Quote: Phylogenetic Trees

Written by Administrator Tuesday, 07 May 2013 06:19 -

"Phylogenetic trees are common in today's scientific journals, but it is seldom realised how speculative they are because they look so real. This rhetorical power was significant in the popularisation and triumph of evolutionary theory. Yet phylogenies are only sketches of historical hypotheses, constructed from imperfect historical evidence fossils; morphological and anatomical similarity; biogeographic patterns; and, recently, comparison of different molecular sequences."

Geir Hestmark, "Temptations of the Tree (millenium essay) *Nature*, vol. 408, p911, 21 December 2000 (Ref. family trees, phylogeny, evolution)