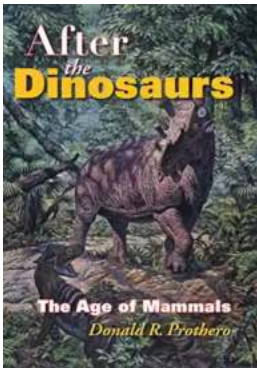




competing with colossal reptiles for resources and habitats, mammals began to flourish in a variety of ways.



## After the Dinosaurs: The Age of Mammals

by Donald R. Prothero (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 57402 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 370 pages

Lending : Enabled



One of the key developments during this era was the evolution of early primates. These small, tree-dwelling mammals paved the way for future primate species, eventually leading to the emergence of our own ancestors. With their arboreal lifestyles, leaping abilities, and increased intelligence, primates adapted to an array of environments around the world.

### The Diversification of Mammals

As time progressed, mammals continued to diversify and dominate various ecological niches. The Earth witnessed the emergence of massive mammals such as mammoths, saber-toothed cats, and giant ground sloths. These incredible creatures roamed the planet, each adapted to thrive in different terrains and climates.

One particularly fascinating group of mammals that thrived during this period were the early cetaceans, which eventually evolved into the majestic whales we

know today. These marine giants, once land-dwelling animals, underwent an extraordinary transformation, developing specialized adaptations for life in the oceans. Witnessing the transition from land to sea in these early mammals is truly awe-inspiring.

## **Climate Changes and Global Impact**

Throughout the Age of Mammals, the Earth experienced significant climatic shifts, influencing the evolution and distribution of various mammalian species. It was during this time that mammals began to adapt to colder environments, evolving traits like thick fur and hibernation to survive harsh winters.

These climatic changes also had an immense impact on the diversity and distribution of vegetation, which, in turn, influenced the availability of food for mammals. In response, many species adapted to consume different types of plants, leading to further diversification and specialization within the mammalian kingdom.

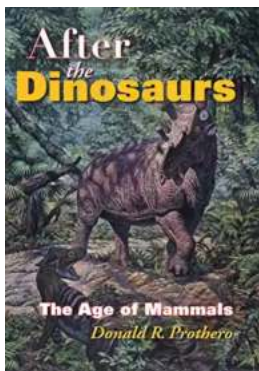
## **The Arrival of Humans**

Finally, in the latter stages of the Age of Mammals, the evolution of our own species, *Homo sapiens*, took place. Our ancestors, initially small and inconspicuous mammals, emerged from the ranks and eventually became the dominant species on planet Earth. The story of our evolution, from early hominids to modern humans, intertwines with the remarkable history of mammalian evolution.

Today, we are fortunate enough to explore the remnants of this remarkable era through fossil records and scientific research. The Age of Mammals serves as a testament to the incredible adaptability and resilience of our mammalian ancestors.

The aftermath of the dinosaurs' reign witnessed the dawn of a new era - The Age of Mammals. It was a time of profound change and diversification, as mammals rose to prominence and adapted to various environments. From the evolution of primates to the incredible transformations of early cetaceans, the Age of Mammals showcases the wonders of evolution and the remarkable history of our mammalian ancestors.

As we continue to uncover fossils and delve deeper into the mysteries of the past, we develop a greater appreciation for the rich tapestry of life that has existed on Earth. The Age of Mammals is a chapter in this fascinating story that reminds us of the extraordinary possibilities that await discovery.



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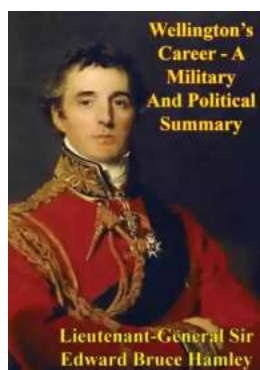
A fascinating study of the thousands of new animal species that walked in the footsteps of the dinosaurs—and the climate changes that brought them forth.

The fascinating group of animals called dinosaurs became extinct some 65 million years ago (except for their feathered descendants). In their place evolved

an enormous variety of land creatures, especially mammals, which in their way were every bit as remarkable as their Mesozoic cousins. The Age of Mammals, the Cenozoic Era, has never had its Jurassic Park, but it was an amazing time in earth's history, populated by a wonderful assortment of bizarre animals.

The rapid evolution of thousands of species of mammals brought forth many incredible creatures—including our own ancestors. Their story is part of a larger story of new life emerging from the greenhouse conditions of the Mesozoic, warming up dramatically about 55 million years ago, and then cooling rapidly so that 33 million years ago the glacial ice returned. The earth's vegetation went through equally dramatic changes, from tropical jungles in Montana and forests at the poles. Life in the sea underwent striking evolution reflecting global climate change, including the emergence of such creatures as giant sharks, seals, sea lions, dolphins, and whales.

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