

Figure 5.4. Interactive Graph. The Equilibrium Theory of Island Biogeography helps us understand that the number of species on an island or habitat patch is the balance of two forces: immigration and extirpation. Figure redrawn from MacArthur and Wilson (1967).

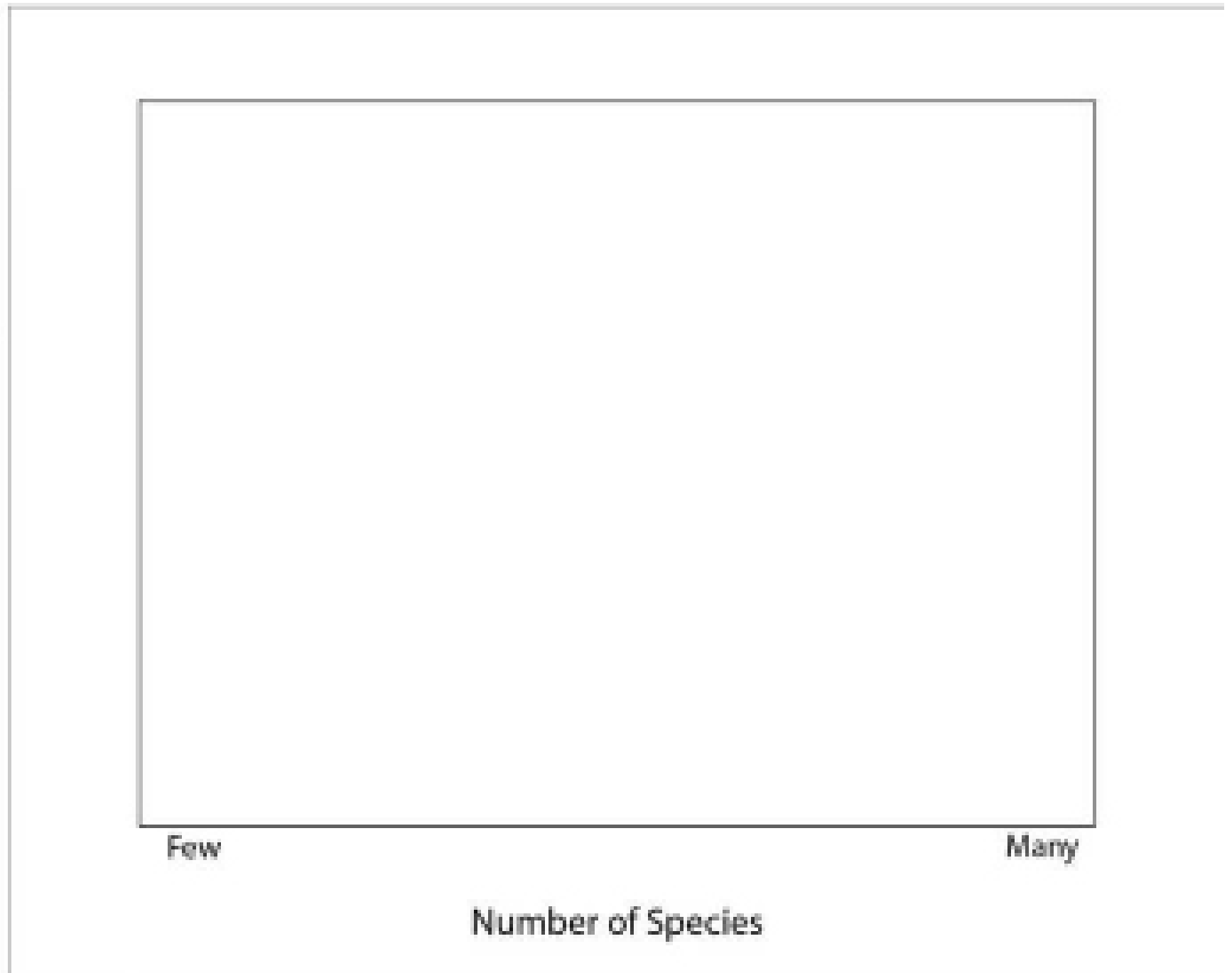
**How many species?
(1 of 14)**

Let's start by assuming that new islands emerged in the Atlantic and you spent the last few decades monitoring bird populations on the islands. (If you don't care for birds, you can substitute your favorite group of animals, plants, fungi, or lichens.)

You visited the islands every year. At first there were no birds, then a few kinds, eventually each island had many kinds of birds, but the list of bird species was different each year; sometimes more, sometimes fewer.

The horizontal axis of the graph represents the number of species counted each year on a single island.

Click the "next" button to continue.



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