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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Rocks, time, and fossils -- Evolutionary processes -- The tree of life -- In the beginning -- The Paleozoic : "ancient life" -- The age of dinosaurs -- The age of mammals -- Of whales and primates -- Walkers and toolmakers -- A cognitive revolution.
Sommario/riassunto	"Endlessly absorbing and informative. It would be hard to imagine a better introduction to this most important and fascinating field."-Bill Bryson, author of A Short History of Nearly Everything Paleontology: A Brief History of Life is the fifth title published in the Templeton Science and Religion Series, in which scientists from a wide range of fields distill their experience and knowledge into brief tours of their respective specialties. In this volume, Ian Tattersall, a highly esteemed figure in the fields of anthropology, archaeology, and paleontology, leads a fascinating tour of the history of life and the evolution of human beings. Starting at the very beginning, Tattersall examines patterns of change in the biosphere over time, and the correlations of biological events with physical changes in the Earth's environment. He introduces the complex of evolutionary processes, situates human beings in the luxuriant diversity of Life (demonstrating that however

remarkable we may legitimately find ourselves to be, we are the product of the same basic forces and processes that have driven the evolutionary histories of all other creatures), and he places the origin of our extraordinary spiritual sensibilities in the context of the exaptational and emergent acquisition of symbolic cognition and thought. Concise and yet comprehensive, historically penetrating and yet up-to-date, responsibly factual and yet engaging, Paleontology serves as the perfect entree to science's greatest story.
