

EVOLUTION: IS IT REALLY TRUE?¹

An Examination of the Fossil Record, Embryology, & Homology

INTRODUCTION:

Every intelligent person believes in the theory of evolution...at least that's what we are constantly told! A few examples of intimidation by evolutionary advocates:

“Today, the theory of evolution is an accepted fact for everyone but a ‘fundamentalist minority’, whose objections are based not on reasoning, but on doctrinaire adherence to religious principles.”²

“It is time for students of the evolutionary process, especially those who have been misquoted and used by the creationists, to state clearly that evolution is fact, not theory... Birds arose from non-birds and humans from nonhumans. No person who pretends to any understanding of the natural world can deny these facts any more than she or he can deny that the earth is round, rotates on its axis, and revolves around the sun.”³

“The first point to make about Darwin’s theory is that it is no longer a theory, but a fact,”⁴

“Ouch!” After statements like that, who’s willing to stand up either in or out of class and say they don’t believe in evolution? You might as well ask for volunteers to commit suicide! Yet quotes like those above are beautiful illustrations of several logical fallacies including “poisoning the wells” (where you seek to discredit a person and his position via slander and innuendo before he even has a chance to be heard), the “ad hominem” fallacy (where you attack and insult the man, instead of discussing and refuting his evidence), and “begging the question” (where you assume the very point you are supposed to be trying to prove—a tactic widely used by evolutionists). While such debate tricks are logically bankrupt, they are, nonetheless, very effective. Most of us get steamrolled by such techniques. A few more examples:

“No line of evidence more forcefully and clearly supports the fundamental principle of evolution—‘descent with accumulative modifications’—than that furnished by fossils.”⁵

Dr. William Dembski wisely comments: “Darwinism has achieved the status of inviolable science. Consequently, in challenging Darwinian theory, design theorists encounter a ruthless dogmatism...scientists who hold their theories dogmatically, go on to assert that their theories cannot be incorrect. Moreover, scientists who are ruthless in their dogmatism regard their theories as inviolable and critics as morally and intellectually deficient...A simple induction from past scientific failures should be enough to convince us that the only thing about which we cannot be wrong is the possibility that we might be wrong...Dogmatism is always a form of self-deception...Richard Feynman put it this way: ‘The first principle is that you must not fool yourself, and you are the easiest person to fool.’...Sadly, Feynman’s sound advice almost invariably gets lost when Darwin’s theory is challenged. It hardly makes for a free and open exchange of ideas when biologist Richard Dawkins asserts, ‘It is absolutely safe to say that if you meet somebody who claims not to believe in evolution, that person is ignorant, stupid, or insane (or wicked, but I’d rather not consider that).’ Nor does philosopher Michael Ruse help matters when he trumpets, ‘Evolution is a fact, fact, FACT!’ Nor, for that matter, does Stephen Jay Gould’s protégé Michael Shermer promote insight into the Darwinian mechanism of natural selection when he announces, ‘No one, and I mean no one, working in the field is debating whether natural selection is the driving force behind evolution, much less whether evolution happened or not.’”⁶

So evolutionists are very bold to tell us that evolution is unquestionably true, that the fossil record powerfully demonstrates that fact, and that anyone who doesn’t believe that is an idiot. Thus it will come as a bit of a shock to find out that, scientifically speaking, the truth is that the fossil record lends little, if any, support to the theory of evolution!

No one debates the fact that there can be variation within a type or kind of organism (e.g. big and small dogs; many varieties of trilobites; various kinds, colors and sizes of corn; etc, etc). This is sometimes referred to as “microevolution.” However one thing is for sure: We do not witness “macroevolution” in the fossil record i.e. the large transitions between major kinds or types of living organisms that evolution postulates. Michael Pitman of Cambridge comments:

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² James D. Watson, as quoted by Douglas J. Futuyma, “*Science on Trial-The Case for Evolution*” (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), p. 23. Dr. Watson is a molecular biologist who shared the Nobel Prize with Francis Crick, for discovering the structure of DNA.

³ Richard C. Lewontin, *Ibid.*, p. 161. Dr. Lewontin, a geneticist, held the Agassiz professorship at Harvard University at the time.

⁴ Sir Julian Huxley, 1960, cited by Norman Macbeth “*Darwin Retried-An Appeal to Reason*” (Ipswich, MA: Gambit Books, 1971), p. 147. Stephen J. Gould also wrote an article titled “*Evolution as Fact, and Theory*” essentially saying the same thing.

⁵ William H. Twenhofel and Robert R. Shrock, “*Invertebrate Paleontology*”, 1935 edition, as cited by Josh McDowell, “*Reasons Skeptics Should Consider Christianity*” (San Bernardino, CA: Here’s Life Publishers, 1981), p. 169.

⁶ “*Signs of Intelligence*”, William Dembski, editor. From the Introduction by Dembski, titled: “*What Intelligent Design is Not*” (Brazos Press: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2001), pp. 12-14.

*“The first process—the development of complex organisms from simpler ones—we have already called macro-evolution...More doubtful still is application of Darwinian theory to macroevolution; there is simply no direct evidence, from paleontology, biochemistry, embryology or elsewhere, that fish have been transformed into birds, bacteria into jellyfish or reptiles into whales...Though Darwin’s theory of evolution by natural selection has long been the concern of scientists in many disciplines, there are those who claim that it is not a scientifically based theory...Sir Karl Popper, the distinguished philosopher of science, has dubbed it unscientific in his book on scientific methodology, *The Unended Quest*. He calls it a ‘**metaphysical research programme**’ because it does not meet his most searching criterion: a theory is scientific only if it can in principle be falsified by experiment, and is capable of refutation.”⁷*

Unfortunately for the theory of evolution it is a fact that there is no evidence for the kind of major transitions between major kinds, groups, phyla, classes, orders, etc., that the theory proposes! Such major intermediate transitional forms (often referred to as “*missing links*”) are what evolutionists should produce from both living and fossil sources, if evolution is actually true-or even wishes to be considered a decent theory. However, prior to establishing that fact, we should examine another surprising phenomenon in the fossil record:

PERSISTENCE OF TYPES. When someone asks an evolutionist why we don’t see evolution occurring in the present as it allegedly has in the past, a typical answer is “*Evolution is still going on, but it happens very slowly and takes literally millions of years for major changes to occur and new organisms to appear.*” If so, then when one goes to the fossil record (assuming the evolutionist’s 600 million year dating scheme) we should see the evidence for evolution written in stone. We should see intermediates by the thousands-but we don’t! Perhaps even more surprising is the persistence of a vast array of types of organisms which have manifested little or no change over that vast time span. A remarkable number of plants and animals haven’t changed at all in allegedly nearly half a billion years:

“Insect wings appear in the fossil record, from the first, fully formed. No evolution, no intermediate forms are found, any more than transitional forms between orders of insects, such as grasshoppers, bees or damsel flies, are found. Insects have always been numerous and varied; they retain as many types in the present. They do not demonstrate plasticity. Indeed, it strikes me as strange that some ancient stock (say fishes, amphibians) should have been thought to split into a different group with astonishing plasticity, and worked up to human status, while their brothers have remained, with almost total rigidity, as they always were. These persistent types, of which insects are one of many, are a thorn in the side for evolution. Amber fossils indicate that ancient wings are essentially identical to modern forms. An extinct dragonfly in coal (Carboniferous) deposits had wings with a seventy-centimeter span. No intermediate forms exist between this type of wing, which cannot be folded, and those whose different mechanism enables them to be flexed and folded back into a resting position. There is no clue from the fossil record as to the origin of the iridescent wings of a dragonfly or the flight of the bee. A leap of faith is needed to believe in the evolution of the eye, a feather, an insect wing or any other special organ.”⁸

“Flies found in amber that is estimated to be 225 million years old are the same as today’s flies. The giraffe, with its incredibly long neck, has not changed in two million years, and it has no shorter-neck predecessors among the fossils. Rodents also appeared suddenly in the fossil record. Fish arrived without preceding fish-like fossils. Insects showed up without any precedents. Thousands of new species, discovered at the Burgess Shale in Canada and at a counterpart in China, exploded on the scene during the Cambrian period (sometimes called the biological big bang) 540 million years ago. No predecessor fossils have ever been found for 99 percent of some quite large and weird-looking animals. The opabinia had five eyes; there were worms with thorny noses to snag prey; and we’ve even found evidence of crawling creatures with eyes on the ends of stalks. There are no new phyla since the Cambrian period. Most species, according to the fossil record, evolved very little, if at all, before becoming extinct; the life expectancy of a species of animal might have extended a hundred thousand generations or a few million years, yet each generation continued to look much like, if not identical to, the previous generations. Take the beetle. It has not changed in two million years. Or the bowfin fish, which has not changed in 100 million years. The lungfish has not changed in 350 million years.”⁹

FOSSIL RECORD VIRTUALLY DEVOID OF EVIDENCE FOR EVOLUTION. In spite of the cocky, self-assured statements quoted above, the actual scientific fact is, the fossil record produces precious little evidence for gradual evolution-and is in fact an embarrassment to it. But don’t take my word for it. Let me quote a few statements-all by evolutionary scientists and experts-acknowledging this fact:

“From the almost total absence of fossil evidence relative to the origin of the phyla, it follows that any explanation of the mechanism in the creative evolution of the fundamental structural plans is heavily burdened with hypotheses...The lack of direct evidence leads to the formulation of pure conjectures as to the genesis of the phyla; we do not even have a basis to determine the extent to which these opinions are correct...”¹⁰

⁷ Michael Pitman, “*Adam and Evolution: A Scientific Critique of Neo-Darwinism*” (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984), pp. 20-21.

⁸ Pitman, op cit., p. 227. At the time of the writing of this book Pitman taught natural science at Cambridge University in England.

⁹ Geoffrey Simmons, M.D., “*What Darwin Didn’t Know*” (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2004), p. 304.

¹⁰ Dr. Pierre P. Grasse, “*Evolution of Living Organisms*” (New York: Academic Press, 1977), p. 31; cited in Jeremy Rifkin, “*Algeny-A New Word, A New World*” (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), p. 124. It is important to point out here that Dr. Grasse isn’t an obscure nobody, or a second rate scientist. Rifkin comments: “*Dr Grasse is one of the world’s greatest living biologists. In his review of (Grasse’s book “Evolution of Living Organisms”) Theodosius Dobzhansky...a staunch defender of Darwinist theory had to admit that Grasse’s observations were impossible to ignore simply because of his vast research experience. He is the editor of the twenty-eight*

“The known fossil record fails to document a single example of phyletic evolution accomplishing a major morphologic transition... and hence offers no evidence that the gradualistic model can be valid.”¹¹

“The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology (i.e. the study of fossils). The evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches; the rest is inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils.”¹²

“The fundamental reason why a lot of paleontologists don’t care much for gradualism is because the fossil record doesn’t show gradual change and every paleontologist has known that ever since Cuvier. If you want to get around that you have to invoke the imperfection of the fossil record. Every paleontologist knows that most species, most species, don’t change. That’s bothersome if you are trained to believe that evolution ought to be gradual.”¹³

“The fossil record is full of gaps and discontinuities, but they are all attributed to the notorious imperfection of the fossil record. The fossil record is imperfect (though much more complete than we have been led to believe-mwe¹⁴), but I think that is not an adequate explanation...”¹⁵

So the situation is this: The major types of organisms appear abruptly in the fossil record without connecting links between them, which is *precisely* what one would postulate and expect, if special creation, as described in the Bible in the book of Genesis, were true. And it is exactly what one would *not* expect to find if evolution (i.e. single cell to multi-cell, to fish, to amphibian, to reptile, to mammal) is true. (See Figure 1, below) The fossil record shows the abrupt appearance of (and sometimes extinction of) different life forms, without intermediate forms connecting them. In other words, the fossil record shows sudden appearance and stasis. So if we’re talking hard science, the palaeontological (fossil) evidence seems to clearly support creation and contradict evolution! Michael Pitman of Cambridge reiterates that fact in his book *Adam and Evolution*:

“Discontinuity is the issue. Where Darwin staked his claim on continuity, discontinuity is a primary prediction of the creationist model; and it correlates the known data well. Today we recognize through the taxonomic system, the distinctions between organisms. For the past, palaeontologists are aware that the fossil record contains precious little in the way of intermediate forms. Most new species, genera and families, and nearly all categories above the level of families, appear in the record suddenly and are not led up to by known, gradual, completely continuous transitional sequences. A critical analysis of zoological groups, including fossil and recent species, shows that most of them ‘froze’ in their present state a very long time ago. In the last 10 to 400 million years, all of them have exhibited only slight variations; no new, broad organizational plan has appeared for several hundred million years...”

