

## **LIFE, SEX, SONGS, SCRAT AND THE SPONGE: AUSTRALIA'S GUINNESS BOOK OF EVOLUTIONARY RECORDS**

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Australians have for too long labored under the early European delusion that the natural productions of Australia are somehow less remarkable than those that evolved in other lands. In reality, many if not most of the major events in the history of life on Earth took place in Australia. Steadily accumulating discoveries in the fossil record and in the living world make it increasingly clear that a surprising number of the world's first, biggest and most extraordinary creatures evolved here. Far from being the evolutionary backwater some northerners have presumed, this place records the first traces of life, the first sex, the first animal, the first tetrapod, the biggest dinosaur, the biggest bird, the first songbird, the most ferocious mammalian carnivore and many other awesome creatures that demonstrate that Australia has punched well above its weight in churning out record-breaking beasts that should humble the rest of Creation.