Extinction

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Extinction is the termination of an organism by the death of its last member. A taxon may become functionally extinct before the death of its last member if it loses the capacity to reproduce and recover. As a species' potential range may be very large, determining this moment is difficult, and is usually done retrospectively. This difficulty leads to phenomena such as Lazarus taxa, where a species presumed extinct abruptly "reappears" (typically in the fossil record) after a period of apparent absence.

Over five billion species are estimated to have died out. It is estimated that there are currently around 8.7 million species of eukaryotes globally, possibly many times more if microorganisms are included. Notable extinct animal species include non-avian dinosaurs, saber-toothed cats, and mammoths...

Holocene extinction

The Holocene extinction, also referred to as the Anthropocene extinction or the sixth mass extinction, is an ongoing extinction event caused exclusively

The Holocene extinction, also referred to as the Anthropocene extinction or the sixth mass extinction, is an ongoing extinction event caused exclusively by human activities during the Holocene epoch. This extinction event spans numerous families of plants and animals, including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates, impacting both terrestrial and marine species. Widespread degradation of biodiversity hotspots such as coral reefs and rainforests has exacerbated the crisis. Many of these extinctions are undocumented, as the species are often undiscovered before their extinctions.

Current extinction rates are estimated at 100 to 1,000 times higher than natural background extinction rates and are accelerating. Over the past 100–200 years, biodiversity loss has reached such...

Extinction event

Marine extinction intensity during Phanerozoic % Millions of years ago (H) K–Pg Tr–J P–Tr Cap Late D O–S An extinction event (also known as a mass extinction

An extinction event (also known as a mass extinction or biotic crisis) is a widespread and rapid decrease in the biodiversity on Earth. Such an event is identified by a sharp fall in the diversity and abundance of multicellular organisms. It occurs when the rate of extinction increases with respect to the background extinction rate and the rate of speciation.

Estimates of the number of major mass extinctions in the last 540 million years range from as few as five to more than twenty. These differences stem from disagreement as to what constitutes a "major" extinction event, and the data chosen to measure past diversity.

Human extinction

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Human extinction or omnicide is the end of the human species, either by population decline due to extraneous natural causes, such as an asteroid impact or large-scale volcanism, or via anthropogenic destruction (self-extinction).

Some of the many possible contributors to anthropogenic hazard are climate change, global nuclear annihilation, biological warfare, weapons of mass destruction, and ecological collapse. Other scenarios center on emerging technologies, such as advanced artificial intelligence, biotechnology, or self-replicating nanobots.

The scientific consensus is that there is a relatively low risk of near-term human extinction due to natural causes. The likelihood of human extinction through humankind's own activities, however, is a current area of research and debate.

Extinction Rebellion

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Extinction Rebellion (abbreviated as XR) is a UK-founded global environmental movement, with the stated aim of using nonviolent civil disobedience to compel government action to avoid tipping points in the climate system, biodiversity loss, and the risk of social and ecological collapse. Extinction Rebellion was established in Stroud in May 2018 by Gail Bradbrook, Simon Bramwell, Roger Hallam, Stuart Basden, along with six other co-founders from the campaign group Rising Up!

Its first major action was to occupy the London Greenpeace offices on 17 October 2018, which was followed by the public launch at the "Declaration of Rebellion" on 31 October 2018 outside the UK Parliament. Earlier that month, about one hundred academics signed a call to action in their support. In November 2018, five bridges...

Extinction vortex

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Extinction vortices are a class of models through which conservation biologists, geneticists and ecologists can understand the dynamics of and categorize extinctions in the context of their causes. This model shows the events that ultimately lead small populations to become increasingly vulnerable as they spiral toward extinction. Developed by M. E. Gilpin and M. E. Soulé in 1986, there are currently four classes of extinction vortices. The first two (R and D) deal with environmental factors that have an effect on the ecosystem or community level, such as disturbance, pollution, habitat loss etc. Whereas the second two (F and A) deal with genetic factors such as inbreeding depression and outbreeding depression, genetic drift etc.

Extinction (astronomy)

In astronomy, extinction is the absorption and scattering of electromagnetic radiation by dust and gas between an emitting astronomical object and the

In astronomy, extinction is the absorption and scattering of electromagnetic radiation by dust and gas between an emitting astronomical object and the observer. Interstellar extinction was first documented as such in 1930 by Robert Julius Trumpler. However, its effects had been noted in 1847 by Friedrich Georg Wilhelm von Struve, and its effect on the colors of stars had been observed by a number of individuals who did not connect it with the general presence of galactic dust. For stars lying near the plane of the Milky Way which are within a few thousand parsecs of the Earth, extinction in the visual band of frequencies (photometric system) is roughly 1.8 magnitudes per kiloparsec.

For Earth-bound observers, extinction arises both from the interstellar medium and the Earth's atmosphere; it...

Cretaceous-Paleogene extinction event

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The Cretaceous–Paleogene (K–Pg) extinction event, formerly known as the Cretaceous-Tertiary (K–T) extinction event, was the mass extinction of three-quarters of the plant and animal species on Earth approximately 66 million years ago. The event caused the extinction of all non-avian dinosaurs. Most other tetrapods weighing more than 25 kg (55 lb) also became extinct, with the exception of some ectothermic species such as sea turtles and crocodilians. It marked the end of the Cretaceous period, and with it the Mesozoic era, while heralding the beginning of the current geological era, the Cenozoic Era. In the geologic record, the K–Pg event is marked by a thin layer of sediment called the K–Pg boundary or K–T boundary, which can be found throughout the world in marine and terrestrial rocks. The...

Late Ordovician mass extinction

the end-Ordovician mass extinction or the Ordovician–Silurian extinction, is the first of the "big five" major mass extinction events in Earth's history

The Late Ordovician mass extinction (LOME), sometimes known as the end-Ordovician mass extinction or the Ordovician–Silurian extinction, is the first of the "big five" major mass extinction events in Earth's history, occurring roughly 445 million years ago (Ma). It is often considered to be the second-largest-known extinction event just behind the end-Permian mass extinction, in terms of the percentage of genera that became extinct. Extinction was global during this interval, eliminating 49–60% of marine genera and nearly 85% of marine species. Under most tabulations, only the Permian–Triassic mass extinction exceeds the Late Ordovician mass extinction in biodiversity loss. The extinction event abruptly affected all major taxonomic groups and caused the disappearance of one third of all brachiopod...

Permian–Triassic extinction event

Marine extinction intensity during Phanerozoic % Millions of years ago (H) K–Pg Tr–J P–Tr Cap Late D O–S The Permian–Triassic extinction event, colloquially

The Permian–Triassic extinction event, colloquially known as the Great Dying, was an extinction event that occurred approximately 251.9 million years ago (mya), at the boundary between the Permian and Triassic geologic periods, and with them the Paleozoic and Mesozoic eras. It is Earth's most severe known extinction event, with the extinction of 57% of biological families, 62% of genera, 81% of marine species, and 70% of terrestrial vertebrate species. It is also the greatest known mass extinction of insects. It is the greatest of the "Big Five" mass extinctions of the Phanerozoic. There is evidence for one to three distinct pulses, or phases, of extinction.

The scientific consensus is that the main cause of the extinction was the flood basalt volcanic eruptions that created the Siberian Traps...

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