairing up across the double helix, and a comparison of the molecular structure of DNA and RNA.

METRIC MEASUREMENT

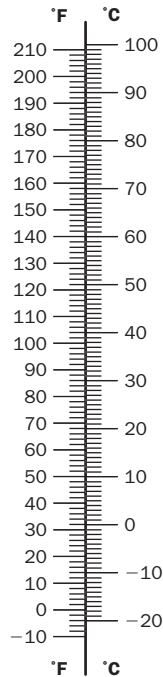
Definitions

Kilo = 1000
 Hecto = 100
 Deka = 10
 Deci = 0.10 (1/10)
 Centi = 0.01 (1/100)
 Milli = 0.001 (1/1000)
 Micro = 0.000001 (1/1,000,000)
 Nano = 0.000000001 (1/1,000,000,000)

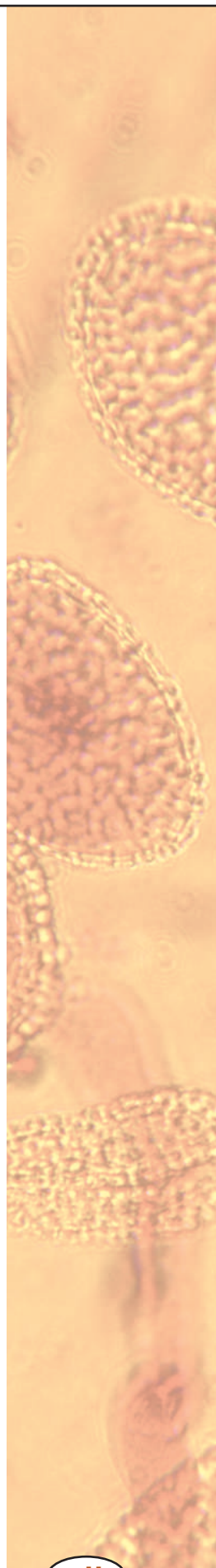
Conversions

To convert	Into	Multiply by
Acres	Hectares	0.4047
Centimeters	Inches	0.3937
Feet	Meters	0.3048
Gallons	Liters	3.7853
Grams	Ounces	0.0353
Grams	Pounds	0.0022
Hectares	Acres	2.4710
Inches	Centimeters	2.5400
Kilograms	Pounds	2.2046
Kilometers	Miles	0.6214
Liters	Gallons]	0.2642
Meters	Feet	3.2808
Miles	Kilometers	1.6093
Ounces	Grams	28.3495
Pounds	Kilograms	0.4536
Pounds	Grams	453.59

Temperature Conversion



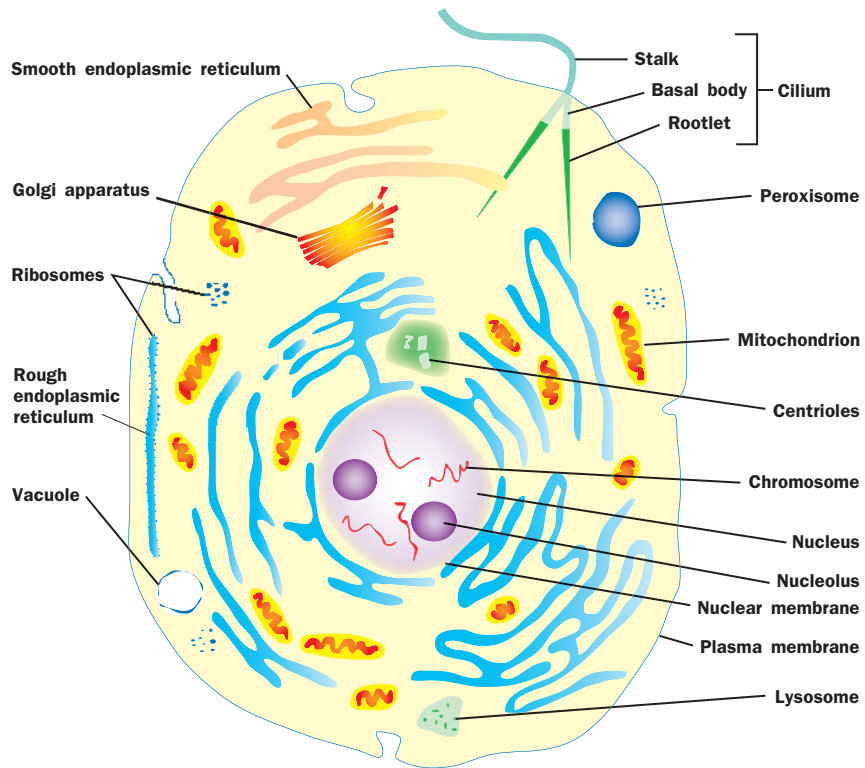
100°C = water boils
 0°C = water freezes