“No one is more aware of the inadequacies of the fossil record than the (evolutionary) geologists themselves. As Darwin wrote: ‘The geological record is extremely imperfect¹⁶ and this fact will to a large extent explain why we do not find interminable varieties, connecting together all the extinct and existing forms of life by the finest graduated steps (sic). He who rejects these views on the nature of the geological record, will rightly reject my whole theory.’ Steven J. Gould, a modern evolutionist adds a sad postscript: ‘Palaeontologists have paid an exorbitant price for Darwin’s argument. We fancy ourselves as the only true students of life’s history, yet to preserve our favoured account of evolution by natural selection we view our data as so bad that we almost never see the very process we profess to study.’”¹⁷

But are the “missing links” still missing? To judge by the sensational headlines that regularly appear in newspapers and on internet news websites, one would think the fossil evidence is enormous, irrefutable, and growing greater by the day. However, those who know fossils, know better. Dr. Niles Eldredge frankly admits that yes the missing links are still missing: “*But no one has found any*

volumes “*Traite’ de Zoologie*” and ex-president of the French Academy of Sciences. According to Dobzhansky, ‘His knowledge of the living world is encyclopedic’(!) (Algeny, p. 116). Another source states that Grasse, “held the Chair of Evolution at the Sorbonne in Paris for twenty years”-so he certainly cannot be dismissed as a “creationist!” (Paul S. Taylor, “*The Illustrated Origins Answer Book*” [Eden Productions: Mesa, AZ, 1990], p. 87). Grasse has made other honest but devastatingly indicting comments in regard to evolution, e.g. “Their success among certain biologists, philosophers, and sociologists notwithstanding, the explanatory doctrines of biological evolution do not stand up to an objective, in-depth criticism. They prove to be either in conflict with reality or else incapable of solving the major problems involved... Through use and abuse of hidden postulates, of bold, often ill-founded extrapolations, a pseudoscience has been created. It is taking root in the very heart of biology and is leading astray many biochemists and biologists, who sincerely believe that the accuracy of fundamental concepts has been demonstrated, which is not the case.” (“*Evolution of Living Organisms*” [New York: Academic Press, 1977], pp. 202 & 6; cited by Rifkin, p. 117).

¹¹ Steven M. Stanley, “*Macroevolution: Pattern and Process*” (San Francisco: W.M. Freeman and Company, 1979), p. 39. Stanley was a member of the science faculty at Johns Hopkins University at the time he wrote this book.

¹² Stephen J. Gould, “*The Panda’s Thumb*” (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1980), p. 181. Gould of Harvard was, until his death in 2002, perhaps evolution’s most well-known, often-quoted, vociferous public defender.

¹³ Gould, from a lecture given at Hobart & William Smith College titled “*Is a New and General Theory of Evolution Emerging?*”, 14 Feb., 1980, quoted by Luther D. Sunderland in “*Darwin’s Enigma*”, (San Diego: Master Book Publishers, 1984), p. 107.

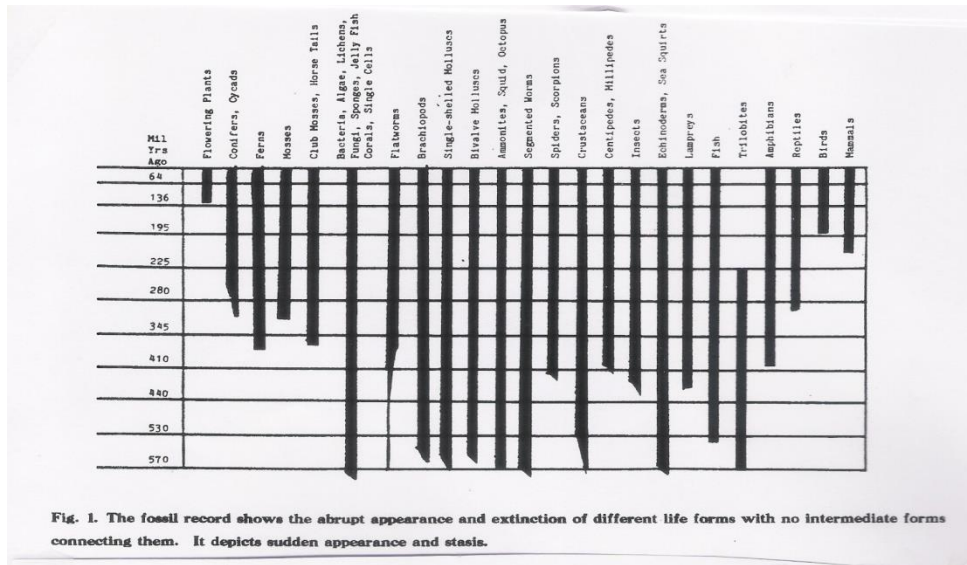
¹⁴ See, for instance, Michael Denton’s “*Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*” (Adler & Adler: Bethesda, MD, 1986), pp. 186-195.

¹⁵ Luther D. Sunderland, “*Darwin’s Enigma*” (San Diego, CA: Master Books, 1984), p. 106. “Mr. Sunderland was an aerospace engineer with the General Electric Company and was involved for 30 years in the research and development of automatic flight control systems (autopilots) for a number of aircraft such as the F-111, Boeing 757 and 767, was elected to the engineering honor society Tau Beta Pi, and authored many published articles and papers on aviation and held a number of patents in his field.”

¹⁶ Even Darwin’s statement regarding the incompleteness of the fossil record is no longer considered valid-if indeed it ever was. Even in his day Darwin honestly confessed, “that (the geological record) is imperfect to the degree required by our theory, few will be inclined to admit.” (quoted in Denton, “*Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*”, p. 191). If few believed it then, far fewer do now. The alleged transitional fossils are not still “missing.” It seems glaringly obvious that they never existed, since the fossil record is surprisingly complete. For fuller documentation of this fact see Denton, pp. 186-195.

¹⁷ Pitman, op cit., p. 69.

such in-between creatures (intermediate forms, “missing links”). This was long chalked up to ‘gaps’ in the fossil records, gaps that proponents of gradualism confidently expected to fill in someday when rock strata of the proper antiquity were eventually located. But all of the fossil evidence to date has failed to turn up any such missing links... and there is a growing conviction among many scientists that these transitional forms never existed.”¹⁸



By now you should be beginning to get the picture—the fossil record provides virtually no support for gradual evolution via natural selection. That fact is so radical that I feel compelled to supply more documentation. The following quotes—virtually all by evolutionary experts and advocates—admit this fact, and cover a wide range of organisms:

“The virtual complete absence of intermediate and ancestral forms from the fossil record is today recognized widely by many leading paleontologists as one of its most striking characteristics, so much so that those authorities who have adopted the cladistic framework now take it as axiomatic, that, in attempting to determine the relationships of fossil species, in the words of a...British Museum publication: ‘We assume that none of the fossil species we are considering is the ancestor of the other.’”¹⁹

“As is now well known, most fossil species appear instantaneously in the fossil record, persist for some millions of years virtually unchanged, only to disappear abruptly...”²⁰

“In any case, no real evolutionist...uses the fossil record as evidence in favor of the theory of evolution as opposed to special creation...”²¹

“The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the **trade secret of paleontology**. The evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches; the rest is inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils.”²²

“As more fossils have been discovered, the gaps have become more pronounced. David Raup, Curator of Geology at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago says: ‘Well, we are now about 120 years after Darwin, and knowledge of the fossil record has been greatly expanded...ironically, we have even fewer examples of evolutionary transition than we had in Darwin’s time. By this I mean that some of the classic cases of Darwinian change in the fossil record, such as the evolution of the horse in North America, have had to be discarded or modified as a result of more detailed information.’”²³

And do you remember the extremely dogmatic statement at the beginning of this paper by Richard Lewontin (i.e. “Birds arose from non-birds and humans from non-humans, and no one who pretends to any understanding of the natural world can deny that, any more

¹⁸ Dr. Niles Eldredge, at the time Curator of the Department of Invertebrates of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. He made these comments in a speech at a convention of science writers on 19 November, 1978 in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, which was reported in the Los Angeles Times; citation taken from Sunderland, op cit., p. 99.

¹⁹ Denton, op cit., p. 165.

²⁰ Tom Kemp, “A Fresh Look at the Fossil Record”, (New Scientist, vol. 108; 05 December, 1985), p. 67. Dr. Kemp was Curator of the University Museum at Oxford University at the time.

²¹ Mark Ridley, “Who Doubts Evolution?” (New Scientist, vol. 90, 25 June, 1981).

²² Stephen J. Gould of Harvard, quoted in “Of Pandas and People-The Central Question of Biological Origins”, by Percival Davis & Dean B. Kenyon, Charles Thaxton, academic editor (Houghton Publishing Company: Dallas Texas, 1993), p. 96.

²³ Ibid.

than they deny that earth is round, rotates on its axis and revolves around the sun”). Well Lewontin was subsequently interviewed by a writer from Harper’s Magazine and was asked about those statements. The writer recounts the situation:

“Finally it was time to get around to the point of my visit. What about these claims: evolution is fact; birds evolve from nonbirds, humans from nonhumans? The cladists disapproved, I said. He paused for a split second and said: **‘Those are very weak statements, I agree.’** Then he made one of the clearest statements about evolution I have heard. He said: *‘Those statements flow simply from the assertion that all organisms have parents. It is an empirical claim, I think, that all living organisms have living organisms as parents. The second empirical claim is that there was a time on earth when there were no mammals. Now, if you allow me those two claims as empirical, then the claim that mammals arose from non-mammals is simply a conclusion. It’s the deduction from two empirical claims. But that’s all I want to claim for it. You can’t make the direct empirical statement that mammals arose from non-mammals...There is a vast weight of empirical evidence about the universe which says that unless you invoke supernatural causes, the birds could not have arisen from muck by any natural processes. Well, if the birds couldn’t have arisen from muck by natural processes, then they had to arise from non-birds. The only alternative is to say that they did arise from muck—because God’s finger went out and touched that muck. That is to say, there was a non- natural process...Either you think that complex organisms arose by non-natural phenomena, or you think that they arose by natural phenomena. If they arose by natural phenomena, they had to evolve. And that’s all there is to it. And that’s the only claim I’m making...Look, I’m a person who says in this book that we don’t know anything about the ancestors of the human species...All the fossils which have been dug up and are claimed to be ancestors—we haven’t the faintest idea whether they are ancestors. Because all you’ve got’...He got up and began to do his famous rat-a-tat-tat with a piece of chalk on the blackboard. ‘All you’ve got is Homo sapiens there, you’ve got that fossil there, you’ve got another fossil there...this is time here...and it’s up to you to draw the lines. Because there are no lines. I don’t think any one of them is likely to be the direct ancestor of the human species. But how would you know it’s that [pat] one.’”²⁴*

Perhaps one of the most amazing and shocking statements of all was made a couple decades ago by Dr. Colin Patterson, who at the time was the Senior Paleontologist at the British Museum of Natural History (which I have been told contains the largest fossil collection in the world). Patterson was addressing a group of evolutionary experts at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and he said:

“Last year I had a sudden realization. For over twenty years I had thought I was working on evolution in some way. One morning I woke up and something had happened in the night; and it struck me that I had been working on this stuff for twenty years and there was not one thing I knew about it. That’s quite a shock, to learn that one can be misled so long... So for the last few weeks I’ve tried putting a simple question to various people and groups of people... Can you tell me anything you know about evolution, any one thing, any one thing that is true? ...All I got...was silence. The absence of answers seems to suggest that evolution does not convey any knowledge, or if so, I haven’t yet heard it... I think many people in this room would acknowledge that during the last few years, if you had thought about it at all, you have experienced a shift from evolution as knowledge to evolution as faith. I know that is true of me and I think it is true of a good many of you here... Evolution not only conveys no knowledge, but seems somehow, to convey anti-knowledge.”²⁵

What an absolutely incredible statement to make to a group like that! But it really shouldn’t surprise us, because Darwin himself was very aware of this problem of no fossil evidence to support his theory. He said:

“**Why if species descended from other species by fine gradation, do we not everywhere see innumerable transitory forms? As by this theory innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them imbedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth?**”²⁶

So where does that leave the evolutionist? Believing his theory by faith, just like a creationist! The Harper’s magazine interviewer asked Colin Patterson about this. The response he got was enlightening and accurate: “Patterson said, ‘I don’t think we shall ever have any access to any form of tree which we can call factual.’ He was then asked: ‘Do you believe it to be, then, no reality?’ He replied: ‘Well, isn’t it strange that this is what it comes to, that you have to ask me whether I believe it, as if it mattered whether I believe it or not. Yes, I do believe it. But in saying that, it is obvious it is faith.’”²⁷

(Important note: One of the most amazingly honest admissions by an evolutionist of the bankruptcy of the fossil record to supply any real evidence of transitional forms in support of gradualistic evolution, can be found at the end of this paper. There I have included a photocopy of a letter that Dr. Patterson wrote in 1979 to a former acquaintance, the late Mr. Luther Sunderland. It should be born in mind when reading that letter, that at the time that he wrote it, he was the head of the fossil collection at the British Museum, which is the largest fossil collection in the world!)

