

Evidence News 07/09 8th July 2009 - Fossils

WELCOME from Deer to Dawkins and everything in between is what's in this Evidence News (07/09) with Editorial COMMENT from John Mackay and the Creation Research team around the globe. You just won't believe the latest evidence on whale evolution. Enjoy and tell your friends to SUBSCRIBE FOR FREE to evidence news at www.creationresearch.net.

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This week's Evidence News Index follows - to view the entire news please click <http://www.creationresearch.net/enews/ENEWS0709-090708-fossils.pdf> (if the link doesn't work just copy and paste it into your web browser).

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1. UK OFFICE ON HOLIDAYS till start of August – give 'em a break.

2. GET YOUR ADVANCE ORDER IN NOW – for Darwin on the Rocks Part 3 – coming November. REVIEW AND ORDER ONLINE www.creationresearch.net.

3. MIGRATING PIRANHA TEETH FOUND, according to articles in ScienceDaily, National Evolutionary Synthesis Center (NESC) and National Geographic, 26 June 2009, and ScienceNOW, 29 June 2009. Piranhas are a South American freshwater fish with a fearsome reputation for devouring flesh. They have a single row of six triangular teeth, like the teeth on a saw blade, but their reputation as killers is somewhat overrated. According to Ichthyologist Wasila Dahdul of NESC, some only eat insects or plants and even the flesh-eaters rarely bite people. The most similar living fish to piranhas are a group of fishes commonly known as pacus. These are plant eating fish that have two rows of square teeth. Palaeontologists have now found the fossil jaw

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of a piranha-like fish that appears to be an intermediate piranhas and pacus. It has been named "Megapiranha paranensis" and is believed to have lived between 8 and 10 million years ago in a South American river system known as the Paraná. As its name suggests "Megapiranha" was a big fish. Based on the size of its jaw it was over one metre long (3ft 3in), compared with living piranhas that usually grow to be 30cm (one foot) long. It has seven pointed teeth arranged in a zig-zag. John Lundberg, of the Academy of Natural Science, Philadelphia, one of the scientists who studied the fossil, commented: "It almost looks like the teeth are migrating from the second row into the first row." Living piranhas have six teeth but Megapiranha had seven. Lundberg suggested, "One of the teeth may have been lost, or two of the original seven may have fused together over evolutionary time. It's an unanswered question. Maybe someday we'll find out." As for what it ate, Wasila Dahdul commented: "It's probably not something we can reconstruct at this point." According to National Geographic "scientists suspect it had a diverse diet."

ScienceDaily: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/06/090625201822.htm>

NESC: <http://www.nescent.org/index.php>

National Geographic: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/06/photogalleries/giant-piranha-pictures-evolution/index.html>

ED. COM. The conclusions made about migrating teeth show the difference between actual scientific findings and the interpretation of science based on already held beliefs. The real data is one fish jawbone that had seven pointed teeth arranged in a zig-zag pattern, plus living fish with two rows of teeth, and a living fish with one row of teeth. Unless someone actually observes the two rows of teeth moving to form one row, there is no proof the fossil teeth were in the process of migrating. Notice that no-one commented about how flat teeth became pointed teeth. A better explanation is that "Megapiranha" is exactly what its name suggests – a giant piranha. A better conclusion based on the scientific observations is that piranhas have always been piranhas, but were originally larger and had more teeth. Since then piranhas have shrunk and lost teeth. This is not evolution, it is degeneration, and is exactly what you would expect from the Biblical history of the world, i.e. creation of separate kinds, followed by degeneration. We are pleased to see one of the researchers admit that you cannot tell what a creature eats simply from the shape of its teeth. If modern day piranhas, with their sharp pointed teeth, eat plants and/or insects, it is quite likely that Megapiranha ate plants, just as Genesis tells us animals were originally created to eat. (Ref. ichthyology, giants, devolution)

