

## The Evolution of Senescence in the Tree of Life

The existing theory on the evolution of senescence assumes that because ageing is inevitable in humans, this must be the case for all organisms. However, recent studies have shown that this is not necessarily true. A better understanding of senescence and its underlying mechanisms could have far-reaching consequences for conservation and eco-evolutionary research. This book is the first to offer inter-disciplinary perspectives on the evolution of senescence in many species, setting the stage for further developments. It brings together new insights from a wide range of scientific fields and cutting-edge research done on a multitude of different animals, plants and microbes, giving the reader a complete overview of recent developments and of the controversy currently surrounding the topic. Written by specialists from a variety of disciplines, this book is a valuable source of information for graduates and researchers interested in ageing and life history traits and populations.

**Richard P. Shefferson** is an associate professor at the University of Tokyo's Organization for Programs on Environmental Sciences and earned his PhD in 2004 at the University of California, Berkeley. He studies the evolutionary ecology of plants and fungi, of which senescence is one key topic. He currently serves as an associate editor for the *Journal of Ecology* and regularly serves on funding panels for the National Science Foundation, the American Philosophical Society and other agencies. He has authored more than forty scientific papers in the top journals in ecology and evolution, including *Ecology*, *Journal of Ecology* and *Proceedings of the Royal Society Series B*.

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# The Evolution of Senescence in the Tree of Life

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The science of ageing is in many ways an ironic field, since we age in the process of conducting the research. Nevertheless, conducting research is an immensely pleasurable activity to those lucky enough to engage in it, and though it may not slow the inevitable march to the grave, at least it makes the journey a fascinating one. Editing this book may have been an ironic pleasure, but a pleasure it most definitely was!

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We hope you enjoy this book.