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Sommario/riassunto	The seemingly innocent observation that the activities of organisms bring about changes in environments is so obvious that it seems an unlikely focus for a new line of thinking about evolution. Yet niche construction--as this process of organism-driven environmental

modification is known--has hidden complexities. By transforming biotic and abiotic sources of natural selection in external environments, niche construction generates feedback in evolution on a scale hitherto underestimated--and in a manner that transforms the evolutionary dynamic. It also plays a critical role in ecology, supporting ecosystem engineering and influencing the flow of energy and nutrients through ecosystems. Despite this, niche construction has been given short shrift in theoretical biology, in part because it cannot be fully understood within the framework of standard evolutionary theory. Wedding evolution and ecology, this book extends evolutionary theory by formally including niche construction and ecological inheritance as additional evolutionary processes. The authors support their historic move with empirical data, theoretical population genetics, and conceptual models. They also describe new research methods capable of testing the theory. They demonstrate how their theory can resolve long-standing problems in ecology, particularly by advancing the sorely needed synthesis of ecology and evolution, and how it offers an evolutionary basis for the human sciences. Already hailed as a pioneering work by some of the world's most influential biologists, this is a rare, potentially field-changing contribution to the biological sciences.
