



Charles Darwin

Information sheet

Charles Darwin was an English Naturalist born on **February 12, 1809** in Shrewsbury, England. He is best known for developing a **theory of evolution** to explain biological change. This theory showed how Man evolved from lower life forms. With this theory, Darwin shocked religious Victorian Society by suggesting that animals and humans shared a common ancestry. He planned to study medicine at Edinburgh University as he came from a family of doctors. Eventually, he was offered a place on the HMS Beagle as a natural scientist in 1831. This voyage ended in 1836.

Quick Facts:

- Darwin was married to his first cousin, Emma Wedgwood.
- Charles and Emma had 10 children together, three of whom died as an infant
- On his voyage, Darwin studied **tortoises**. He noticed that each island had a different species of tortoise
- He also studied **finches**. Each island had a different species of finch.
- He wrote many books about his voyage, **Journal of Researches, Coral Reefs, Volcanic Islands** and **Geographical Observations on South America**.
- His memorial work **The Origin of Species** was published on November 24, 1859.
- He wrote his last book on earthworms which published in October 1881.
- Darwin appears on the back of the British 10 pound note along with an image of HMS Beagle, a magnifying lens and flora and fauna seen on his travels.
- When in Cambridge University, he formed the Gourmet Club for the purpose of dining on exotic animals.
- Charles Darwin **passed away** on **April 19, 1882** at Down House, Kent.
- He was honoured by burial in Westminster Abbey next to fellow scientists John Herschel and Sir Isaac Newton.
- Charles Darwin's father was a doctor and he really wanted Charles to study medicine at university. Charles started to train to be a doctor, but he was afraid of the sight of blood, and switched to studying the classics. However, Charles soon realised that his real passion was for **geology** (the study of the Earth and rocks) and **botany** (plant biology).
- A **statue** of him has been placed in the main hall of **London's Natural History Museum**.
- More than **120 species** have been named after Darwin.