4. DAWKINS FUNDS ATHEIST KID'S CAMP, according to Times online and BBC News 28 June 2009, and Daily Telegraph 29 June 2009. Prominent atheist and anti-creationist crusader Richard Dawkins has subsidised a five-day camp for children aged 8 to 17 that will teach that religious belief and doctrines can prevent ethical and moral behaviour. According to the Telegraph, "the camp is part of a campaign, backed by Dawkins and Professor AC Grayling, the philosopher and writer, designed to challenge Christian societies, collective worship and religious education." Dawkins said the camp was designed to "encourage children to think for themselves, skeptically and rationally". The camp is the first British "Camp Quest" a US based camp organizations that was set up by Edwin Kagin, an atheist lawyer, in 1996 as an alternative to summer camps run by scouts, churches and faith based organizations. Along with usual camp activities such as canoeing, swimming and other sports, there will be sessions on evolution, moral philosophy and debunking phenomena such as crop circles, telepathy and spoon bending. The ultimate test in critical thinking will be to prove that there are no invisible unicorns on the camp site. The prize for coming up with such proof is a 10 pound note signed by Richard Dawkins. 2009 British 10 pounds notes have a portrait of Charles Darwin on them. Samantha Stein, a post graduate psychology student who is leading the camp explained: "The unicorns are not necessarily a metaphor for God, they are to show kids that you can't prove a negative. We are not trying to bash religion, but it encourages people to believe in a lot of things for which there is no evidence." She also said: "It is not about changing what they think, but the way that they think." A spokesman for the Church of England commented: "We would defend the right for anyone to set up an event like this, as long as the young people are happy to attend. But in his imitation of the type of youth events that religious

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groups have been running for years, Dawkins makes atheism look even more like the thing he is rallying against."

ED. COM. Samantha Stein is right – you cannot prove a negative. Therefore Dawkins and company cannot prove there is no God. Therefore, their world view is just as much a faith based view as the one they are opposing, and it is about time they were honest enough to admit it. One thing they are consistent about, however, is the connection between evolution and atheism. The belief that the universe, the earth and all living things made themselves is the foundational doctrine of atheism. In this, Dawkins and company are more honest than church leaders who try to insert evolution into the Bible. (Ref. Philosophy, education)

5. DR MONTY WHITE REVIEWS Darwin on the Rocks: "Unlike so many DVDs from creation ministries, this DVD is not a "talking head" (i.e. a lecture) but is shot on location, or should I say locations, as John Mackay looks at rocks and fossils on the continents of Australasia, Europe and North America.

In this DVD, we find John talking enthusiastically about God's creation and Noah's Flood in the wet, windy hills of Wales, in the cold, snowy Alps, and in hot humid tropical jungles. He gets excited about the fossils he finds on beaches at sea level as well as in the rock strata in mountain ranges and he shows how they provide evidence of creation by Almighty God and of Noah's Flood.

John also interviews many scientists, asking them about the history of evolutionary thought (it did not start with Darwin, by the way!) and about how they interpret the fossils and rocks that they find.

The more that we can learn about Darwin and his ideas, the better we will be able to counter the evolutionary teachings that are being taught us – especially in 2009 which is the bicentenary of Darwin's birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication of Darwin's The Origin of Species. This DVD will help us to be better acquainted with Darwin's ideas and so better able to show people that the rocks and fossils that we find actually support what the Bible teaches about the creation and the early history of the Earth rather than supporting Darwinian evolution.

This DVD is real value for money. It lasts for well over an hour and is in two parts – so you are really getting two presentations for the price of one!

Dr Monty White, Biblical Foundations UK, 13th May 2009

FREE DVD PREVIEW ONLINE - "Darwin on the rocks". Click http://evidencweb.net/generic_search_results.php?p_SEARCHTYPE=Video_Gallery&p_playlist=0F86C15C512BD2DF and then click on the picture under "Darwin on the Rocks".

WEB Order on www.creationresearch.net HOME PAGE CENTRE.

6. FOSSIL "EARLY WHALE" MOTHER found according to ScienceDaily 4 Feb 2009. A team of palaeontologists led by Philip Gingerich have found the fossil of "female whale with a fetus" in Pakistan. They also found a fossil male of the same species. The new fossil has been named "Maiacetus inuus" and is dated as 47.5 million years old. "Maiacetus" means mother whale and "inuus" refers to a Roman fertility god. The unborn baby 'whale' is orientated in the head down position, as occurs in land animals. Whales give birth tail first. Maiacetus is described as having "four legs modified for foot-powered swimming, and although these whales could support their weight on their flipper-like limbs, they probably couldn't travel far on land." According to Gingerich and ScienceDaily, its "big teeth, well-suited for catching and eating fish, suggest the animals made their livings in the sea, probably coming onto land only to rest, mate and give birth." Gingerich commented: "They clearly were tied to the shore. They were living at the land-sea interface and going back and forth."

