



## Life in Our Phage World

By Forest Rohwer

Wholon. Hardcover. Condition: New. 404 pages. Dimensions: 11.0in. x 8.5in. x 1.2in. We share the Earth with more than 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 phages. Everywhere they thrive, from well-fed guts to near-boiling acidic springs, from cryoconite holes to endolithic fissures. They travel from one microbial host to the next as virions, their genetic weapons packaged inside a protective protein shell. If you could lay all of these nanoscopic phage virions side-by-side, the line-up would stretch over 42 million light years. Through their daily shenanigans they kill or collaborate with their microbial hosts to spur microbial evolution and maintain ecosystem functioning. We have learned much about them since their discovery by Frederick Twort a century ago. They also taught us that DNA, not protein, is the hereditary material, unraveled the triplet genetic code, and offered their enzymes as indispensable tools for the molecular biology revolution. More contributions will be forthcoming since the vast majority of phages await discovery. Phage genomes harbor the world's largest cache of unexplored genetic diversity, and we now have the equipment needed to go prospecting. Although there are field guides to birds, insects, wild flowers, even Bacteria, there was no such...



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