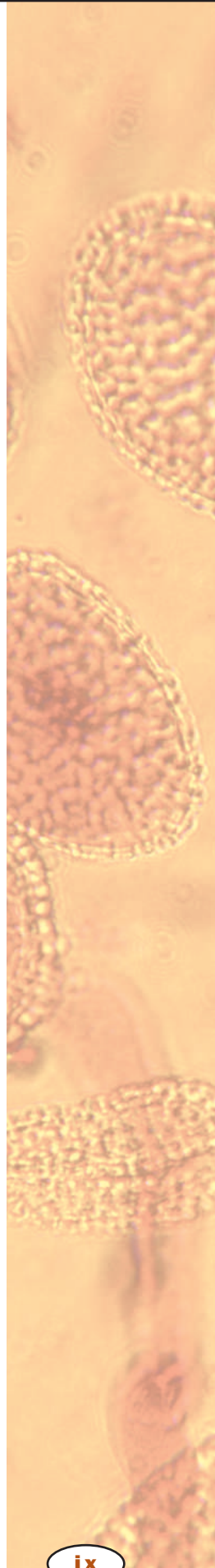
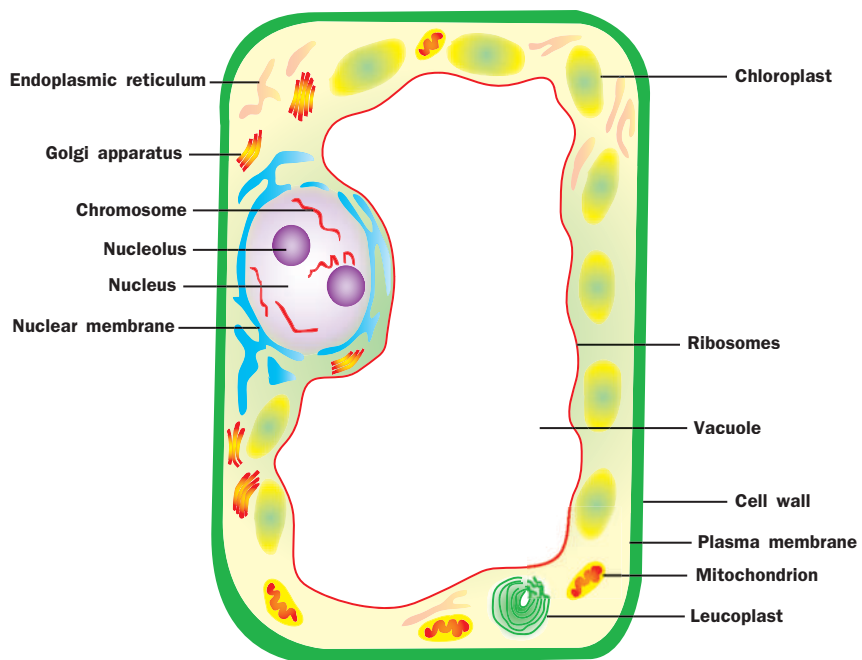
GEOLOGIC TIMESCALE

ERA	PERIOD	EPOCH	STARTED (millions of years ago)	
Cenozoic: 66.4 millions of years ago–present time	Quaternary	Holocene	0.01	
		Pleistocene	1.6	
	Tertiary	Neogene	Pliocene	5.3
			Miocene	23.7
		Paleogene	Oligocene	36.6
			Eocene	57.8
			Paleocene	66.4
Mesozoic: 245–66.4 millions of years ago	Cretaceous	Late	97.5	
		Early	144	
	Jurassic	Late	163	
		Middle	187	
		Early	208	
	Triassic	Late	230	
		Middle	240	
		Early	245	
	Paleozoic: 570–245 millions of years ago	Permian	Late	258
Early			286	
Carboniferous		Pennsylvanian	Late	320
		Mississippian	Early	360
Devonian		Late	374	
		Middle	387	
		Early	408	
Silurian		Late	421	
		Early	438	
Ordovician		Late	458	
		Middle	478	
		Early	505	
Cambrian		Late	523	
		Middle	540	
	Early	570		
Precambrian time: 4500–570 millions of years ago			4500	