²⁴ As reported in an interview by Tom Bethell, “*Agnostic Evolutionists*” (Harper’s magazine, Feb. 1985), pp. 60-61.

²⁵ Rifkin, op cit., p. 113. From a speech delivered 05 November, 1981.

²⁶ Charles Darwin, “*On the Origin of the Species*” (New York: Avenel Books, first edition reprint, 1979), p. 206.

²⁷ Bethell, op cit., p. 52.

But what about the claim that the theory of evolution is absolutely critical to all of science, not to mention all of life?

“Patterson told me that he regarded the theory of evolution as ‘often unnecessary’ in biology. ‘In fact,’ he said, ‘they could do perfectly well without it.’ Nevertheless, he said, it was presented in textbooks as though it were ‘the unified field theory of biology.’ Holding the whole subject together—and binding the profession to it. ‘Once something has that status,’ he said, ‘it becomes like religion.’”²⁸

“(But) do you think that maybe it’s just that evolutionists haven’t uncovered enough fossils yet?” Darwin acknowledged the lack of any fossil evidence to support his theory, was one of its most serious problems: *“To the question of why we do not find rich fossiliferous deposits belonging to these assumed earliest periods, I can give no satisfactory answers.”²⁹* As noted above, to defuse the problem of a lack of hard paleontological evidence Darwin fell back on what he called *“the extreme imperfection of the fossil record.”* At the time Darwin was told not to worry, that we simply hadn’t uncovered enough fossils yet. He was assured that they would eventually surface. But nearly 150 years later, having recovered literally hundreds of millions of fossils, there is still no evidence! So that excuse won’t work any more. Denton, quoting Romer, states in his book *“Evolution: A Theory in Crisis”* that **we have found 97% of living orders of terrestrial vertebrates fossilized, and 80% of the living families of terrestrial vertebrates-nearly 90% if we exclude birds, which rarely are fossilized.** So we aren’t missing much!

Dr. E. J. H. Corner of the Cambridge University Botany School *“...made a candid evaluation of the knowledge of plant evolution: ‘Much (?) evidence can be adduced in favor of the theory of evolution—from biology, biogeography and paleontology (sic), but I still think that to the unprejudiced, the fossil record of plants is in favor of special creation.’(!)³⁰*

Some statements by evolutionary proponents in regard to a few specific plants and animals documenting the fact, once again, that there is no fossil evidence to support the evolutionary theory:

Plants: *“Supposedly somewhere within the group called algae lay the sources of the higher plants, the vascular groups. Whatever these ancestors may have been, they seem to have been irrevocably lost in the vastness of time.”³¹*

Land Plants: *“Since there is considerable question as to just when plants did come from water onto land—estimated dates vary from early Cambrian to Silurian times—it is clear that no one actually knows (!) much about the actual events. There is no tangible evidence whatsoever in the fossil record.”³²*

Invertebrate Animals: *“Eight phyla of invertebrate animals have many representatives with mineralized skeletons...Unfortunately, there is no fossil record of the origin of these phyla, for they are already clearly separate and distinct when they first appear as fossils.”³³*

Insects: *“The Upper Carboniferous period, which witnessed the appearance of reptiles and decline of the Stegocephalia (i.e. amphibians) gave birth to a considerable population of insects. About a thousand species have been identified, but nothing is known of their past. If they descend from the common stock we have no idea when they branched off to evolve in their own manner.”³⁴*

In an interview with Dr. Nelson Platnick (a recognized expert on **spiders**), Tom Bethell, writing for Harper’s Magazine, related the following humorous, yet incredibly revealing, conversation:

Platnick: *“Most of the spiders I look at may have been looked at by two or three people in history...I will most likely be dead before anyone looks at them again.”*

Bethell: *“What do you know about spider...ancestry?”*

Platnick: *“Very little. **We still don’t know a hill of beans about that... We don’t even know of any links in the 400 million year chain of spider ancestry. I do not ever say that this spider is ancestral to that one...**”³⁵*

Frogs: *“No transitional types, however, are known...”³⁶*

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Darwin, quoted in Simmons, op cit., p. 298.

³⁰ E.J.H. Corner, *“Contemporary Botanical Thought”*, edited by A.M. MacLeod and L.S. Copley (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), p. 97; cited in Sunderland, op cit., p. 94.

³¹ E.C. Olson, *“The Evolution of Life”* (New York: New American Library, 1965), p. 161; cited by Josh McDowell, *“Reasons Skeptics Should Consider Christianity”* (San Bernardino, CA: Here’s Life Publishers, 1981), p. 170.

³² Olson, Ibid, p. 160, in McDowell, ibid.

³³ A. Lee McAlester, *“The History of Life”* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1968), p. 53; cited by McDowell, p. 171.

³⁴ Lecomte Du Nouy, *“Human Destiny”* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1947), p. 77; cited in McDowell, p. 171.

³⁵ Tom Bethell, op cit., p. 58. Note: At the time, Dr. Norman Platnick was the Curator of the American Museum of Natural History’s entomology department. A Ph.D. graduate of Harvard and an expert on spiders, he and a colleague recently co-authored a book published by Columbia University Press: *“Systematics and Biogeography: Cladistics and Variance.”*

³⁶ Alfred S. Romer, *“Vertebrate Paleontology”*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 101.

Lungfishes: “Whatever ideas authorities may have on the subject, the lungfishes, like every other major group of fishes that I know, have their origins firmly based in **nothing**.”³⁷

Snakes: “The snakes are obviously (?) descended from lizards of some kind, but their precise mode of origin is obscure.”³⁸

Rodents: “All attempts to relate the ancestry of the rodents to other groups have been in vain.”³⁹

GENERAL STATEMENTS:

Regarding the “Cambrian Explosion” Phillip Johnson comments: “The Cambrian Explosion is the sudden appearance of the major animal groups (phyla) in the rocks of the Cambrian era, without apparent ancestors”⁴⁰ Even Richard Dawkins, perhaps the most caustic, vitriolic, atheistic defender of mindless, undirected Darwinism in the world has admitted regarding this paleontological evidence: “***It is as though they*** (the many fossil phyla) ***were just planted there, without any evolutionary history.***” Of course Dawkins and all other Darwinists believe that this appearance is an illusion caused by the incompleteness of the record and that a complete fossil record would show a universe of transitional forms and side branches, all having evolved by tiny steps from a single common ancestor... If you are a Darwinist you *know* the necessary ancestors and transitionals *had* to exist, regardless of the lack of fossil evidence.”⁴¹(!)

George Gaylord Simpson: “It is a feature of the known fossil record that most taxa appear abruptly... Gaps among known species are sporadic and often small. Gaps among known orders, classes, and phyla are systematic and almost always large.”⁴²

“The central question of the Chicago conference was whether the mechanisms underlying microevolution can be extrapolated to explain the phenomena of macroevolution. At the risk of doing violence to the positions of some of the people at the meeting, the answer can be given as a clear, No.”⁴³

“Herbert Nilsson of Lund University, Sweden (has) stated, ‘It is not even possible to make a caricature of evolution [Darwin’s gradualism] out of paleobiological facts. The fossil material is now so complete that the lack of transitional series cannot be explained by the scarcity of material. The deficiencies are real, they will never be filled.’”⁴⁴

Johnson summarizes the situation neatly: “In short, if evolution means the gradual change of one kind of organism into another kind, the outstanding characteristic of the fossil record is the absence of evidence for evolution.”⁴⁵

You might be wondering, “Why haven’t I heard about this problem of the bankruptcy of fossil evidence for evolution?” The answer is quite simple: There has been, and continues to be, a great cover-up of this fact-which Gould famously called the “*trade secret*” of paleontology (see p. 3 above).

The “HORSE SERIES.”

Unfortunately the “Great Cover-Up” is still in operation. For example, Dr. Niles Eldredge of the American Museum of Natural History stated on tape and in print in 1979, that the famous “Horse Series” was completely worthless as evidence for evolution. Yet in 1981, a year and a half **after** saying that, Eldredge told a vast audience watching on nationwide American television that the “Horse Series” was a “good” (sic) example of scientific evidence for evolution! Here are the actual, documented quotes:

1979: “I (Eldredge) admit that an awful lot of that has gotten into the textbooks as though it were true. For instance, the most famous example still on exhibit downstairs (i.e. in the American Museum) is the exhibit on horse evolution, prepared perhaps fifty years ago. That has been presented as literal truth in textbook after textbook. Now I think that that is lamentable, particularly because the people who propose these kinds of stories themselves may be aware of the speculative nature of some of the stuff. But by the time it filters down to the textbooks, we’ve got science as truth, and we’ve got a problem.”⁴⁶

14 February, 1981: A year and a half later on ABC’s “20/20” television program, Sylvia Chase interviewed this same Dr. Eldredge. Here is the relevant part of the interview:

³⁷ Errol White, “Proceedings,” *Linnaean Society of London*, 177 (1966), p. 8; cited by Rifkin, op cit., p. 127. Note: Dr. White was formerly the Keeper of the Department of Paleontology of the British Museum. This quote was from his presidential speech to the prestigious Linnaean Society of London.

³⁸ J. Z. Young, “*The Life of Vertebrates*” (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 309; cited in McDowell, p. 172.

³⁹ Edwin H. Colbert, “*Evolution of the Vertebrates*” (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969), p. 282; cited in McDowell, p. 173.

⁴⁰ Phillip E. Johnson, “*Objections Sustained-Subversive Essays on Evolution, Law & Culture*” (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1998), p. 82.

⁴¹ Johnson, op cit., p. 82.

⁴² George Gaylord Simpson, “*The Evolution of Life*” (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 149. Note: Dr. Simpson was Agassiz Professor of Vertebrate Paleontology, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

⁴³ Roger Lewin, “*Evolutionary Theory Under Fire*” (Science, November 21, 1980).

⁴⁴ Simmons, op cit., p. 304.

⁴⁵ Phillip E. Johnson, “*Darwin on Trial*” (Intervarsity Press: Downers Grove, Illinois, 1991), p. 50.

⁴⁶ Dr. Niles Eldredge, American Museum of Natural History, quoted by Sunderland, “*Darwin’s Enigma*,” p. 78. Note: The statements in Sunderland’s book are based on taped interviews with five of the leading officials in five natural history museums containing some of the largest fossil collections in the world. The interviews were taped, transcribed, and edited by the interviewees. Anyone interested can gain access to original typed verbatim interview transcripts which were prepared for the New York State Education Department, by going to any public library in the United States and asking for the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, microfiche, ED 228 056.