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ScienceDaily: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/02/090204085133.htm>

ED. COM. Apart from the stupidity of calling the whole species “mother whale” when half of them were father whales, there is no excuse for calling this fossil a whale, early or late. If a creature with four legs suited for foot powered swimming, but also able to support its weight and give birth on land was found today, it would not be called a whale. The only reason for calling it an “early whale” is Gingerich’s apriori belief that land dwelling creatures evolved into whales. There is nothing strange about an animal that lived partly in the sea and rested and reproduced on land. There are plenty of them alive today, e.g. seals, sea lions, walruses, and no-one considers them to be “early whales”. (Ref. presuppositions, cetaceans, amphibious)

7. WHALE EVOLUTION – DEER ME. New “Whale Evolution” theory reported in BBC News 7 July 2009. After observing two species of mouse deer in Asia jumping into water and swimming submerged for several minutes biologists have suggested that this was the starting point for ruminants (animals such as deer, sheep, goats and cows) to evolve into whales. The belief that ruminants are the ancestors of whales was bolstered in 2007 when Hans Thewissen of the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine found a fossil of a ruminant animal that looked like a small deer, but “also had morphological features that showed it could be an ancestor of early whales”. Researchers carrying out a biodiversity survey in northern Central Kalimantan Province in Borneo, Indonesia, observed a deer swimming in a river for over an hour. Other researchers have observed mouse deer in Sri Lanka remain in pond after escaping from a mongoose. Zoologist Erik Meijaard commented: “The behaviour is interesting because it is unexpected. Deer are supposed to walk on land and graze not swim underwater.”

ED. COM. Dogs and many other mammals also regularly jump into water and swim. Does that mean they are on their way to becoming whales? According to the logic expounded by the researchers above one of the editors of this newsletter has started to evolve into a whale after jumping into a river and remaining there to escape a swarm of bees. Meanwhile, the deer were too busy escaping from predators to read the biology textbook that says they aren’t supposed to swim underwater. (Ref. fossils, wildlife, behavior)

8. OLDEST FOSSIL SEAHORSES found, according to National Geographic online, 4 May 2009 and reefbuilders.com 5 May 2009. Jure Žalohar of Slovenia's University of Ljubljana has found a number of beautifully preserved seahorse fossils in siltstone in Slovenia. He and his colleagues were looking for fossil insects in the area, so finding seahorse fossils was a complete surprise. The fossils include juveniles and adults of several species, and are dated at 13 million years old, making them the oldest seahorse fossils found so far. One of the fossils is an extinct seahorse, described by National Geographic as being “among the first evidence of the only known extinct seahorse species ever found, ‘Hippocampus slovenicus’. The fish is similar to living pygmy seahorses, but has a considerably longer snout.” The fossils are so well preserved they show signs of black flecks in their skin. National Geographic goes on to say: “They probably dwelled in dense beds of seagrass, where food - such as small crustaceans - was abundant. The seahorses' black flecks would have camouflaged them in the vegetation, which the fish also likely anchored themselves to using their prehensile tails.” According to reefbuilders.com, “The finds shed some light on the evolution of seahorses and their gregarious nature which is still evident in modern seahorses.”

National Geographic: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/05/photogalleries/seahorse-fossils/index.html>

Reefbuilders: <http://www.reefbuilders.com/2009/05/05/13-million-year-seahorse-fossil-slovenia/>

ED. COM. Give the find a new species name and then claim it as evidence for evolution of species and hope that nobody notices that the new fossil find was instantly recognizable as a seahorse, so close in structure to the living Hippocampus sea horses it had to be put into that group. Have you noticed that Genesis is not about the origin of species, but the origin of Kinds? There is no evidence in these new fossils here that some non seahorse kind evolved into a seahorse kind,

