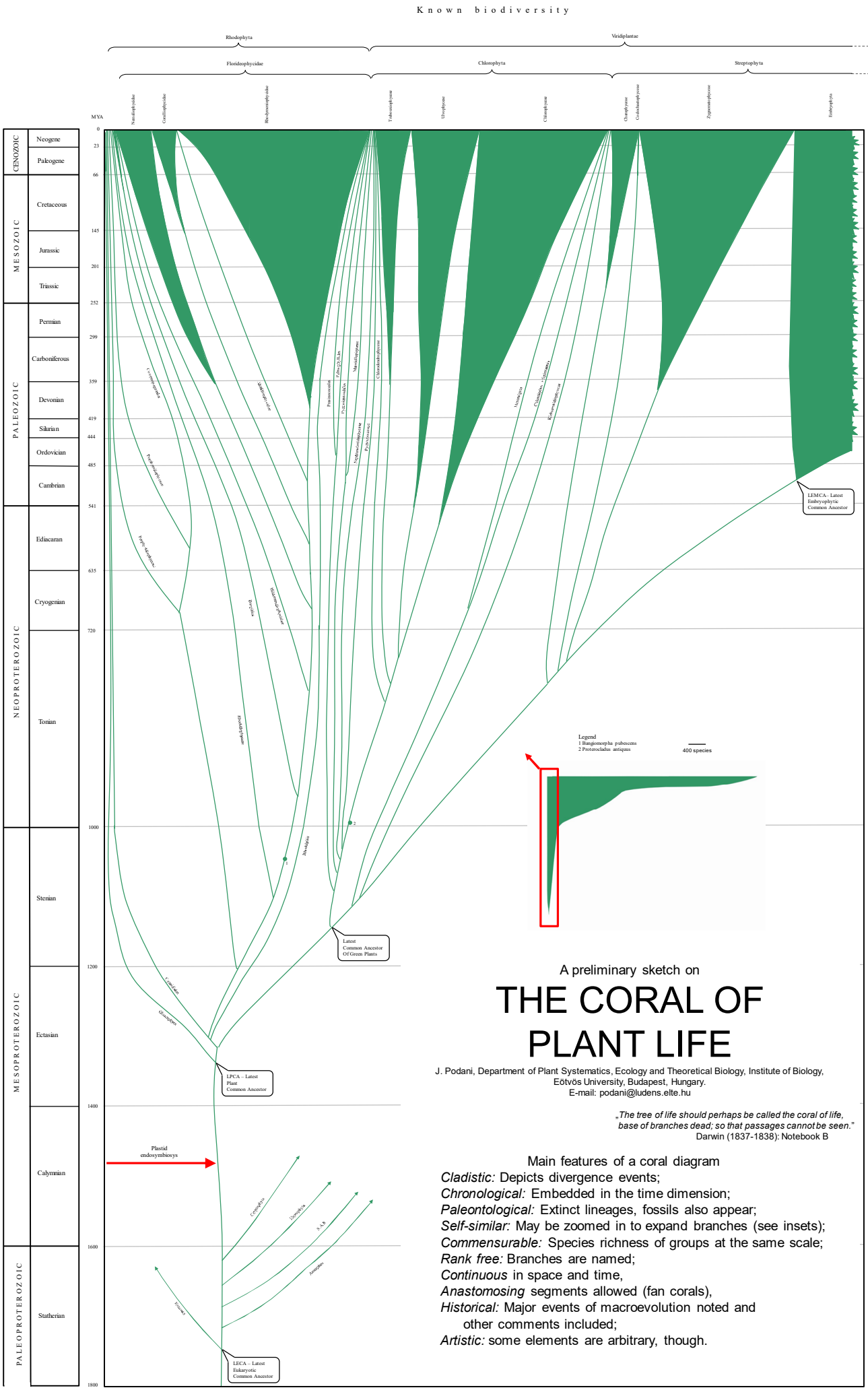

A preliminary sketch on

THE CORAL OF PLANT LIFE

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„The tree of life should perhaps be called the coral of life, base of branches dead; so that passages cannot be seen."
Darwin (1837-1838): Notebook B

Main features of a coral diagram

Cladistic: Depicts divergence events;
Chronological: Embedded in the time dimension;
Paleontological: Extinct lineages, fossils also appear;
Self-similar: May be zoomed in to expand branches (see insets);
Commensurable: Species richness of groups at the same scale;
Rank free: Branches are named;
Continuous in space and time,
Anastomosing segments allowed (fan corals),
Historical: Major events of macroevolution noted and other comments included;
Artistic: some elements are arbitrary, though.