



# Evolution and the Theory of Games

*By John Maynard Smith*

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## Evolution and the Theory of Games By John Maynard Smith

In this 1982 book, the theory of games, first developed to analyse economic behaviour, is modified so that it can be applied to evolving populations. John Maynard Smith's concept of an evolutionarily stable strategy is relevant whenever the best thing for an animal or plant to do depends on what others are doing. The theory leads to testable predictions about the evolution of behaviour, of sex and genetic systems, and of growth and life history patterns. This book contains a full account of the theory, and of the data relevant to it. The account is aimed at senior undergraduate and graduate students, teachers and research workers in animal behaviour, population genetics and evolutionary biology. The book will also be of interest to mathematicians and game theorists; the mathematics has been largely confined to appendixes so that the main text may be easily followed by biologists.

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"Of those two near-contradictory things publishers say about a book, that it is 'seminal' and that it is 'long-awaited', *Evolution and the Theory of Games* somehow manages to make me think of both at once....This is a book that must be read by every serious ethologist/sociobiologist....It is unmistakably a brilliant book by one of the most important contributors to ethology in its history, still at the height of his powers. The only reason we don't call him an ethologist is that he is so much else besides....the gems of wisdom and biological insight are still there on every page, and ethologists can spend many happy field sessions testing the ideas here." Richard Dawkins, *Animal Behaviour*

### **About the Author**

John Maynard Smith is an eminent evolutionary biologist and author of many books on evolution, both for scientists and the general public. He is professor emeritus at the University of Sussex, UK, Fellow of the Royal Society, winner of the Darwin Medal, and laureate of the Crafoord Prize of the Swedish Academy of Sciences. David Harper is Senior Lecturer in Evolution, School of Biological Sciences, University of Sussex, UK.

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