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BUT there is abundant evidence that seahorses have produced after their kind from the first known ones to the present. Furthermore, the seahorses may have lived in beds of seagrass but the fossil insects found in the same rocks did not. Finding well preserved land and sea creatures together is evidence that this fossil bed is not a buried ecosystem, but the results of a catastrophic event that swept up many creatures, mixed them and rapidly dumped and buried them. (Ref. ichthyology, arthropods, sediments)

9. 100 MILLION YEARS OF FOSSIL SEX REVEALED, according to BBC News 18 June 2009. A new technique for examining the internal structure of fossils has enabled scientists to examine the reproductive organs of tiny shellfish fossils (ostracods) from the Santana Formation in Brazil. The fossils were embedded in rocks that also contained well preserved fish. Renate Matzke-Karasz of the Ludwig Maximilians University, Germany, used a technique called holotomography, to examine the fossils and found the ostracods had reproductive organs and giant sperm that were "remarkably similar" to those of living ostracods, which are characterized by having two sets of reproductive organs and males which produce giant sperm. Matzke-Karasz told BBC News: "It was very surprising that these structures were so similar to organs we know from modern ones. Now we know that it happened at least 100 million years ago - it developed quite early in the freshwater ostracods." The new technique should enable scientists to examine the internal structure of many more fossils. Matzke-Karasz commented: "This holotomography is so helpful; it could bring out much, much more of fossils which are all over the world in museums, buried in the collections."
BBC: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8107515.stm>

ED. COM. The fact that the fossils were so well preserved that their internal organs and sperm were preserved shows they must have been suddenly and deeply buried and quickly preserved by rapid chemical penetration. They did not die in the water and slowly become entombed in mud. Ostracods that die in water today rapidly decay, leaving only their hard outer shells to sink to the bottom to be slowly buried. We hope this new technique will be used on many more fossils and look forward to seeing more evidence for rapid preservation. It is also no surprise to Creation Research that the fossil ostracods are the same as living ostracods – externally and internally. It is exactly the PREDICTION scientists would make based on the Genesis data that ostracods were created by God to multiply after their kind. (Ref. crustaceans, preservation, fossilisation)

10. AUSSIES – JOIN US AT GYMPIE July 18th to help us get the next stage of the outdoor museum signage erected and new plants in the Genesis garden at our Gympie Flood Log Jam site. If you want a great day exercising in the delicious Queensland sun then book your place now via info@creationresearch.net. Numbers are limited to 20 people only and it's free. This great fossil find is proving a magnet to students who have never seen anything like it, as evidence of catastrophic fossil formation. See more of this great discovery on <http://www.creationresearch.net/research/Gympie-Fossil-log-jam2.htm>.

11. "EARLY MAN BECOMES EARLY APE" is the headline of an article in Nature News, 17 June 2009 and Nature, vol. 459, p899 18 June 2009. Fourteen years ago anthropologist Russell Ciochon, (University of Iowa), and colleagues identified a fragment of jaw with two teeth attached as a fossil hominid, possibly "Homo habilis", which they believed to be an early human ancestor. The fossil was found in the Longgupo cave in Sichuan province, China, and as it was dated at 1.9 million years old, it was considered the oldest Homo fossil in Asia. This led to some debate about the evolution of humans outside Africa. According to Nature, "The discovery of two apparent stone tools, the jaw and a tooth that is indisputably Homo — found in nearby sediments — stoked speculation that Homo erectus may have evolved outside of Africa." Four years ago Ciochon examined a collection of fossils at Guangxi Zhuang Natural History Museum in Nanning, China, including eight teeth that resembled the teeth found at Longgupo. This has led Ciochon to change his mind about the jaw fragment and re-classify it as an ape fossil. At the time of the original report some anthropologists, including Jeffrey Schwartz at the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, suggested that it was from an "orangutan-like species" and palaeoanthropologist Dennis Eter, now at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California, commented: "I never thought it was Homo, but akin to

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apes." Jeffrey Schwartz commented about Ciochon's reclassification of the fossil: "It is not often that a scientist says he changes his mind. This openness is good."

