

Species Can Change Rapidly

African green monkeys were introduced to several Caribbean islands in the 17th century. Scientists studying them 300 years later discovered they had changed enough to distinguish them from their ancestral population. In contrast, fossil species show greater stability than one would expect if they actually lived for millions of years.



A green monkey, *Chlorocebus sabaeus*, in Barbados

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Laysan finches were introduced to other islands on the Pearl and Hermes Reef in an effort to protect the species from extinction by storms. Within twenty years, one of the populations showed changes in their beaks. Species can make minor changes rapidly to adapt to changes in their environment.



Laysan finches, *Telespiza cantans*

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