

MGSE Workshop

Karl Popper's relevance for evolutionary biology

Thursday, 20 April 2023

Sir Karl Raimund Popper (1902 – 1994) was one of the 20th century's most influential philosophers of science. He is known for his rejection of the traditional and still widespread inductivist views on the scientific method in favour of empirical falsification. According to Popper, a theory in empirical sciences can never be proven, but it can be falsified, meaning that it can (and should) be scrutinised with decisive experiments.

In 1974, Popper argued that »Darwinism is not a testable scientific theory, but a metaphysical research programme«. While he retracted that judgement later, his stance towards Darwinism as a scientific theory remained cautious and circumspect.

In the workshop, we will learn about and discuss Popper's view on evolutionary theory and his continued relevance for the field of evolutionary biology.

Programme

10.00 – 12.00

Keynote Talks

Seminar Room, Northern Kavaliershäuschen, Schlossplatz 6

Koos Boomsma (Department of Biology, University of Copenhagen)

»The continued relevance of Karl Popper for evolutionary biology«

Ulrich Krohs (Department of Philosophy, University of Münster)

»How Popper got the fitness principle wrong – and why«

12.00 – 14.15

Lunch Break

14.15 – 17.00

Discussion Session

Social Room, Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity, Hüfferstr. 1