

FUEGIANS AND THEIR ADAPTATION TO COLD

Darwin day, 12 February, commemorates the birth of Darwin in 1809. In his book, *The Voyage of the Beagle*, Darwin describes his encounter with Fuegians, the inhabitants of the Tierra del Fuego (South America). Fuegians were “naked and scarcely protected from the wind and rain of this tempestuous climate [and] sleep on the wet ground...”. Tierra del Fuego, closely facing the South Pole, has a very cold climate.

How did Fuegians adapt to such a cold climate? A paper by Watanabe et al. (1) has identified specific gene variants involved in the brown adipose tissue accumulation.

1. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-021-02783-1>