

Edward Osborne Wilson

[b. Birmingham, Alabama, June 10,1929]

Wilson first distinguished himself by becoming the world's leading authority on ants. His discoveries included the finding that ants communicate primarily through [pheromones](#). Wilson then became the principal proponent of [sociobiology](#); his belief that there is a biological basis for the social behavior of all animals, including humans, has aroused much controversy. Wilson also has been a major voice in efforts to maintain Earth's [biodiversity](#).

Then



NARA/Harvard 306-PS-E-76—2052

Edward Osborne Wilson

NARA/Harvard 306-PS-E-76-2052

Now.....

E.O. Wilson



EDWARD O.WILSON is Pellegrino University Professor Emeritus at Harvard University. In addition to two Pulitzer Prizes (one of which he shares with Bert Hölldobler), Wilson has won many scientific awards, including the National Medal of Science and the Crafoord Prize of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

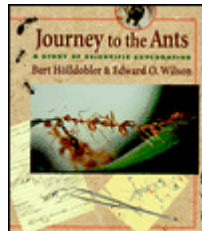
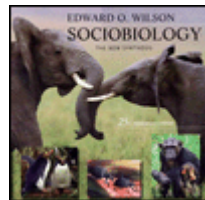
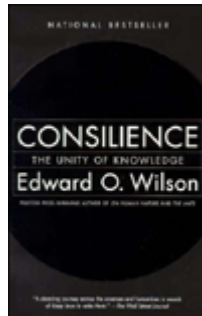
His books include *The Future of Life*; *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge*; *Diversity of Life*; *The Ants* (co-authored with Bert Hölldobler); *On Human Nature*; *Naturalist*;

Sociobiology: The New Synthesis, Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Edition; Journey to the Ants: A Story of Scientific Exploration (co-authored with Bert Hölldobler); and The Insect Societies.



E.O. Wilson Video [DSL](#) | [Modem](#)
Requires Real Player plug-in ([Free Download](#))

[A UNITED BIOLOGY: A Talk with E.O. Wilson](#) [5.28.03]



A Review of Consilience

Edward Wilson - [Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge](#)

Edward O. Wilson is used to stirring up controversy. A world-famous biologist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, named by *Time* magazine as one of America's 25 most influential people of the 20th century, this mild-mannered, courtly southerner has been raising hackles for much of his career. With *Consilience*, in which he proposes a bold explanation of the nature of the world and everything in it, the author of [Sociobiology](#) will once again arouse passionate debate. Wilson's premise in *Consilience* is that a common body of inherent principles underlies the entire human endeavor. "I believe that the Enlightenment thinkers of the 17th and 18th centuries got it mostly right the first time," he says. They assumed a lawful, perfectible material world in which knowledge is unified across the sciences and the humanities. Wilson calls this common groundwork of explanation that crosses all the great branches of learning "consilience," and he argues that we can indeed explain everything in the world through an understanding of a handful of natural laws.

The world he envisions is a material world that is organized by laws of physics and evolves according to the laws of evolution. Wilson makes his point through a fascinating tour through the Enlightenment and the age of scientific specialization. Among his bugaboos are "professional atomization," which works against the unification of knowledge, and cultural relativism ("what counts most in the long haul of history is seminality, not sentiment"). In examining how a few underlying physical principles can explain everything from the [birth of stars](#) to the workings of social institutions to a Mondrian painting, he offers fresh insight into what it means to be human.

Thoughtful readers with an interest in the future should consider Wilson's plea. This consilience of the natural sciences and the social sciences could equip future humankind with the analytical and predictive capacity to deal with the many changes wrought by humanity's recent global hegemony and, thereby, help "preserve the Creation." -- Harry E. Demarest *The San Francisco Chronicle*

Other web sites for E.O. Wilson

The Encyclopedia of Life <http://www.eol.org/>

Save America's Forests – E.O Wilson and Jane Goodall slide show to Congress

<http://www.saveamericasforests.org/>

Psychology at the crossroads – E.O Wilson lecture

<http://www.apa.org/monitor/oct99/nb1.html>

Fighting the real Terrorism - E.O.Wilson Essay

<http://dir.salon.com/story/people/conv/2002/01/14/eowilson/index.html>

E.O/ Wilson Foundation for Biodiversity <http://www.eowilson.org/>