ED. COM. We commend Ciochon's boldness and integrity and hope we could live up to the standard he has set when we make such mistakes in judgement in favor of creation. This story is also a good reminder that the story of human evolution is a big story built of small fragments. The fossil record purported to prove evolution of humans from apes consists of many fragments and teeth, rather than whole skeletons and because of their fragile nature, very few people get to examine the original fossils or see them in their original context. Ciochon's openness to new evidence is good, and it makes us wonder how many other fragmentary fossils classified as "Homo something" are really ape fossils. Ciochon's honesty may be appreciated by his scientific colleagues, but it seems the popular media who normally report on articles in Nature have not appreciated the loss of some evidence for human evolution. Did you see this story reported in your local news service that only the month before (May 09) were full of Ida as a new missing link? (Ref. hominids, anthropology, scientific method)

12. NORTH SEA NEANDERTHAL FOUND according to BBC News 15 June 2009. Fishermen off the coast of the Netherlands have dredged up a piece of a Neanderthal skull from the bottom of the North Sea. The fossil was found in 2001 amongst debris that included animal remains and artifacts. It has been studied by anthropologists led by Jean-Jacques Hublin, from the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, and has been identified as part of the skull frontal bone with the distinctive eyebrow ridge seen in other Neanderthal specimens. Chemical analysis indicates the Neanderthal lived on a diet with high meat content. Neanderthals are known to be "resourceful, physically powerful hunter-gatherers". Large areas of what is now the bottom of the North Sea were once dry land where large herds of mammals such as horses, reindeer, woolly rhino and mammoth, roamed a rich habitat of river floodplains, valleys and lakesides. According to the BBC article: "For most of the last half million years, sea levels were substantially lower than they are today." Mammoth fossils were collected off the coast of Norfolk and Suffolk, England, 150 years ago and over the years fishing trawlers have brought in many animal bones, but this is the first known human fossil. According to Professor Hublin this was the extreme edge of the Neanderthals' northern range. He commented: "What we have here is a marginal population, probably with low numbers of people. It's quite fascinating to see that these people were able to cope with the environment and be so successful in an ecological niche which was not the initial niche for humans."

BBC: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8099377.stm>

ED. COM. In spite of all attempts to classify Neanderthals as a separate species, all studies indicate they were human beings who were suffering the effects of a poor diet and a harsh climate. The harsh climate of the ice ages made life difficult, but it also facilitated the movement of people away from the Tower of Babel on the Plain of Shinar near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in what is now Iraq. Soon after Babel (Genesis 11) there are references to ice forming on the earth (e.g. Job 38:29). As the ice built up on the land the sea levels dropped to a point where access to much of the world was feasible. Land areas that are now separated were joined, and the scattered people could migrate far and wide. The first settlers and animals walked to England, Alaska etc. Following the Ice Age and the first global warming event, sea levels again rose and the scattered people were now separated. Hublin is right about one thing; the bottom of the English Channel was not the initial niche of human beings. These remains found are from the people who were the descendents of those who left the Tower of Babel. (Ref. anthropology, archaeology, races)

13. OLDEST SLOTH FOSSIL FOUND, according to Reuters, 26 May 2009. Workers installing a water system beneath the concrete floor of a house in the Andean region of Espinar, southern Peru discovered the fossil of a 10 feet (3.3m) long sloth. Parts of a giant armadillo were also found nearby. The fossils have been dated as five million years old – four million years older than smaller sloth fossils found in other parts of South America. Paleontologist Rodolfo Salas, of Peru's Natural History Museum, who helped excavate the fossils commented: "This skeleton of the sloth is

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especially important as it is the first complete skeleton of its kind that is 5 million years old in the Americas. Previously, discoveries have been made of partial skeletons of similar animals, but from the Pleistocene era, meaning from the last million years." Salas also said the sloth was relatively small compared with other animals of its type and would help researchers better understand evolution of mammals in the Andes.

Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/scienceNews/idUSTRE54P0H520090526>

ED. COM. Darwin was impressed by the large fossil sloths he saw in Patagonian Chile in the 1830's. He argued that the fact that living sloths existed in a region where Giant fossil sloths were found, is part of the proofs of evolution by which he concluded that sloths were not a created kind and Genesis is incorrect. The above authors follow the same line and fail to notice the obvious – these new sloth fossils will not help anyone understand evolution since they actually show sloths and armadillos were once larger than they are now, but they were still sloths and armadillos. The only change that has occurred since these fossils were buried is that sloths and armadillos have become smaller. This is not evolution, but fits the Biblical history of the world. Genesis tells us that the world started out very good with a uniformly mild, moist climate without any carnivores. There would have been plenty of lush vegetation for large sloths to eat and trees large enough for a 10 foot animal to hang about on, as sloths do. After Noah's flood the climate progressively degraded and carnivores increased. As a result many large animals have died out and only small ones have survived. This is a good example of survival of the fittest, but it is not evolution. (Ref. mammals, megafauna, degeneration)

