

Graber Reviews

Giraffe's Neck

Francis Hitching's new book, *The Neck of the Giraffe* (Ticknor & Fields, \$13.95), is reviewed for the Los Angeles Times by David Graber, NPS ecologist at Sequoia and Kings Canyon NPs. The review appeared in client papers throughout the country in September.

Graber describes Hitching's suggestion of "a mystical organizing principle of life," using the similarity of organs in different creatures as evidence. That same evidence in living fossil creatures traditionally has been used to demonstrate how evolution uses the parts at hand to fashion new creatures, proceeding step by incremental step."

Some alternative views are considered in the Graber review.

"There are important and exciting new ideas in the wind," he writes. "it may well be that forces in addition to natural selection will be found to contribute significantly to evolution. Darwin's belief in the necessity of minute progressive changes has been rejected by many prominent evolutionists, who nonetheless call themselves 'Darwinians.' Steven Stanley ('The New Evolutionary Timetable') and Stephen Jay Gould ('The Panda's Thumb') offer well-written and learned fare for the non-biologist, both with better science than 'Giraffe.' "