A TYPICAL ANIMAL CELL

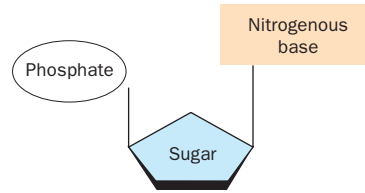


A TYPICAL PLANT CELL



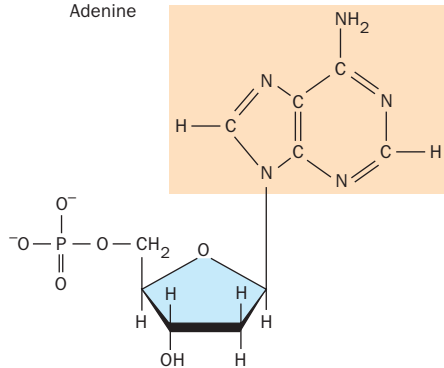
STRUCTURE OF DNA NUCLEOTIDES

Components of a nucleotide



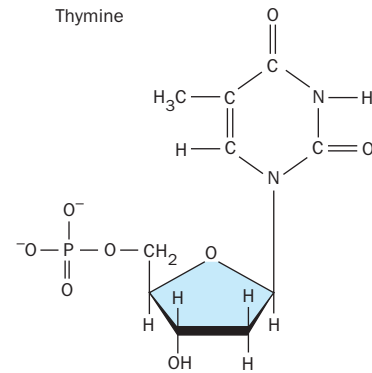
Purine-containing nucleotides

Adenine

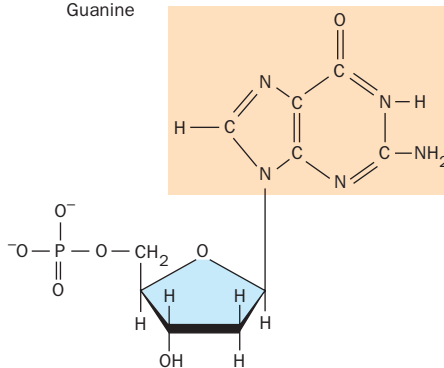


Pyrimidine-containing nucleotides

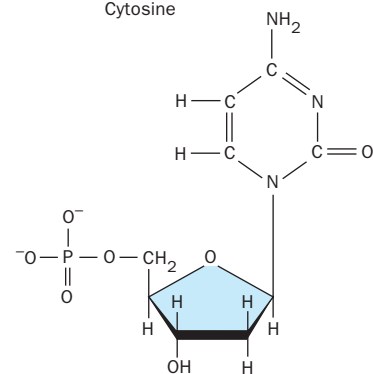
Thymine



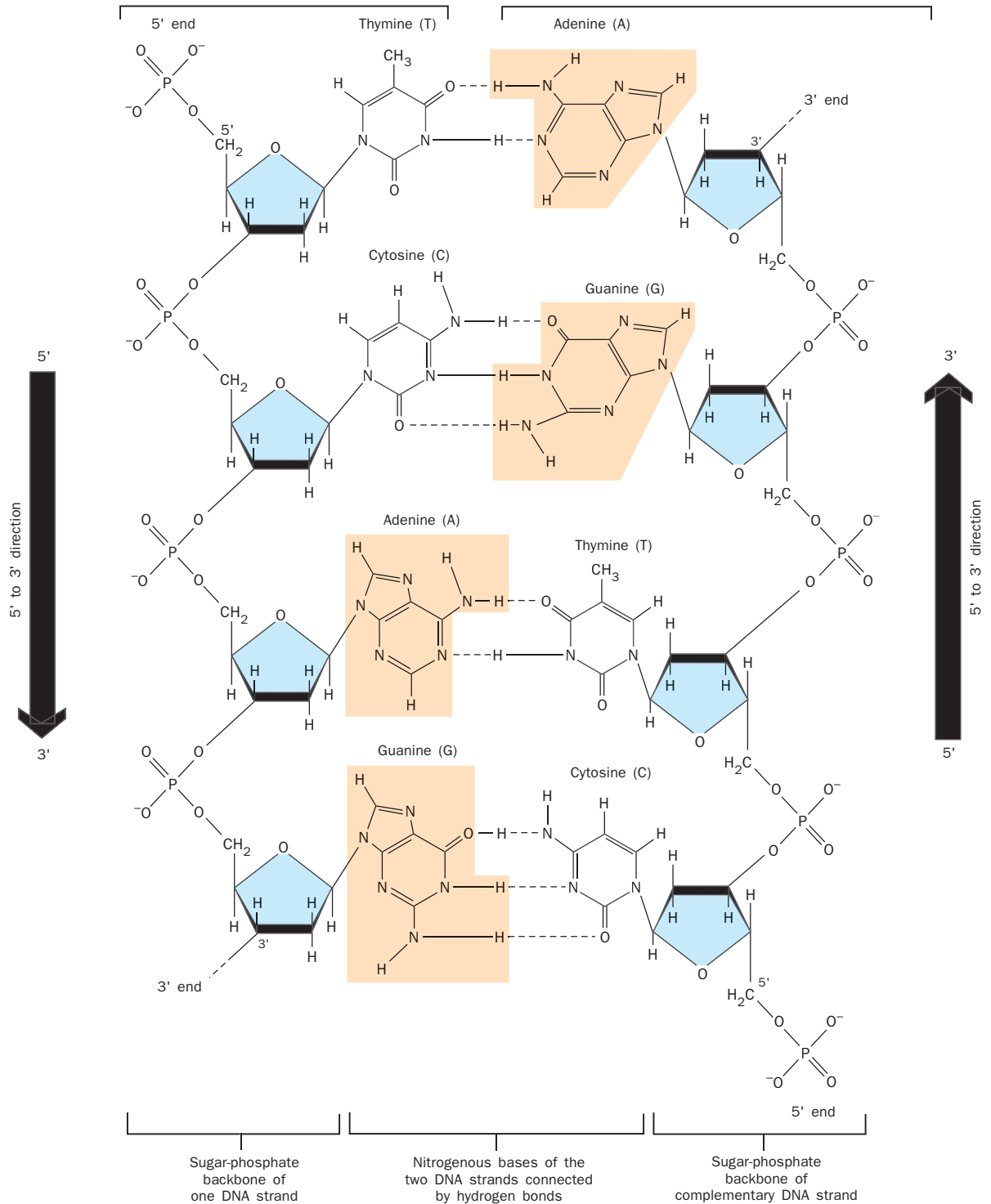
Guanine



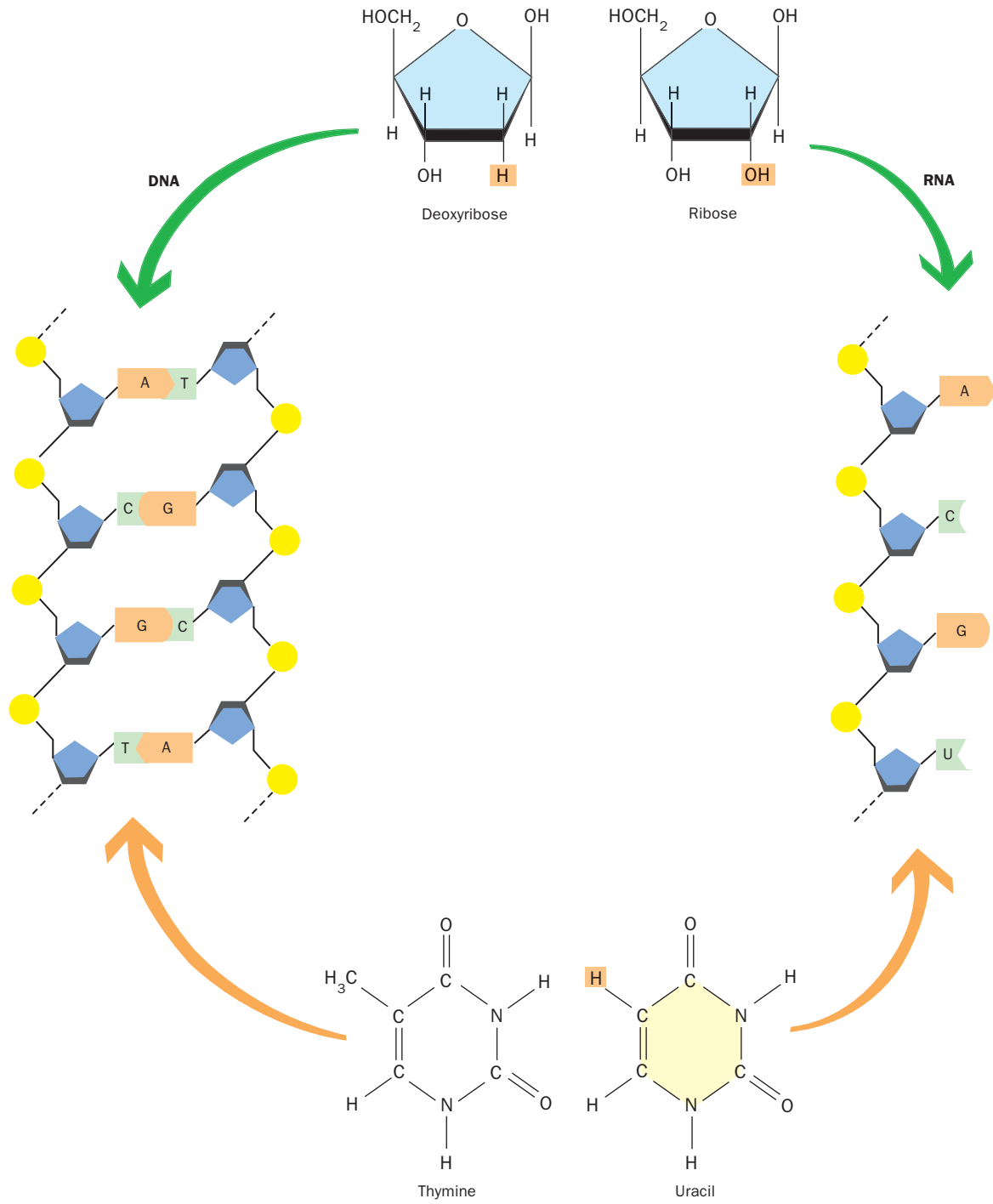
Cytosine



DNA NUCLEOTIDES PAIR UP ACROSS THE DOUBLE HELIX



COMPARISON OF DNA AND RNA



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Paleontology
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Sleep
Temperature Regulation
- Lynn J. Rothchild
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Extreme Communities
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Meristems
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Roots
Shoots
- Scott D. Russell
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Flowers
Pollination and Fertilization
- Margaret Somosi Saha
College of William and Mary
Birth Control
- Kenneth S. Saladin
Georgia College & State University
Behavior, Genetic Basis of
Cancer
Cnidarian
Connective Tissue
Creationism
Crustacean
Electron Microscopy
Feeding Strategies
Harvey, William

- Homeostasis
Imaging in Medicine
Leeuwenhoek, Antony van
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Metabolism, Human
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Mollusk
Osmoregulation
Parasitic Diseases
Platyhelminthes