14. TELL YOUR FRIENDS Evidence News is free and they can subscribe at <http://www.creationresearch.net>.

15. SCANNED FOSSILS CONFUSE WATER-LAND TRANSITION, according to reports from Duke University News 17 April 2009, ScienceDaily 19 April 2009 and Science vol. 324, p341 & p364, 17 April 2009. Researchers from Duke University found some fossils embedded in rocks from Greenland and rather than risk damaging them, they scanned them with a CT scanner and used computer image software to reconstruct a three dimensional structure of the fossils. The fossils were *Acanthostega* and *Ichthyostega* – extinct creatures commonly believed to be transitional forms in the evolution from fish to land creatures. *Acanthostega* is believed to have been the first to show changes from fish fins to legs, with *Ichthyostega* being more advanced. The new fossils included the first juvenile *Ichthyostega* ever found, which enabled scientists to reconstruct changes that occurred in the creature's bones as it grew and developed. The researchers concentrated on the humerus – the bone that connects forelimb to shoulder. The researchers examined nine humeri of *Ichthyostega* from six individual animals, and four humeri from three *Acanthostega* specimens. The fossil did not show a neat progression from *Acanthostega* to *Ichthyostega*. According to Viviane Callier, one of the scientists who studied the fossils: "Although *Acanthostega* appears to be aquatically adapted throughout the recorded developmental span, its humerus exhibits subtle traits that make it more similar to the later, fully terrestrial tetrapods." *Ichthyostega* seemed to be "aquatically adapted" as a juvenile, but as it matured its humerus became more able to support "weight-bearing terrestrial locomotion." Callier went on to suggest: "If *Ichthyostega* is actually more primitive than *Acanthostega*, then maybe animals evolved towards a terrestrial existence a lot earlier than originally believed. Maybe *Acanthostega* was actually derived from a terrestrial ancestor, and then, went back to an aquatic lifestyle." She went on to say: "It seems like there were different species evolving the same or similar traits independently – evidence of parallel evolution. The terrestrial environment posed new challenges like feeding and moving on land and breathing air, to which the first tetrapods had to evolve solutions. Sometimes different lineages stumbled upon similar solutions." These confusing results led Callier to conclude: "If there is one take-home message, it is that the evolutionary relationship between these early tetrapods is not well resolved."

ScienceDaily: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/04/090417144848.htm>

Duke University: <http://news.duke.edu/2009/04/firstlubber.html>

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ED. COM. OUR PREDICTION: The evolutionary relationship between these creatures will never be resolved because it didn't happen. There is no evidence for the story that water creatures turned into land creatures, then somehow changed their minds and their bodies as they evolved back into water creatures. These new fossils are clearly two separate living creatures, each with their own growth pattern and design suitable for the environment they lived in. The fact that they are both now extinct is a reminder that the world is degenerating, which sadly fits the Biblical description of the world of created perfection followed by degeneration. (Ref. fish, amphibians, limbs)

16. EARLIEST ANIMAL TRACES FOUND, according to reports in ScienceNOW 4 Feb 2009, ScienceDaily and Nature vol457, p718, 5 Feb 2009. A team of scientists who were analysing sedimentary rocks in south Oman have found "anomalously high amounts of 24-IPC" – a steroid chemical only produced by the animal class labelled *Demospongiae*, which includes most modern sponges. The rocks are dated at 635 million years, making them about 100 million years pre-Cambrian. Sponges are believed to be one of many kinds of multi-cellular animals that suddenly evolved in the "Cambrian Explosion" of life. The steroids found by the researchers are an essential part of sponge cell membranes, where they help support the membranes. Gordon Love, who started working on the project when he was a postdoctoral researcher at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, explained the significance of the discovery: "Our findings suggest that the evolution of multicellular animals began earlier than has been thought. Moreover, sponges live on the seafloor, growing initially in shallow waters and spreading, over time, into deeper waters, implying the existence of oceanic environments which contained dissolved oxygen near the shallow seafloor around 635 million years ago." According to ScienceNOW, paleobiologist, Kevin Peterson of Dartmouth College said the discovery confirms that "we animals can all trace our origins back to sponges."

