

Podcast: From Jurassic Park to woolly mammoths – is it right to bring back extinct species?



Geneticist Kat Arney takes a look at the science of de-extinction, asking whether it's feasible – or even ethical – to bring species back from the past.

In 2003, Spanish researchers used cloning techniques to bring back the recently extinct bucardo (a type of mountain goat), only for the first cloned animal to die within minutes of birth. Other scientists are using genetic engineering techniques to stitch together the genomes of extinct species like passenger pigeons and woolly mammoths with their modern-day relatives.

Could these tools ever be used to bring back the biggest animals of them all, the dinosaurs? And is all this effort really worth it, or should we be focusing on conserving the species we already have on Earth?

<https://geneticliteracyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/027-Uprooting-the-Tree-of-Life-Genetics-Unzipped.mp3>

Arney also investigates the history of one of the most famous diagrams in biology – the Tree Of Life – which Charles Darwin famously drew in 1837 to illustrate the evolutionary relationships between species.

Today's trees much more complex, bushy thickets, informed by modern genomics. But all this data brings a new challenge: deciding what counts as a species in the first place.

[Full transcript, credits and show notes are available here.](#)

Genetics Unzipped is the podcast from the UK [Genetics Society](#), presented by award-winning science communicator and biologist [Kat Arney](#) and produced by [First Create the Media](#). Follow Kat on Twitter [@Kat_Arney](#), Genetics Unzipped [@geneticsunzip](#), and the Genetics Society at [@GenSocUK](#)

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