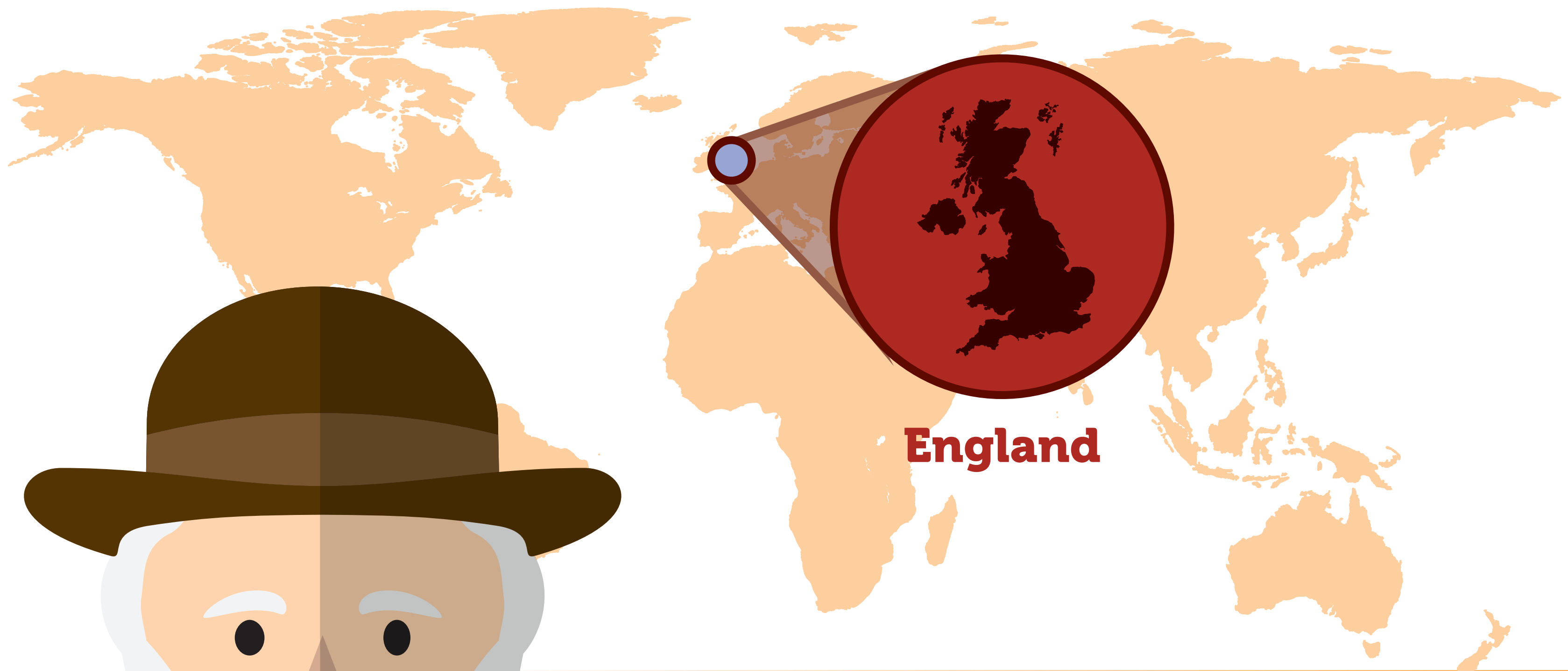


# Charles Darwin

The most important character in Evolution



**Charles Darwin**  
(1809-1882)

The idea that living things evolved over time, instead of being created by a supernatural force, is an idea that had already been considered long before Darwin. However, it was Darwin who first understood how it happens and was able to explain the process with a very simple and powerful theory: **Natural Selection**.

He was religious when young, and even planned to become a clergyman, but **fate led him to get a job in 1831 as a companion of Captain Robert FitzRoy, touring the Southern hemisphere on board the HMS Beagle for five years.** Darwin spent most of his time observing the animals found during his voyage, studying the fossils they saw, and sending back to England samples of species unknown in Europe. **The trip had such an effect on him that when he returned to England, he became a scholar of nature and developed his theory during the following 20 years,** which would undoubtedly move him away from religion.



He learned by chance that Alfred Russel Wallace had reached a very similar theory while touring Brazil and Southeast Asia. This event hastened the presentation of his theory to the Linnean Society in London in 1858 and the publication of his masterpiece *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. Darwin's theory, known as Natural Selection, is the theory that has most impacted the view man has of himself, his home and his place in the universe. Most probably, Darwin, along with Newton, is one of the greatest scientists that have ever lived.