ScienceDaily: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/02/090204135731.htm>

ED. COM. This discovery certainly does confirm sponge cell membranes have been the same as present day sponge cell membranes for as long as they can be proved to have been on the planet, AND despite Kevin Peterson's claims, it's actually not evidence that sponges turned into people. Instead, it is rather good evidence sponges have multiplied after their kind, as Genesis says God created them to do. (Ref. invertebrates, fossils, biochemistry)

17. OLDEST FOSSIL FOOTPRINTS FOUND, according to a report in Ohio State University Research News, 5 Oct 2008 and ABC News in Science 6 Oct 2008. Loren Babcock, professor of Earth Sciences at Ohio State University and Stewart Hollingsworth of the Institute for Cambrian Studies have found a rock containing the fossilized trail of a small many-legged creature in Nevada, USA. They believe the fossil is the footprints of a centipede or worm with legs. The Rock is dated as belonging to the Ediacaran period, about 570 million years old, making the fossil the oldest footprints so far found. The Ediacaran period is considered to be a period when only single celled and simple multi-cellular creatures had evolved, but these tracks indicate more complex creatures were around. Loren explained: "We keep talking about the possibility of more complex animals in the Ediacaran - soft corals, some arthropods, and flatworms - but the evidence has not been totally convincing. But if you find evidence, like we did, of an animal with legs - an animal walking around - then that makes the possibility much more likely." He went on to say: "I expect that there will be a lot of scepticism. There should be. But I think it will cause some excitement. And it will probably cause some people to look harder at the rocks they already have. Sometimes it's just a matter of thinking differently about the same specimen."

ABC: <http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2008/10/06/2382981.htm?site=science&topic=ancient>

Ohio State University: <http://researchnews.osu.edu/archive/bugfoot.htm>

ED. COM. Thinking differently about the same evidence is exactly what the creation and evolution debate is about. But notice who may be forced to change their beliefs when new evidence is found. These fossil footprints are no problem for Biblical creationists. Genesis reports that fully formed animals with legs were created along with all the other animals that live in the sea or land in a time

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span of only 3 days. Therefore, it is no surprise that evidence of them is found in sedimentary rocks, whatever age they are believed to be. (Ref. invertebrates, palaeontology, locomotion)

18. LORD HOWE LOBSTERS OLDER THAN LORD HOWE, according to an article in ScienceNOW 17 Dec 2008. In spite of its name the Lord Howe tree lobster (*Dryococelus australis*) is actually a thickset stick insect that looks like a cross between a grasshopper and a cockroach, and lives on the ground. It is the world's rarest insect, being only found on Lord Howe Island, a rocky volcanic island off the east coast of Australia. As part of a project to find the evolutionary origin of stick insects, scientists from Lancare Research analysed DNA from this insect, along 70 other stick insect species, including three groups of tree lobsters. They concluded that *D. australis* was more than 20 million years old. This would make it 13 million years older than the rocks on Lord Howe Island. This left researchers having to explain where they evolved as they can't fly or swim. They suggest the insects originated on nearby volcanic peaks that are now submerged. The insects would have moved south as their island eroded away. They also found that three present day groups of tree lobsters are not closely related despite their similarity in body shape. The researchers believe they are an example of "convergent evolution" having separately evolved their body shape as an adaptation to ground dwelling.

ED. COM. The idea that the flightless insects could move from one island to another is plausible as it is seen today that insects can and do float on rafts of vegetation or they get their eggs picked up by birds, or they can be blown vast distances in huge storms. However, it takes more faith to believe that it happened repeatedly over 13 million years as volcanic islands came and went. Now add to this the fact that convergent evolution is a process that has never been seen to happen. Amazing how much faith an evolutionist has to have to write a scientific paper, so let's stop tagging the faith label only on the creationist and lets all admit faith is an integral part of any scientific discussion and is not the exclusive realm of religion. (Ref. arthropods, insects, survival)

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