Protista
Protozoan Diseases
Respiration
Rivers and Streams
Sex Determination
Tunicate
Vesalius, Andreas
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Control of Gene Expression
Control Mechanisms
Signaling and Signal
Transduction
Transcription
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Protozoa
- Alexander Sandra
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Fetal Development, Human
- Jack C. Schultz
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Herbivory and Plant Defenses
Secondary Metabolites in Plants
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Reproduction in Plants
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Tissue
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Bacterial Cell
Bacterial Genetics
Bacterial Viruses
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Crick, Francis
Pauling, Linus
Watson, James
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Blood Vessels
Cardiovascular Diseases
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Vaccines
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Wood and Wood Products
- Carl J. Shuster
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Viral Diseases
- Margaret Simpson
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Zoology
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Genomics
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Nurse Practitioners
- Vassiliki Betty Smocovitis
University of Florida
History of Evolutionary Thought
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Sexual Reproduction, Evolution of
Sexual Selection
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*Organic Farming Research
Foundation*
Organic Agriculture
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Membrane Proteins
Membrane Transport
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Transgenic Techniques
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Carbohydrates
Glycolysis and Fermentation
Krebs Cycle
Metabolism, Cellular
Nucleotides
Oxidative Phosphorylation
Photosynthesis
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Human Evolution
Primate
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Slime Molds
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Peripheral Nervous System
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Extinction
Hardy-Weinberg Equilibrium
Mammal
- Tim Watkins
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Sexual Reproduction
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Lipids
Membrane Structure
Plasma Membrane
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Water Cycle
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Female Reproductive System
Pharmaceutical Sales
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Forensic DNA Analysis
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Antisense Nucleotides
Mendel, Gregor
Polymerase Chain Reaction
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Bioinformatics
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Hybridization, Plant
Plant Nutrition
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Bird
Speciation
Species