Sylvia Chase: “Dr. Niles Eldredge, Curator of the Department of Invertebrates of the American Museum of Natural History, one of many scientists vigorously opposed to the creationists. I asked him for evidence (for evolution).”

Dr. Eldredge: “Ahh, the horse is a good (sic) example. Here’s an effectively modern horse which is a million years old, but we can all recognize it as a horse. And as we go deeper in lower layers of rock, back further in time, we excavate successively more primitive horses. Here’s one that is two million years old. They are becoming less and less obviously horse-like till we get back 60 million years ago, and here is the ancestor of the horse, which doesn’t really look like a horse... So when the creationists tell us that we have no intermediate between major groups, we point to a creature like the dawn horse and say, ‘Here we have 60 million years ago an exact intermediate between the horses and the rhinos.’”⁴⁷

“So in 1981, after joining the anti-creationist campaign, Dr. Eldredge repeated a scenario for a nationwide television audience that 18 months earlier he had privately called “*lamentable*.”⁴⁸ A bit of historical perspective might help explain why Dr. Eldredge was willing to compromise his character and integrity on nationwide television. In 1981 a huge court case was going on in the state of Arkansas regarding whether or not creation, particularly the scientific evidence in support of it and against evolutionary theory, would be allowed to be taught in the public schools there. Eldredge, as well as many other evolutionary “heavyweights” gave testimony at that trial, and did everything in their power to ensure that only one viewpoint would be taught to the students, and that they would not be allowed to hear any scientific evidence opposing evolution or supporting special creation. Sadly, they succeeded.

Some important scientific observations in regard to the alleged evidence for the evolution of the horse i.e. the “*Horse Series*”:

- 1) “Nowhere in the world are the fossils of the horse series found in successive strata”⁴⁹ “*The family tree of the horse is beautiful and continuous only in the textbooks.*”⁵⁰;
- 2) “When they are found on the same continent, like in the John Day formation of Oregon, the three-toed and one-toed are found in the *same* geological horizon (stratum)”⁵¹;
- 3) In South America, the one-toed horse is even found *below* the three-toed creature that he supposedly evolved from!⁵²;
- 4) “When other structures besides toes are considered, the picture does not look so impressive. For example, the four-toed *Hyracotherium* has 18 pairs of ribs, the next creature has 19, then there is a jump to 15, and finally back to 18 for *Equus*, the modern horse. (also) The sequence requires arranging Old World and New World fossils side-by-side, and there is considerable dispute about the order in which they should be arranged. One specialist says, ‘*The story depends to a large extent upon who is telling it and when the story is being told.*’”⁵³
- 5) The “*Hyracotherium*” (now called “*Eohippus*”) does not look in the least like a horse-which has caused many to ask why he has ever been considered an ancestor of horses. “When first found, it was classified as *Hyracotherium* because, skeletally, it was said to be identical to the rabbit-like hyrax or daman that is running around in the African bush today.”⁵⁴ “*Today no evolutionist thinks that the ‘short-necked creature not much bigger than a domestic cat’ is related to the modern horse at all. The fossil called Eohippus or ‘Dawn Horse’ is now considered to be a close relative of the rock rabbit!*”⁵⁵;
- 6) *Eohippus* fossils have been found in surface strata alongside two types of modern horses, *Equus nevadensis* and *Equus occidentalis*.”(1)⁵⁶
- 7) Toe changes from four, to three, to one, are not marks of evolution, but of degeneration, i.e. going from complex to simple, not simple to complex. In addition, Riddle has stated that there are horses alive today with 3 toes, but no one claims that they are an “intermediate” or a “transitional form.”⁵⁷
- 8) The variations in size is a non-issue, since there would be expected to be a wide variation within the horse “*kind*”, according to creationists. For example, some horses today grow to be no higher than the edge of a table when full grown! “The series shown in museum displays generally depicts an increase in size, and yet the range in size of living horses today from the tiny

⁴⁷ Sunderland, pp. 82-83.

⁴⁸ Ibid. Dr. David Raup of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago in a quote on page 3 of this paper also acknowledges the bankruptcy of the horse series.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 81.

⁵⁰ Professor N. Heribert-Nilsson of Lund University, Sweden, quoted by Francis Hitching, “*The Neck of the Giraffe or Where Darwin Went Wrong*” (London: Pan Books, 1982, p. 28.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² A. S. Romer, “*Vertebrate Paleontology*,” 3rd Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966); cited in Sunderland, p. 81.

⁵³ Sunderland, op cit., p. 81.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Lawrence Richards, “*It Couldn’t Just Happen*” (Ft. Worth: Sweet Publishing, Inc., 1987), pp. 94-95.

⁵⁶ Francis Hitching, “*The Neck of the Giraffe or Where Darwin Went Wrong*” (London: Pan Books, 1982), p. 30; Sunderland, op cit., pp. 81-82. “Francis Hitching is a member of the Royal Archaeological Institute and the Prehistoric Society.”-from the front piece of his book.

⁵⁷ Mike Riddle, “*The Fossil Record*” (videotaped lecture),1995?, www.Train2Equip.com

American miniature ponies to the enormous shires of England is as great as that found the fossil record. It is no wonder that Dr. Eldredge called the textbook characterization of the horse series 'lamentable.'⁵⁸

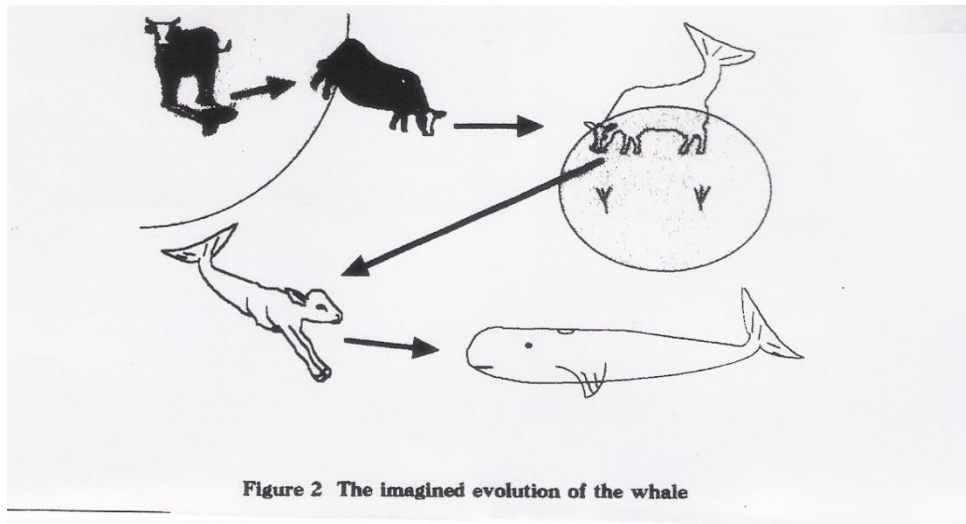
THE EVOLUTION OF THE WHALE—An example of the evolutionist's fertile imagination. ...or... "A Whale of a Story!"

"The theory of evolution is deeply embarrassed by the existence of aquatic mammals such as whales, for it must assume that these monsters of the deep evolved from four-legged pig-like (cow-like?) land mammals which in turn had evolved from reptiles and fishes. This theory is not only completely lacking in genetic and paleontologic evidence, but is logically absurd."⁵⁹

Here is the National Geographic magazine's explanation of where whales came from:

*"The whale's ascendancy to sovereign size apparently began sixty million years ago when hairy four-legged mammals, in search of food or sanctuary, ventured into water. As eons passed changes slowly occurred: hind legs disappeared, front legs changed into flippers, hair gave way to a thick, smooth blanket of blubber, nostrils moved to the top of the head (how?), the tail broadened into flukes, and in the buoyant water world, the body became enormous."*⁶⁰

What was just described above in National Geographic, and what the reader is being asked to believe, is pictured below:



You may be excused for bursting out laughing. To ask people to believe that if enough cow-like animals jump in and out of water for a long enough period of time that they will eventually evolve into whales, should not be dignified with a response. However, since this is taught as sober science in textbook after textbook, we will briefly examine the main "evidence" typically advanced.

Alleged Whale Ancestors:

Ambulocetus – 7 feet long (2m) *Ambulocetus natans* ("walking whale that swims"). "The nice pictures of *Ambulocetus natans* in these publications are based on artists' imaginations, and should be compared with the actual bones found! ...the critical skeletal elements necessary to establish the transition from non-swimming land mammal to whale are (conveniently) missing...The evolutionary biologist Annalisa Berta commented on the *Ambulocetus* fossil: 'Since the pelvic girdle is not preserved, there is no direct evidence in *Ambulocetus* for a connection between the hind limbs and the axial skeleton. This hinders interpretations of locomotion in this animal, since many of the muscles that support and move the hind-limb originate on the pelvis.'⁶¹

Basilosaurus Isis – "(a.k.a. *Zeuglodon*) is the fourth and last postulated transitional form on page 18 of "Teaching about Evolution." *Basilosaurus* is Greek for 'king lizard,' but it was actually a serpent-like sea mammal about 70 feet (21 m) long, with a 5 foot (1.5 m) long skull. It was 10 times as long as *Ambulocetus*, although the Teaching about Evolution book draws them at the same size—it helps give the desired (false) impression that there is a genuine transitional series. However *Basilosaurus* was fully aquatic, so hardly transitional between land mammals and whales. Also Barbara Stahl, a vertebrate paleontologist and evolutionist, points out: 'The serpentine form of the body and the peculiar shape of the cheek teeth make it plain that these archaeocetes [like *Basilosaurus*] could not possibly have been the ancestor of modern whales.' Both modern branches of whales, the toothed whales (Odontoceti) and baleen whales (Mysticeti), appear abruptly in the fossil record... *Basilosaurus* did have small hind limbs (certainly too small for walking), and Teaching Evolution says 'they were thought to be non-functional.' But they were probably used for grasping during copulation,

⁵⁸ Sunderland, op cit., p. 82.

⁵⁹ John Whitcomb, Jr., "The Early Earth" (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), p. 69.

⁶⁰ Randall R. Reaves & Thomas J. Oneill, "Whales of the World" (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, vol. 150; No. 6; December, 1976), p. 722a.

⁶¹ J. G. M. Thewissen, S. T. Hussain, and M. Arif, "Fossil evidence for the origin of aquatic locomotion in archaeocete whales," *Science*, 263 (5144): 210-212, January 14, 1994. Perspective by A. Berta, "What is a whale?," same issue, pp. 180-181, cited by Sarfati, op cit., pp. 73-74.

according to even other evolutionists. For example, the evolutionist whale expert Philip Gingerich said, ‘It seems to me that they could only have been some kind of sexual and reproductive clasper.’”⁶²

Pakicetus – “Pakicetus inachus, discovered by Philip Gingerich... According to evolutionary ‘dating’ methods it is 52 million years old...Pakicetus was (originally) only known from some cheek teeth and fragments of the skull and lower jaw, so there was insufficient basis for knowing whether its locomotion was transitional. But Gingerich’s article for schoolteachers featured an imaginative reconstruction, as did the cover of *Science*...New discoveries since Gingerich’s papers have blown away his imaginative reconstruction. A prominent expert, Thewissen, and colleagues unearthed some more bones of Pakicetus, and published their work in the journal *Nature*. The commentary on this paper in the same issue says, ‘All the postcranial bones indicate that pakicetids were land mammals, and ...indicated that the animals were runners, with only their feet touching the ground.’...Thewissen’s evolutionary bias is still clear, describing Pakicetus as a ‘terrestrial cetacean’ and saying, ‘The first whales were fully terrestrial, and were even efficient runners.’ But the term ‘whale’ becomes meaningless if it can describe land mammals, and it provides no insight into how true marine whales supposedly evolved.”⁶³

If you choose to believe the cow to whale story, you are certainly welcome to do so. But please don’t expect to have a lot of company. And please don’t call it science. It is far more akin to believing in ‘*Peter Pan*.’ Sunderland, when interviewing Dr. Niles Eldredge at the behest of the New York State Board of Regents, asked Dr. Eldredge about the National Geographic scenario on the origin of whales. His response was honest and revealing: “He said that whales came out of some group of archaic ungulates. He had written a paper several years (earlier) **and pointed out that in making up such accounts one was only limited by one’s ‘own imagination, and the credulity of the audience,’** As science, he added, ‘*it doesn’t wash,*’ In other words, since evolutionary scenarios are not part of testable science, the only limitation that restricts these authors is the gullibility level of the public.”⁶⁴

ARCHAEOPTERYX—A “MISSING LINK?” This creature is often hailed as a bona fide “missing link” between reptiles and birds. The reasons advanced for the assertion that it was part reptilian are:

- It had claws on its wings,
- It had a small sternum,
- It had teeth,
- It had bones in its tail,
- It had solid bones instead of hollow ones such as birds have,
- It predates the general arrival of birds by millions of years.

