

What Is Life?

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From bacteria to biosphere, the evolution of life took a convoluted course. Science illuminates this path.

We live. We – people, birds, flowering plants, even algae glowing in the ocean at night – differ from rocks, steel, inanimate matter.

We are alive. But what does it mean to live, to be alive, to be a discrete being at once a part of the universe and separated from it by our skin?
What is life?

One of the world's foremost life scientists, author of *Symbiosis and Cell Evolution* and an early proponent of the Gaia theory, Lynn Margulis shares her thoughts on this age-old question.

Lynn Margulis

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Photo: *Myxococcus*, multicellular bacterium.
Brian Duval, University of Massachusetts.

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