

## Does competition drive diversity of species?

In Darwinian evolution, organisms compete for resources, and the winners get to pass their genome to future generations. According to these rules, two similar species using the same resources in the same environment will be forced to compete with each other. If both are to survive, they will need to become more distinct from each other over time. The famous naturalist E. O. Wilson, along with collaborator William Brown, dubbed this pattern character displacement in the 1950s and proposed that it explains much of the diversity among the world's organisms.

"It's one of the main Darwinian ideas for explaining why species are different," said Joseph Tobias, an evolutionary biologist at Oxford University. But some scientists, including Tobias, are now questioning the data supporting character displacement as a driving force in the evolution of diversity.

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