However a careful examination of the alleged evidence eliminates Archaeopteryx from consideration as a legitimate “missing link”:

- a) **It had wings, feathers, and it flew.** “*In one respect, flight, the most characteristic feature of birds, Archaeopteryx was already truly bird. On its wing there were flight feathers as fully developed as any modern bird, and recent research reported in 1979 suggests that it was as capable of powered flight as a modern bird.*”⁶⁵ “Archaeopteryx had fully formed flying feathers (including asymmetric vanes and ventral, reinforcing furrows as in modern flying birds), the classical elliptical wings of modern woodland birds, and a large wishbone for attachment of muscles responsible for the downstroke of the wings.”⁶⁶ “*Feathers are unique to birds, and there are no known intermediate structures between reptilian scales and feathers. Notwithstanding speculations on the nature of the elongated scales found on such forms as Longisquama...as being featherlike structures, there is simply no demonstrable evidence that they in fact are. They are very interesting, highly modified and elongated reptilian scales, and are not incipient feathers.*”⁶⁷ cf. “*Feathers of Archaeopteryx: Asymmetric Vanes Indicate Aerodynamic Function,*” *Science*, Vol. 203, No. 4384 (March 9, 1979), pp. 1021-1022—an article that “shows that flight feathers of Archaeopteryx were asymmetrical—identical to those of flying birds.”⁶⁸ “The name Archaeopteryx means ‘old wing.’ Yet ironically, the wings, or at least the feathers, are the most modern part of this creature. If we judge strictly by its feathers, we would be convinced that Archaeopteryx was an accomplished flyer, because they provided an airfoil superbly adapted for flight. But birds have an adaptational package of several characteristics—known as the ‘avian complex’—that suits them for flight...In place of these and other avian structures, however, Archaeopteryx has typical reptilian characteristics...Clearly, the characteristics of Archaeopteryx are not predicted by Darwinism for a transition between reptiles and birds. In Darwinian theory, only under a regime of selective pressure for flight would fully modern feathers emerge. David Wilcox, Professor of Biology at Eastern College points out that there should, therefore, be a progressive acquisition of the flight features running parallel to the plumage of Archaeopteryx, however, they are simply nowhere to be found.”⁶⁹ “*All birds have feathers: no other organisms do. Archaeopteryx has feathers. There exists absolutely no evidence*

⁶² Sarfati, pp. 74-76.

⁶³ Ibid, pp. 76-78.

⁶⁴ Sunderland, op cit., p. 77.

⁶⁵ Denton, op cit., p. 175.

⁶⁶ Sarfati, op cit., p. 59, with a supporting footnote from A. Feduccia, “*Evidence from claw geometry indicating arboreal habits of Archaeopteryx,*” *Science* 259 (5096): 790-93, February 5, 1993.

⁶⁷ Alan Feduccia, “*On Why Dinosaurs Lacked Feathers,*” in “*The Beginning of Birds*” (Eichstatt, West Germany: Jura Museum, 1985), p. 76.

⁶⁸ Taylor, op cit., p. 103.

⁶⁹ Davis & Kenyon, op cit., pp. 105-106.

for the evolution of feathers. The guess that DNA coding for scales 'must have' changed to produce feathers is entirely unsubstantiated."⁷⁰

- b) **Other birds today have claws on their wings** (e.g. the *hoatzin* in South America, the *touraco* in Africa; and the *ostrich*), yet all are classified as birds. "In 1983 the British Museum of Natural History displayed numerous species within nine families of birds with claws on the wings."⁷¹
- c) **"Various modern flying birds such as the hoatzin have similarly shallow breastbones**, and this does not disqualify them from being classified as birds. And there are, of course, many species of non-flying birds, both living and extinct."⁷² No evolutionist argues that chickens, ostriches, etc., are not birds, because they aren't "built" for flight. So why do they say that about Archaeopteryx? "In the earliest known fossils of pterodactyls, bats and winged insects the instrument of flight is fully developed. Just so, the wings and feathers of Archaeopteryx are as perfect as in modern birds. Asymmetric flight feathers resemble those of strong fliers; tail-feather arrangement parallels that found in modern swans and hens. It is a moot point just how good or bad at flying Archaeopteryx was. There are living flightless birds, such as the kiwi, with very small breastbones and not much of a keel (on to which the flight muscles are attached). Indeed, many birds 'have wings, won't fly'; these include emus, cassowaries, rheas, swimming birds (penguins), ostriches, extinct dodos and moas."⁷³
- d) **"Modern birds do not have teeth but many ancient birds did**, particularly those in the Mesozoic. There is no suggestion that these birds were transitional. The teeth do not show the connection of Archaeopteryx with any other animal since every subclass of vertebrates has some with teeth and some without."⁷⁴ "Archaeopteryx had teeth like many, *but not all* reptiles and like some later fossil *birds* such as *Hesperornis* of the Cretaceous period."⁷⁵ One writer asks, "What about the teeth? No living birds have socketed teeth but some fossil ones did. Some reptiles have teeth, some have not. The same applies to fishes, amphibian and mammals. Following the analogy that toothless birds are more advanced, the toothless duck-billed platypus, or spiny anteater should be considered more advanced than humans."⁷⁶ (!)
- e) **"In the embryonic stage, some living birds have more tail vertebrae than Archaeopteryx**. They later fuse to become an upstanding bone called the pygostyle. The tail bone and feather arrangement on swans are very similar to those of Archaeopteryx. One authority claims that there is no basic difference between the ancient and modern forms: the difference lies only in the fact that the caudal vertebrae are greatly prolonged. But this does not make a reptile."⁷⁷ Pitman observes, "In the embryo some living birds have more tail vertebrae than 'Arch', which later fuse to become an upstanding bone called the pygostyle. It is certainly a permutation on the usual tail-end subroutine for birds, but so are its vertebrae, which have no saddle-shaped articulations. This 'reptilian' feature is also found in cormorants, darters, gulls and certain parrots."⁷⁸ Why don't evolutionists classify them as bird ancestors?
- f) **The idea that Archaeopteryx had solid bones "has been refuted** because the long bones of Archaeopteryx are now known to be hollow."⁷⁹ In addition: "To reduce weight, large bones in birds are hollow, strengthened with cross-struts inside. If the long bones of Archaeopteryx lack this characteristic, it is also missing in swallows, martins, snipe and canaries (!) ... The free (unfused) foot-bones and wrist-bones found in Archaeopteryx, are also found outside reptiles—in penguins. Indeed, Archaeopteryx had perching feet."⁸⁰
- g) **Birds before the ancestor of birds?** "In 1977 a geologist from Brigham Young University, James A. Jensen, discovered in the Dry Mesa quarry of the Morrison formation in western Colorado a fossil of an unequivocal bird in Lower Jurassic rock. This deposit is dated as 60-million-years older than the Upper Jurassic rock in which Archaeopteryx was found... This was reported in Science News, 24 September 1977. Professor John Ostrom commented, 'It is obvious we must now look for the ancestors of flying birds in a period of time much older than that in which Archaeopteryx lived.'⁸¹ "The splendid isolation of Archaeopteryx was relieved by a bird which predated it."⁸²

(cont.)

⁷⁰ Pitman, op cit. p. 222.

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 74.

⁷² Ibid, p. 75.

⁷³ Ibid, p. 222.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 75.

⁷⁵ Davis & Kenyon, op cit., p. 105.

⁷⁶ Pitman, op cit., p. 223.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 74.

⁷⁸ Pitman, op cit., p. 223.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 75.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 223.

⁸¹ Ibid; interior quote source: "*Bone Bonanza: Early Bird and Mastodon*," Science News, vol. 112, 2 September, 1977, p. 198.

⁸² Pitman, op cit., p. 225.

Finally...a number of evolutionists have stated unequivocally that Archaeopteryx is not a missing link, but was simply a bird:

John Ostrom, Yale University: “There can be no doubt that Archaeopteryx was a true bird...”⁸³

Alan Feduccia, a world authority on birds at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an evolutionist himself: “Paleontologists have tried to turn Archaeopteryx into an earth-bound, feathered dinosaur. But it’s not. It is a bird, a perching bird. And no amount of ‘paleobabble’ is going to change that.”⁸⁴

“No other fossils lead either to or from it. Stephen Gould and Niles Eldredge therefore claim it does not count as a missing link. Links are not links if they are mosaics of complete functional traits from other groups. Whales and seals have a mixture of fish and mammal traits, penguins have fin-shaped wings and bats are a mixture of bird and mammal, but no one calls them intermediate.”⁸⁵

Colin Patterson, British Museum (where the leading Archaeopteryx fossil is kept) has said when asked about it: “I will lay it on the line—there is not one such fossil (a fossil that is ancestral or transitional) for which one could make a watertight argument...Is Archaeopteryx the ancestor of all birds? Perhaps yes, perhaps no: there is no way of answering the question. It is easy enough to make up stories of how one form gave rise to another, and to find reasons why the stages should be favoured by natural selection. But such stories are not part of science, for there is no way of putting them to the test.”⁸⁶

Davis & Kenyon (former evolutionists who no longer hold to the theory) have commented: “The feathers in Archaeopteryx are identical to those in modern birds, having the structure of a genuine airfoil. Yet in place of the ‘avian complex,’ Archaeopteryx has eight reptilian features. No process capable of sculpting its feathers while leaving its other reptilian features untouched is known to current Darwinian theory. In fact, Archaeopteryx has only one bird-like feature, much like the duck-billed platypus living in Australia today. The platypus has a bill like a duck and fur like a mammal, but has never been considered transitional.”⁸⁷

HOW BIRDS EVOLVED...ACCORDING TO EVOLUTIONISTS.

There have been two main theories as to how birds evolved, neither of which make any sense whatsoever. One theory, *the arboreal scenario*, says that reptiles began climbing trees and that while in the trees they began jumping from branch to branch and eventually from tree to tree, until they evolved scales which in time became feathers! (*I’m serious-mwe*). See Figure 3a below. The other theory, since discarded, was that a reptile type creature ran around trying to catch insects with his hands, and as he kept slapping at them, he eventually evolved scales which later became feathers on his fore limbs, enabling him not just to catch insects but to fly as well (sic). See Figure 3b below.

