



## The Story Of Earth & Life: A Southern African Perspective on a 4.6-Billion-Year Journey

By Bruce Rubidge, Terence McCarthy

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‘It is inordinately difficult for most people to relate past events described by earth scientists to the world we see around us today. Reason and logic are strained when they describe mountains that were once seas, or seas where there were once mountains. It is hoped that this book will go some way to alleviating this kind of difficulty.’-- from the Introduction Southern Africa is without equal in terms of geology, a treasure trove of valuable minerals with a geological history dating back some 3 600 million years. In addition, the evolution of plants and animals, especially mammals and dinosaurs, is well preserved in the region, which also has among the best records of the origin of modern man. The Story of Earth and Life provides a fascinating insight into this remarkable history – how southern Africa’s mineral deposits were formed, how its life evolved and how its landscape was shaped. Along the way readers will be enthralled by accounts of the Big Bang that marked the beginning of time and matter, by drifting and colliding continents, folding and fracturing rocks, meteors colliding with the Earth, volcanic eruptions, and the start of life. Other topics include why South Africa is so rich in minerals, how glacial deposits came to be found in the Karoo, why dinosaurs became extinct, how mammals developed from reptiles, and how closely humans are related to the apes. The answers to many such questions can be found here. The book is comprehensively illustrated with explanatory diagrams and full color photographs.

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#### **About the Author**

Prof. Terence McCarthy is Professor of Mineral Geochemistry at the University of the Witwatersrand. He has wide research interests in the earth sciences, including economic and environmental geology, geochemistry and geomorphology, and is a leading expert on the geology of wetlands, especially the Okavango Delta in Botswana.

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