



## CHARLES DARWIN AND THE THEORY OF NATURAL SELECTION

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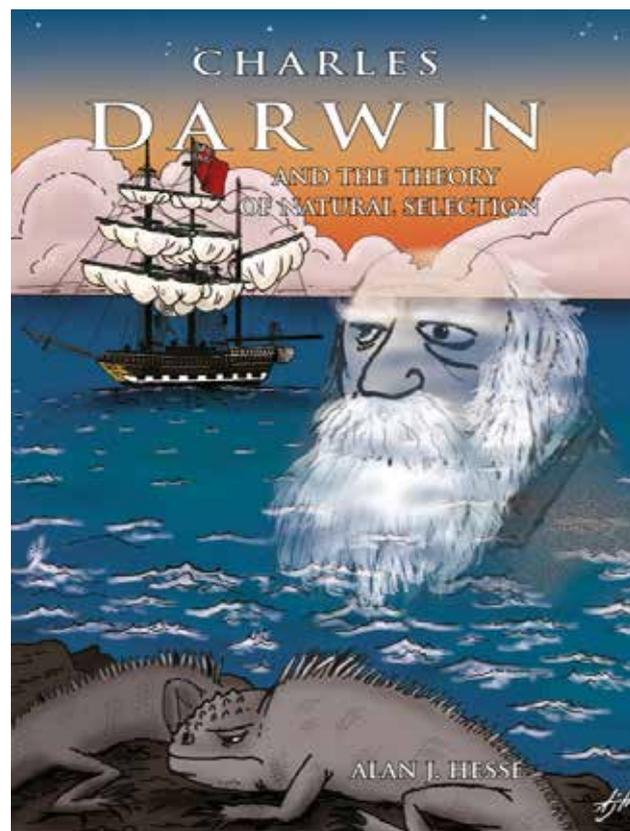
**Reviewed by:** Helen Silvester

As a biologist and teacher, I loved this graphic novel. It is one that I will read and reread to remind me of the background of the key players in Charles Darwin's life and his (and Wallace's) theory of natural selection. The author uses illustrations to convey life into the various scientists that contributed to the twenty-year study that led to the publishing of the 'Origin of the Species'. There are many sections that mirror the details found in Darwin's journal or the resulting publication.

The illustrations are attractive and the slightly flawed nature of the characters is appealing. The history of the key players is presented at the front and end of the graphic novel, and provides insights into their relationship with Darwin.

Some narrative is delivered above the illustrations that links the characters and occasionally compared the way samples were gathered in Darwin's day to that of modern day sampling techniques. The 'voice' used in these sections is very relatable to most secondary students.

Although the content is relevant to Year 10 Evolution in the Australian Curriculum, some advanced students in younger year levels (possibly Years 8–9) would enjoy the style of reading. Average students in the lower or primary year levels would



find some of the concepts complex and the metacognition required to process and genuinely comprehend the text would be beyond them. It is a shame that this could not have been presented in a way that introduced these concepts at a primary level.

Despite not being able to use this graphic novel in a standard classroom setting, I plan on keeping it in my classroom when I teach Year 10 Evolution, for those students who have an interest, or for those who find the textbook too dense to read.