At this point you probably don’t believe me, so let me quote a couple of representative statements by evolutionists themselves:

“The long history of birds probably started when some of this group became attracted to life in the trees, perhaps to escape enemies, or perhaps to exploit a new source of food. Once well established in the trees, they probably started to jump from branch to branch and later from tree to tree. In living reptiles and mammals, such as flying squirrels, this is often aided by a flap of skin along the sides of the body to extend their jump and cushion the landing. Similarly, the arboreal reptile may have extended its arms as it jumped, and gradually enlarged scales were developed along the arms which in time evolved into feathers. Chemically, the composition of scales and feathers is similar.”⁸⁸

Another example of evolutionary “Once Upon a Time” thinking:

“From being a terrestrial runner the animal now turns an arboreal climber, leaping further and further from branch to branch, from tree to tree, and from the trees to the ground. Meanwhile the first toe changes to a hind toe so adapted as to grasp the braches (notice the “god-like” qualities these animals possess, enabling them to apparently rearrange their toes on command-mwe). As the hind limbs while running on the ground have abandoned the reptilian position, they are kept closer to the body when leaping takes place, the pressure of the air acting like a stimulus, produces, chiefly on the forelimbs and the tail, a parachutal plane consisting of longish scales developing along the posterior edge of the forearms and the side edges of the flattened tail. By the friction of the air, the outer edges of the scales become frayed, the frayings gradually changing into still longer horny processes, which in course of time become more and more featherlike (!) until the perfect feather is produced.”⁸⁹ See figure 3a on following page (from Denton):

⁸³ John Ostrom in “*The Beginning of Birds*” (Eichstatt, West Germany: Jura Museum, 1985), p. 174; cited by Ronald C. Calais, “Response to Padian,” *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (P.O. Box 14016, Terre Haute, Indiana 47803: March 1989), p. 203.

⁸⁴ V. Morell, “*Archaeopteryx: Early bird catches a can of worms*,” *Science* 259 (5096):764-65, February 5, 1993, cited by Jonathan Sarfati, “*Refuting Evolution*” (Acacia Ridge, Queensland: Answers in Genesis, 1999), p. 58.

⁸⁵ Pitman, op cit., p. 224; interior quote by Gould and Eldredge from *Paleobiology*, vol. 3, 1977, p. 147.

⁸⁶ From a personal letter written by Dr. Patterson to Mr. Luther Sunderland, 10 April, 1979, copy on file-mwe.

⁸⁷ Davis & Kenyon, op cit., p. 23.

⁸⁸ Ellis, “*The World of Birds*,” pp. 11-12.

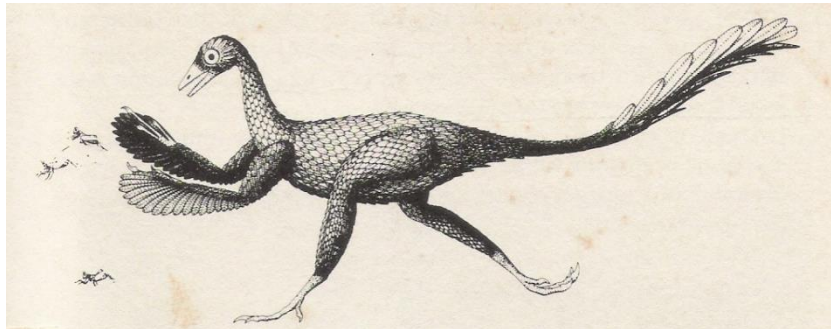
⁸⁹ Gerhard Heilman, “*The Origin of Birds*,” (London: Witherby, 1926), p. 199; cited by Denton, op cit., p. 204.



Figure 9.1: Pro-avis. (from Heilman)²

In response to the above, all I can say is, “Amazing, absolutely amazing... and impossible to believe.” Apparently I’m not the only one who couldn’t buy it, because Dr. John Ostrom of Yale, who I have quoted earlier, came up with a totally different theory, which he called the “*insect net*” theory. Let me quote him directly:

*“It is possible that the initial (pre-Archaeopteryx) enlargement of feathers on its hand might have been to increase the hand surface area, thereby making it more effective in catching insects? Continued selection (notice how natural selection possesses incredible creative power-mwe) for larger feather size could have converted the entire forelimb into a large, lightweight ‘insect net.’ It is not difficult (sic) to visualize how advantageous these paired ‘insect nets’ would be in snaring leaping insects, or even batting down escaping flying insects.”*⁹⁰ What he is proposing is shown in Figure 3b below (from Denton):



And if you believe the picture above, then I would suggest that it is equally plausible to presume that if you round up enough people and have them go to concerts and clap their hands together over and over, that they will eventually evolve feathers on their hands, (and to paraphrase Ostrom) “*It is not difficult to visualize how advantageous feathered hands will be on people for snaring insects*”...not to mention baseballs!

In all fairness, I should tell you that Professor Ostrom later abandoned his insect net theory. In an interview he said: “*Yes the insect net idea is dead. It did its job.*”⁹¹ As Sunderland has commented in response: “Apparently Ostrom felt that the job at hand was to confuse

⁹⁰ J. H. Ostrom, “*Bird Flight: How Did It Begin?*”, American Scientist (Vol. 67, 1979), p. 55; cited by Denton, op cit., p. 208.

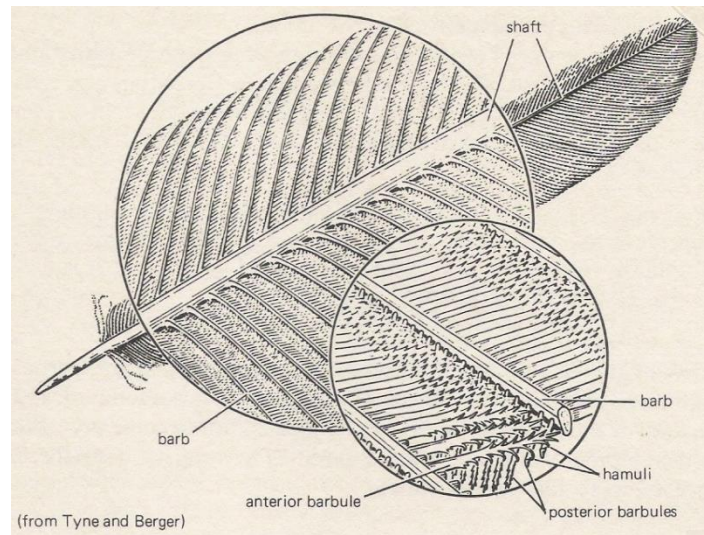
⁹¹ Roger Lewin, “*How Did Vertebrates Take to the Air?*”, Science (Vol. 221, No. 4605, July 1, 1983), pp. 38-39; cited by Sunderland, op cit., pp. 73-74.

the opposition and convince the public and millions of students that birds had actually evolved from reptiles--regardless of the fact that there was no scientific evidence of such a transition or any plausible mechanism for it."⁹²

OTHER PROBLEMS FOR EVOLUTIONARY THEORY, RELATIVE TO THE BIRDS AND FLIGHT:

The amazing feature of flight is found in four separate, distinct cases: Insects, Reptiles like Ramphoryncus; Bats, which are mammals; and Birds. So what is apparently impossible for evolutionists to explain plausibly once, had to occur four different times!

The bird feather. Proposing how such a thing could have evolved, strains the limits of credulity. Almost all evolutionary biologists believe that the feather evolved from a reptile's scale. But the two objects are light years apart. Denton explains the problem: "*It is true that basically a feather is indeed a frayed scale—a mass of keratin filaments—but the filaments are not a random tangle, but are ordered in an amazingly complex way to achieve the tightly intertwined structure of the feather. Take away the exquisite coadaptation of the components, take away the coadaptation of the hooks and barbules, take away the precisely parallel arrangement of the barbs on the shaft and all that is left is a soft pliable structure utterly unsuitable to form the basis of a stiff impervious aerofoil. The stiff impervious property of the feather which makes it so beautiful an adaptation for flight, depends basically on such a highly involved and unique system of coadapted components that it seems impossible that any transitional feather-like structure could possess even to a slight degree the crucial properties. In the words of Barbara Stahl, in "Vertebrate History: Problems in Evolution," as far as feathers are concerned, 'how they arose initially, presumably from reptiles scales, defies analysis.'*"⁹³ Pitman adds: "Feathers are aerodynamic beauties. They are light, the shaft being hollow, and quite different from the scales which are coded on to the feet alone of birds...A feather from wing or tail is composed of a shaft with branches, called barbs, arranged diagonally to the left and right. The barbs have branches to right and left called barbules. These overlap neighbouring barbules and are interlocked to each other by little hooks and eyelets. Some large feathers contain over a million barbules, with hooks and eyelets to match, in perfect order. The feather is useless without this interlocking mechanism which acts something like an automatic zip fastener (zipper) whose disturbance preening rearranges. When outstretched in flight, the hooks cause the whole wing-assembly to form a continuous sheet to catch the wind...Feathers are in no way frayed or modified scales. They even arise from a different layer of skin cells. Whence evolved the pigment mechanism for colouring and patterning both plumage and egg? In the latter colours are laid down in the oviduct, in whose walls no pigment has been found. This indicates that the organization of pigment and pattern is coded into the avian DNA. *By a megamutation?*"⁹⁴ The biting incredulity in the last sentence is understandable, since what evolutionists are asking us to believe in regard to the evolution of bird flight is preposterous. They have no mechanism to make it happen and no viable evidence! cf. Figure 4 below (from Denton):



The Avian (bird) Lung and Respiratory System. Without going into great detail, the bird lung is totally different than the lung of any other air-breathing animal. How it evolved is a major problem for the theory of evolution. Denton explains the conundrum:

"No lung in any other vertebrate species is known which in any way approaches the avian system. Moreover, it is identical in all essential details in birds as diverse as hummingbirds, ostriches, and hawks. Just how such an utterly different respiratory system could have evolved gradually from the standard vertebrate design is fantastically difficult to envisage, especially bearing in mind that the maintenance of respiratory function is absolutely vital to the life of an organism to the extent that the slightest malfunction leads to death within minutes... In attempting to explain how such an intricate and highly specialized system of correlated adaptations could have been achieved gradually through perfectly functional intermediates, one is faced with the problem of the feather magnified a thousand times. ...The Avian lung and the feather bring us very close to answering Darwin's challenge: 'If it could be demonstrated

⁹² Sunderland, op cit., p. 74.

⁹³ Denton, op cit., p. 209.

⁹⁴ Pitman, op cit., p. 222.

that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.”⁹⁵ cf. figure 5 below (from Denton):

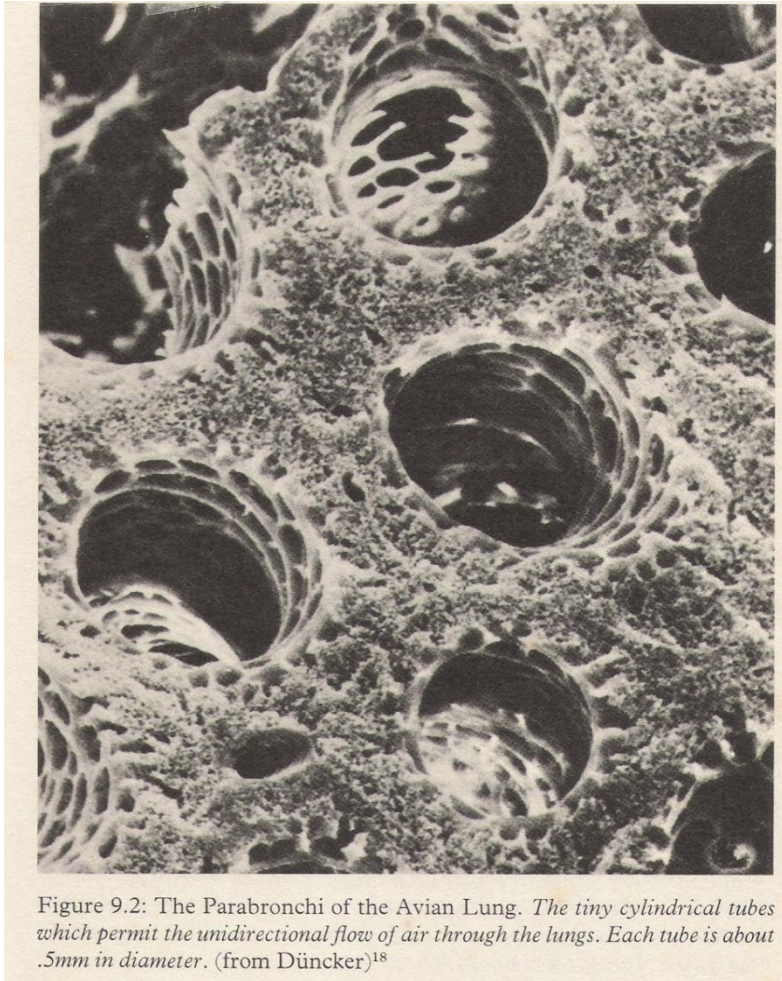


Figure 9.2: The Parabronchi of the Avian Lung. *The tiny cylindrical tubes which permit the unidirectional flow of air through the lungs. Each tube is about .5mm in diameter.* (from Düncker)¹⁸

Pitman again: “*Birds need an efficient respiratory system to serve the energetic demands of flight. A unique system of air sacs and capillaries, through which the flow is one way only, extends into some of the larger bones. The ventilation promotes not only the flight but, as air flow over resonating vocal chambers, song. Moreover, bird lungs have lung tubes not millions of tiny air sacs like those of reptiles and mammals. How could the transitional sac-tube organism have survived? Indeed, how could the whole, integrated ‘flight-friendly’ system have evolved piecemeal?*”⁹⁶

These kinds of problems in regard to the theory of evolution are the rule, rather than the exception. Darwin was once asked to explain how something as complex as the eye could have evolved. His answer was no answer at all. He simply said that “*the thought of how something as complex as the eye could have evolved leaves me cold.*” So much for answers.

