

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910782657403321
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Titolo	On the nature of limbs [[electronic resource]] : a discourse // Richard Owen ; with a preface by Brian K. Hall ; with introductory essays by Ron Amundson ... [et. al]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Chicago, : University of Chicago Press, 2007
ISBN	9786612004988 1-282-00498-0 0-226-64195-3
Edizione	[University of Chicago Press ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (231 p.)
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Disciplina	571.3/1
Soggetti	Extremities (Anatomy) - Evolution
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Preface -- "Richard Owen and Animal Form" -- "Richard Owen's Quadrophenia: The Pull of Opposing Forces in Victorian Cosmogony" -- "The Mystery of Richard Owen's Winged Bull-Slayer" -- On the Nature of Limbs -- Plates
Sommario/riassunto	The most prominent naturalist in Britain before Charles Darwin, Richard Owen made empirical discoveries and offered theoretical innovations that were crucial to the proof of evolution. Among his many lasting contributions to science was the first clear definition of the term homology-"the same organ in different animals under every variety of form and function." He also graphically demonstrated that all vertebrate species were built on the same skeletal plan and devised the vertebrate archetype as a representation of the simplest common form of all vertebrates. Just as Darwin's ideas continue to propel the modern study of adaptation, so too will Owen's contributions fuel the new interest in homology, organic form, and evolutionary developmental biology. His theory of the archetype and his views on species origins were first

offered to the general public in *On the Nature of Limbs*, published in 1849. It reemerges here in a facsimile edition with introductory essays by prominent historians, philosophers, and practitioners from the modern evo-devo community.