Table of Contents

VOLUME 1

PREFACE	v
FOR YOUR REFERENCE	vii
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	xiii

A

Active Transport	1
Adaptation	3
Adrenal Gland	5
Aging, Biology of	7
Agriculture	10
Agronomist	13
AIDS	14
Alcohol and Health	17
Algae	20
Alternation of Generations	22
Amino Acid	24
Amniote Egg	25
Amphibian	26
Anabolic Steroids	27
Anatomy of Plants	29
Angiosperms	31
Animalia	34
Annelid	36
Antibodies in Research	37
Antibody	39
Antisense Nucleotides	41
Arachnid	42
Archaea	43
Arthropod	46
Autoimmune Disease	47

B

Bacterial Cell	48
Bacterial Diseases	52
Bacterial Genetics	53
Bacterial Viruses	58
Beer-making, Biology of	59

Behavior, Genetic Basis of	60
Behavior Patterns	63
Biochemist	65
Biodiversity	66
Biogeochemical Cycles	68
Biogeography	70
Bioinformatics	71
Biological Weapons	74
Biology	76
Biology of Race	77
Biome	79
Biotechnology	80
Bird	80
Birth Control	82
Blood	84
Blood Clotting	86
Blood Sugar Regulation	87
Blood Vessels	89
Body Cavities	91
Bone	93
Bony Fish	95
Botanist	96
Brain	97
Bryophytes	104
Buffon, Count (Georges-Louis Leclerc)	106

C

C4 and CAM Plants	107
Cambrian Explosion	108
Cancer	110
Carbohydrates	112
Carbon Cycle	114
Cardiovascular Diseases	115
Carson, Rachel	117
Cartilaginous Fish	118
Cell	119
Cell Culture	122

Cell Cycle 124
 Cell Division 127
 Cell Evolution 127
 Cell Junctions 129
 Cell Motility 130
 Cell Wall 132
 Central Nervous System 134
 Chemoreception 135
 Chloroplast 137
 Chordata 138
 Chromosome Aberrations 139
 Chromosome, Eukaryotic 143
 Circulatory Systems 149
 Clinical Trials 151
 Clone 152
 Cnidarian 155
 Coffee, Botany of 155
 College Professor 156
 Community 157
 Competition 159
 Conifers 162
 Connective Tissue 164
 Conservation 165
 Control of Gene Expression 170
 Control Mechanisms 177
 Convergent Evolution 181
 Coral Reef 183
 Creationism 185
 Crick, Francis 187
 Crocodylians 188
 Crustacean 189
 Cyanobacteria 190
 Cytokinesis 191
 Cytoskeleton 193

D

Darwin, Charles 197
 De Saussure, Nicolas-Théodore 199
 Dentist 200
 Desert 201
 Desertification 204
 Development 205
 Differentiation in Plants 212
 Digestion 217
 Digestive System 219
 Disease 221
 DNA 222

DNA Sequencing 224
 DNA Viruses 227
 Doctor, Family Practice 228
 Doctor, Specialist 229
 Drug Testing 232
 Dubos, René 233

PHOTO AND ILLUSTRATION

CREDITS 235
 GLOSSARY 243
 TOPIC OUTLINE 263
 INDEX 273

VOLUME 2

FOR YOUR REFERENCE v

E

Echinoderm 1
 Ecological Research, Long-Term 3
 Ecology 4
 Ecology, History of 5
 Ecosystem 7
 Electron Microscopy 10
 Electrophoresis 13
 Emergency Medical Technician 15
 Endangered Species 16
 Endocrine System 18
 Endocytosis 22
 Endoplasmic Reticulum 25
 Entomologist 27
 Environmental Health 28
 Enzymes 29
 Epidemiologist 36
 Epithelium 37
 Estuaries 38
 Ethnobotany 40
 Eubacteria 41
 Eudicots 43
 Evolution 44
 Evolution, Evidence for 52
 Evolution of Plants 55
 Excretory Systems 60
 Exocytosis 62
 Extinction 64
 Extracellular Matrix 68
 Extreme Communities 69
 Eye 72