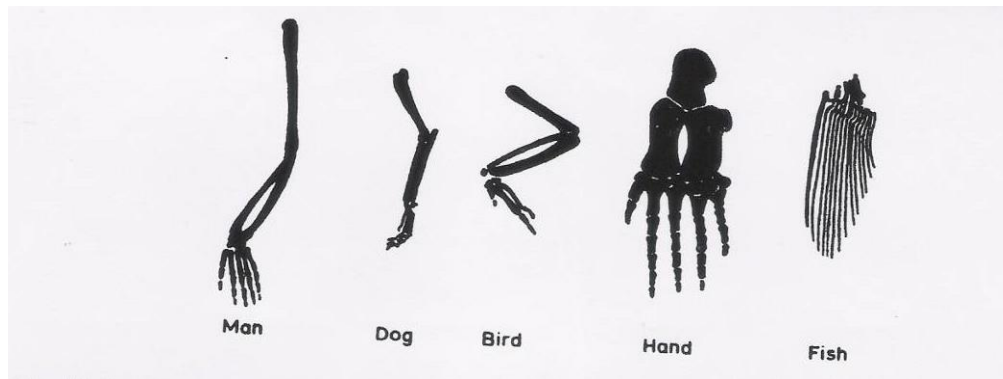
HOMOLOGY (i.e. COMPARATIVE ANATOMY). Does “Ontogeny Recapitulate Phylogeny”? i.e. Do Similarities Supply Proof of Relationships and for Evolution?

A few words about this subject would perhaps be helpful, since evolutionists unfailingly point to the fact that certain animals have similar structures e.g. the bone structure of the “*forearms*” respectively of man, monkey, bat, porpoise, etc. (See figure 6 on following page). They then take that fact and extrapolate it and claim that such similarities (homologies) prove descent from a common ancestor. But there are some serious questions to be asked and problems to be faced before one climbs on the “*Comparative Anatomy*” bandwagon.

(cont.)

⁹⁵ Denton, pp. 211-213. Darwin quote from: Charles Darwin, “*On the Origin of Species*,” 6th edition (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 182.

⁹⁶ Pitman, op cit., p. 223.



Firstly: “*What are similarities and how do we assess them?* Birds, bats and bees show a striking similarity—they all fly. Are their wings similar? In function, yes, but not in structure—for birds and bats have bones in their ‘front leg’ wings, while bees have thin membranous wings held rigid by bonds of hardened protein. Bony wings, say biologists, are *analogous* to membranous wings: both work to press air downwards and hold their owners up, but there the similarity ends. Bat and bird wings, however, have a good deal in common. Not only are they bony...both are built on remarkably similar sets of bones...that with a little imagination, can be compared with wrist and fingers...Similarities of this kind are *homologies*...What is the origin of such an archetype? Evolutionist and creationist agree on the significance of homologies but, as might be expected, they differ profoundly on the kind of relationship that homology implies. To the evolutionist homologous structures are clear evidence of common ancestry and a family tree of life. Bat wings, bird wings, flippers and human arms are similar because the ancestors common to birds, bats, and humans had just such a structure—a forelimb built on the pattern that biologists identify as ‘pentadactyl’ or ‘five-fingered’. Creationists prefer to think of homologies as fixed patterns or discrete blocks, not unlike subroutines in a computer programme or pre-assembled units that can be plugged into a complex electronics circuit. They can be varied according to an organism’s need to perform particular functions in air, water or on land. Organisms are mosaics made up from such units at each biological level, and nothing of ancestry can be deduced from their possession. Grouping together animals with the pentadactyl limb, for example, tells us only that they happen to have that kind of limb in common—not that they inherited it from a common ancestor...”

“Though unthinking Darwinians may accept homologies as firm evidence of evolution, thoughtful ones remain puzzled. Sir Alistair Hardy, former Professor of Zoology at Oxford University, wrote, ‘*the concept of homology is fundamental to what we are talking about when we speak of evolution, yet in truth we cannot explain it at all in terms of present-day biological theory.*’...The pentadactyl limb...(is) obviously a homologous pattern underlying the structure of wings in birds and bats, fore-flippers and arms...But does this necessarily imply a common ancestor? Aeroplanes, ships and motor cars all incorporate a ‘homologous’ steering system and, in most cases, a ‘homologous’ organ of locomotion. This organ, the piston engine, is adapted from a similar blueprint for use in air or sea or on land. In other words, the similarity of aeroplanes, ships and motor cars with respect to steering or motive power resides, basically, in a couple of archetypal ideas...the pentadactyl limb represents an encoded plan—an integral part of the overall encoded plan for vertebrate animals—that gives rise to basically similar structures in whatever animal the plan is realized. Alter the genetic coding in this direction, and up comes a seal’s flipper; alter it in that direction and a bird’s wing or human hand is formed. Who needs common ancestors?”

“An (evolutionary) edifice of presumed relationships has been built up from the careful study of homologous structures—not least from the study of bones in the skulls of reptiles. However, does such study still support evolution? Recently a bone in the floor of the skull that lies between the eyes of amphisbaenian lizards has been causing trouble. In other lizards this bone, the orbitosphenoid, is formed in the normal way from a cartilaginous precursor...Now it has been found that, in their case, it develops in the embryo in quite a different way—from soft tissue instead of cartilage. Because of this it fails the test for homology, although it completely mimics ‘normal’ orbitosphenoid bones in other lizards...An anatomist, Dr. R. Presley of University College, Cardiff, has written: ‘...*this apparently obscure finding seems to me in the light of my present knowledge of the subject to have shaken the philosophical and logical framework of comparative biology to a very serious extent, and lots of people ought to be worried. I bet they aren’t.*’...”

“Similarly, the eyes of a mammal and a squid are superficially similar in appearance, remarkably similar in function and efficiency but built up in different ways from different elements. No Darwinian biologist would dream of ‘homologizing’ these two kinds of eyes, because they belong to quite different kinds of animals. He would just say that these eyes have ‘converged’—become superficially similar, as fish and whales have ‘converged’ toward a similar streamlined shape that gives them equal mastery in water. *Can homologous organs, then, be matched only in animals that we believe on other grounds to be closely related? If so, the Darwinist stands in danger of the noose of a circular argument; homologies cannot be based on relationships and, at the same time, be considered independent evidence for them.*”⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Pitman, op cit., pp. 40-43.

For instance, “Insects are the only invertebrates that possess the power of flight... Typical insect wings are flying machines no less efficient than those of bats, birds or Boeings. They develop in pairs from the thorax and consist of a thin membrane stiffened by numerous veins... Evolutionists sometimes claim that the veins have a consistency of pattern from one insect to another, indicating a common ancestry. For the creationist, this consistency indicates the repetitive, thematic presence of a good mechanical design; it no more indicates common ancestry than does DNA.”⁹⁸

Secondly: Evolutionists selectively pick and choose their “similarities.” There are many, many other organs and comparisons that do not support their contention. In fact they directly contradict their hypothesis. So evolutionists selectively pick out and trumpet only similarities that support what they are trying to demonstrate. We hear nothing about the “similarities” that contradict their theory, though they are multitudinous. For instance, if we compare eye anatomy, man and octopus are very similar. So following the evolutionary logic, man and octopus must be closely related. But that doesn’t fit the evolutionary scenario at all. Heart anatomy would indicate that man and pig are closely related. But that’s not acceptable to evolutionists. Blood specific gravity shows man and frog to be closely related, and man and monkey are dissimilar! Cytochrome C, which has often been touted as proving evolutionary relationships, turns out to not do so after all. Instead, we find it shows that man is closely related to sunflowers (!), while mold and sunflowers are very dissimilar. Likewise Cytochrome C sequences show man and bullfrog to be closely related, yet rattlesnakes and frogs to be very dissimilar! Obviously something is terribly wrong with a method that can give such contradictory, disparate results.⁹⁹

“On the basis of...cytochrome similarity, rattlesnakes are more closely related to human beings than to another reptile, the snapping turtle! Human beings are closer to the peking duck than to another mammal, the horse!”¹⁰⁰

“Dr. Michael Denton, an Australian molecular biologist (who is not a creationist, but who knows this subject very well) has observed: *“The really significant finding that comes to light from comparing the proteins’ Amino Acid Sequences is that it is impossible to arrange them in any sort of an evolutionary series.”¹⁰¹*

The conclusion then is that similarities in such areas as comparative anatomy, etc., prove something only if you want them to, and if you carefully, selectively pick the similarities you use and ignore the ones that don’t fit your preconceived scenario! Richards illustrates it well: “It’s almost as if you were outside one day and found a tennis ball, a soccer ball, and a basketball in a weedy field. You notice that each ball is hollow, and each has an increasingly thicker skin. You’re really excited, and figure that each evolved from some common ancestor! Then you spend the rest of your life trying to figure out how that could possibly have happened. You invent story after story to explain that evolution, and even though the evidence is against each suggestion you make, many people believe you. They don’t seem to realize that finding balls lined up in a particular order doesn’t prove descent at all.”¹⁰²

Thirdly: Similar design could just as well infer an original designer! After all, if God did create all the plants and animals, why should he be required to make every single thing completely different? If you have a design that is functional, there is no law against using it in a variety of settings and situations. Houses come in all shapes and sizes from an “A Frame” to “Ranch Style,” from “Tri-Level” to “Single Story.” Yet almost any house will have certain basic things in it, because they are useful (e.g. a living room, a kitchen, a bathroom, one or more bedrooms, etc). When an architect begins to design a house plan, he doesn’t normally dispense with the bathroom just because he wants to be different! A good, functional house has certain basic components. Once you have those, how you lay them out, and the shape that you “wrap” those things in, is up to you. But one shouldn’t be surprised that all houses have some minimal, basic components—they’re what make up a functional house.

Fourthly: A key point: Scripture teaches that this world and everything in it is no longer perfect, nor is it necessarily the way it was originally designed. Genesis teaches that when Adam & Eve chose to sin in the Garden of Eden, the entire creation was negatively impacted. At least some animals changed dramatically in shape, diet, behavior, etc. Things began to go downhill. This is likely the time that the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics went into effect, with all of its negative consequences. So one needs to be careful not to assume that every animal, plant and part of creation was originally the way we find it now. There would have been no death prior to that time, no deleterious mutations in the gene pool of every organism until then, etc. In short, extrapolating things as they appear in the present backward into the past is another error.

Dembski makes some good comments in regard to this point: “The success of the suboptimality objection comes not from science at all, but from shifting the terms of the discussion from science to theology. In place of *How specifically can an existing structure be improved?*, the question instead becomes *What sort of deity would create a structure like that?* Darwin, for instance, thought there was just ‘*too much misery in the world*’ to accept design, [for example] ‘*that a cat should play with mice*’... ‘*ants make slaves*’ and ‘*the young cuckoo ejecting its foster-brother.*’ **The problem of suboptimal design is thus transformed into the problem of evil. Critics who invoke the problem of evil against intelligent design have left science behind and are engaging in philosophy and theology.** Design by intelligent agency does not preclude evil. A torture chamber replete with implements of torture is designed, and the evil of

⁹⁸ Pitman, p. 226.

