

## EYES WIDE OPEN

Evolutionary biology is a cornerstone of modern science. Yet, many people remain skeptical. A 2008 report from the National Academy of Sciences, which HHMI is helping to distribute to schools and to the public, seeks to reveal the strong evidence supporting evolution and its relevance to today's most important questions.

As individuals and societies, we are now making decisions that will have profound consequences for future generations. How should we balance the need to preserve the Earth's plants, animals, and natural environment against other pressing concerns? Should we alter our use of fossil fuels and other natural resources to enhance the well-being of our descendants? To what extent should we use our new understanding of biology on a molecular level to alter the characteristics of living things?

None of these decisions can be made wisely without considering biological evolution. People need to understand evolution, its role within the broader scientific enterprise, and its vital implications

for some of the most pressing social, cultural, and political issues of our time.

Science and technology are so pervasive in modern society that students increasingly need a sound education in the core concepts, applications, and implications of science. Because evolution has and will continue to serve as a critical foundation of the biomedical and life sciences, helping students learn about and understand the scientific evidence, mechanisms, and implications of evolution are fundamental to a high-quality science education.

Science and religion are different ways of understanding. Needlessly placing them in opposition reduces the potential of both to contribute to a better future.

*From the National Academy of Sciences/Institute of Medicine report "Science, Evolution, and Creationism" © 2008 National Academies Press, Washington, D.C. Reprinted with permission of the National Academy of Sciences. For more about the report, visit [www.nap.edu/sec](http://www.nap.edu/sec).*