⁹⁹ R. L. Wysong, “*The Creation-Evolution Controversy*” (Midland, MI: Inquiry Press, 1976), pp. 393-397.

¹⁰⁰ Richards, op cit., p. 100.

¹⁰¹ Denton, op cit., p. 289.

¹⁰² Richards, op cit., p. 95.

its designer does nothing to undercut the torture chamber's design. The existence of design is distinct from the morality, esthetics, goodness, optimality, or perfection of design...

“Some [evolutionary] scientists, however, prefer to conflate (mix together) science and religion—and that despite being members of the National Academy of Sciences and professing that science and religion are separate and mutually exclusive realms. Consider, for instance, the following criticism of design by Stephen Jay Gould:

‘If God had designed a beautiful machine to reflect his wisdom and power, surely he would not have used a collection of parts generally fashioned for other purposes...Odd arrangements and funny solutions are the proof of evolution—paths that a sensible God would never tread but that a natural process, constrained by history, follows perforce.’

“Gould is here criticizing the panda's thumb, a bony extrusion that helps the panda strip bamboo of its hard exterior and thus render the bamboo edible to the panda. **The first question that needs to be answered about the panda's thumb is whether it displays clear marks of intelligence.** The design theorist is not committed to every biological structure being designed. Mutation and selection do operate in natural history to adapt organisms to their environments. Perhaps the panda's thumb is merely such an adaption and not designed. **Even if the intelligent design of some structure has been established, it still is a separate question whether a wise, powerful, and beneficent God ought to have designed a complex, information-rich structure one way or another.** For the sake of argument, let's grant that certain designed structures are...even cruel. What of it? Philosophical theology has abundant resources of dealing with the problem of evil...

“One looks at some biological structure, and it appears evil. Did it start out evil? Was that its function when a good and all-powerful God created it? Objects invented for good purposes are regularly co-opted and used for evil purposes. Drugs that were meant to alleviate pain become sources of addiction. Knives that were meant to cut bread become implements for killing people. Political powers that were meant to maintain law and order become the means for enslaving citizens. **Within the Judeo-Christian tradition, the good that God initially intended is no longer fully in evidence. Much has been perverted...** Nonetheless, mutation and selection are incapable of generating the highly specific, complex, information-rich structures in nature that signal not merely apparent but actual design—that is, intelligent design...Intelligent design is scientifically unobjectionable. Whether it is theologically objectionable [to evolutionists] is another matter...critics of intelligent design are preoccupied with theological concerns like the problem of evil...[Evolutionists think that] for design theorists to oppose Darwin's theory [they must have] some hidden motivation, like wanting to shore up traditional morality or being a closet fundamentalist...let's be clear that **the opposition of design theorists to Darwinian theory rests in the first instance on strictly scientific grounds.**”¹⁰³

Fifthly: A bogus attempt to answer to answer the argument of “Intelligent Design” proponents. A number of atheists and evolutionists are vehemently arguing that even though multitudes of living plants and animals demonstrate incredibly complex design, they nonetheless do *not* have a designer. In other words, what appears to be intricate design is not *really* design at all! Their logic is deeply flawed, as Dembski, (who has two earned Ph.D.'s & several other degrees), makes clear:

“Intelligent design needs to be distinguished from *apparent design* on the one hand and *optimal design* on the other. Apparent design refers to something that looks designed but really isn't. Optimal design is perfect design and hence cannot exist except in some idealized realm (sometimes called a 'Platonic heaven')...Consider, for instance, biology. Many biologists claim that biological systems are not actually designed and thus attempt to assimilate all biological design to either apparent or optimal design (Stephen Jay Gould, Richard Dawkins, and Francisco Ayala are masters of this strategy). **This is an evasive strategy because it avoids the central question that needs to be answered, namely, the question of actual design.**

“The automobiles that roll off the assembly lines in Detroit are intelligently designed in the sense that actual human intelligences are responsible for them. Nevertheless, even if we think Detroit manufactures the best cars in the world, it would still be wrong to say that they are optimally designed. Nor is it correct to say that they are only apparently designed... A biological theory of intelligent design holds that a designing intelligence is required to account for the complex, information-rich structures in living systems. At the same time it refuses to speculate about the nature of that designing intelligence...No real design attempts optimality in the sense of attaining perfect design. Indeed, there is no such thing as perfect design. Real designers strive for *constrained optimization*, which is something altogether different. As Henry Petroski, an engineer and historian...aptly remarks...’All design involves conflicting objectives and hence compromise, and the best designs will always be those that come up with the best compromise.’ ...This is what design is all about. **To find fault with biological design—as Stephen Jay Gould regularly does—because it misses some idealized optimum is therefore gratuitous. Not knowing the objectives of the designer, Gould is in no position to say whether the designer has proposed a faulty compromise among those objectives...Just because we can always imagine some improvement in design doesn't mean that the structure in question wasn't designed, or that the improvement can be effected, or that the improvement, even if it could be effected, would not entail deficits elsewhere. And, of course, the charge of poor design may simply be mistaken.**”¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Dembski, “*Signs of Intelligence*”, op cit., pp. 9-11.

¹⁰⁴ Dembski, op cit., pp. 8-9.

EMBRYOLOGY

“Embryological Recapitulation” has been taught in schools and presented in textbooks for nearly a century, allegedly as powerful evidence for man’s evolutionary ancestry. Described simply, the theory teaches that a human embryo in its early stages of development ‘recapitulates’ or shows its earlier evolutionary ancestry via such vestigial leftovers as “*gill slits*” from when we were a fish, a “*tail*” from our ape ancestry, a “*yolk sac*” as a remnant from our reptilian past, etc. The theory of embryological recapitulation was originated by a German named Haeckel. It is now a well known fact that the drawings and woodcuts of embryos that Haeckel produced to support his theory were deliberately falsified to fit the theory he was trying to promote. This recapitulation theory has been examined thoroughly by embryologists and other serious scholars and totally debunked! Unfortunately it still appears in textbooks the world over, and is still being taught in high schools and universities, even to this present day! The editor of National Geographic, in responding to a letter writer who was protesting the extremely biased evolutionary slant of the magazine, even appealed to embryology when enumerating “the vast array of evidence” in support of evolution. (sic) So let’s quickly look at that subject and lay that evolutionary myth to rest, via quotes from several authorities:

*“the theory of recapitulation...should be defunct today.”*¹⁰⁵

*“Haeckel’s basic thesis is invalid... Recapitulation does not take place.”*¹⁰⁶

In regard to the so-called “*gill slits*” (properly called pharyngeal bars or pouches), Wolfrom has stated:

*“In mammals, birds and reptiles, however, these structures never function in respiration, nor are there ever any openings into the pharynx. Instead these ‘pouches’ form upper and lower jaws, inner ear, tonsils, thymus, the parathyroid gland, etc. None of these structures, it may be noted, are associated with respiration.”*¹⁰⁷

In an interview in 1979 Dr. David Raup of the Field Museum in Chicago stated:

*“The biogenetic law—embryological recapitulation—I think was debunked back in the 1920’s by embryologists.”*¹⁰⁸

During a debate with Dr. Duane Gish in April, 1980 at Princeton University, world famous anthropologist the late Dr. Ashley Montagu verified the fact that this so-called “*embryological law*” had been totally rejected, in an amazingly candid and revealing exchange. Here is the word-for-word portion of the transcript from the relevant portion of that debate:

Gish: “Years and years of embryological research was essentially wasted because people, convinced of the theory of evolution and that embryos recapitulated their evolutionary ancestry, spent much of their time in embryological research trying to develop phylogenies based on the data of embryology. As I mentioned earlier, embryologists have abandoned the theory of embryological recapitulation. They don’t believe it. They know it is not true... It produced bad research rather than the good research that should have been done.”

Montagu: “The theory of recapitulation was destroyed in 1922 by Professor Walter Garstang in a famous paper, since when no respectable biologist has ever used the theory of recapitulation, because it was utterly unsound, created by a Nazi-like preacher named Haeckel.”

Gish: “Ladies and gentlemen, I have traveled all over the world. I have lectured on many, many major university campuses, and it is hardly a single university campus that I appear on that some student does not tell me that he is taught the theory of embryological recapitulation right there at that university. I’ve had many evolutionists argue the evidence for evolution from embryological recapitulation. Unfortunately, as Dr. Montagu has said, it is a thoroughly discredited theory, but it is still taught in most biology books and in most universities and schools as evidence for evolution.”

Montagu: “Well ladies and gentlemen, that only goes to show that many so-called educational institutions, called universities, are not educational institutions at all or universities; they are institutes for mis-education!”¹⁰⁹

Vestigial Organs? In regard to this subject, let me include just a brief but revealing comment by an evolutionist:

*“An analysis of the difficulties in unambiguously identifying functionless structures...leads to the conclusion that ‘vestigial organs’ provide no evidence for evolutionary theory.”*¹¹⁰

CONCLUSION: One man has wisely observed:

*“False facts are highly injurious to the progress of science, for they often endure long...”*¹¹¹

A better explanation for the survival of the theory of evolution has probably never been articulated. How ironic that it was by Darwin!

(Note: A photocopy of the letter by Dr. Colin Patterson of the British Museum can be found on the following page)

¹⁰⁵ Stephen J. Gould, “*Dr Down’s Syndrome*,” Natural History (Vol. 89, No. 4, April, 1980), p. 144.

¹⁰⁶ Glen W. Wolfrom, “*Perpetuation of the Recapitulation Myth*” (Creation Research Society Quarterly, Vol. 11, No. 4, March 1975), p. 199.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Comment by Dr. David Raup in an interview with Sunderland, op cit., p. 119. Dr. Raup at the time was Curator, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, Illinois, and chairman of the department of geophysical sciences at the University of Chicago.

¹⁰⁹ Dr. Ashley Montagu. Statements made in a debate with Dr. Gish at Princeton University, 12 April, 1980.

¹¹⁰ S. R. Scadding, “*Do Vestigial Organs Provide Evidence for Evolution?*”, Evolutionary Theory (Vol. 5, May 1981), p. 173; cited in ICR Impact, op cit, p. 3

¹¹¹ Charles Darwin, “*The Descent of Man*”, cited in Simmons, op cit., p. 26.



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Luther D Sunderland,
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USA

Your reference

Our reference

Date 10th April 1979

Dear Mr Sunderland,

Thanks for your letter of 5th March, and your kind words about the Museum and my book. I held off answering you for a couple of weeks, in case the artwork you mention in your letter should turn up, but it hasn't.

I fully agree with your comments on the lack of direct illustration of evolutionary transitions in my book. If I knew of any, fossil or living, I would certainly have included them. You suggest that an artist should be asked to visualise such transformations, but where would he get the information from? I could not, honestly, provide it, and if I were to leave it to artistic licence, would that not mislead the reader?

I wrote the text of my book four years ago. If I were to write it now, I think the book would be rather different. Gradualism is a concept I believe in, not just because of Darwin's authority, but because my understanding of genetics seems to demand it. Yet Gould and the American Museum people are hard to contradict when they say that there are no transitional fossils. As a palaeontologist myself, I am much occupied with the philosophical problems of identifying ancestral forms in the fossil record. You say that I should at least 'show a photo of the fossil from which each type organism was derived.' I will lay it on the line - there is not one such fossil for which one could make a watertight argument. The reason is that statements about ancestry and descent are not applicable in the fossil record. Is Archaeopteryx the ancestor of all birds? Perhaps yes, perhaps no: there is no way of answering the question. It is easy enough to make up stories of how one form gave rise to another, and to find reasons why the stages should be favoured by natural selection. But such stories are not part of science, for there is no way of putting them to the test.

So, much as I should like to oblige you by jumping to the defence of gradualism, and fleshing out the transitions between the major types of animals and plants, I find myself a bit short of the intellectual justification necessary for the job.

Thanks again for writing.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Patterson