



Ken Ham and John Mackay finish new joint video in USA, as white tigers struggle, while velvet snakes heat and hide, yet swallows shrink and Obama does POLLUTics on climate, all while you enjoy this week's Evidence News 12/13 with EDitorial COMment from the Creation Guy John Mackay and the Creation Research Team worldwide.

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<http://www.askjohnmackay.com>

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**1. NEW QUESTIONS:** GAP THEORY: "I have recently heard several pastors preach the Gap theory. I don't see how there can be a gap anywhere in Genesis 1. Where did the gap theory come from, and how do we answer it? Are these pastors deceived, ignorant or just ill-informed?" [ANSWER](#) by John Mackay.

**2. WHITE TIGER GENE** found, according to reports in ScienceNOW, BBC News, ScienceDaily and *Current Biology* doi: 10.1016/j.cub.2013.04.054 23 May 2013. White Bengal tigers have white fur with black stripes, rather than the normal orange fur with black stripes. Although they have been found in the wild in the past, they now only seem to exist in zoos, where the white colouration is maintained by captive breeding programmes. Some white tigers have many of the problems associated with inbreeding, including eye problems and deformities, and there has been some speculation that the white gene could be the cause of these problems. In order to track down the genetic basis of the white fur a group of Chinese scientists have studied the genomes of a family of 16 related white and normally pigmented tigers living in Chimelong Safari Park. They found a mutation in a pigment gene named SLC45A2 in the white tigers. This gene codes for a transporter protein involved in pigment production, and the mutation results in the

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substitution of an amino acid, which may partially block the transporter channel cavity. The mutation inhibits the production of red and yellow pigments, but does not seem to affect black pigment, so the white tigers still have black stripes. This mutation is also found in other light coloured animals, including mice, horse, fish and chickens, and also in light skinned people. The researchers suggest the mutation only affects the production of pigment, and therefore the deformities seen in the captive bred populations are due to other results of inbreeding, rather than the white mutation. They concluded: “The white tiger variant is viable in the wild and a natural polymorphism of the tiger”.

Links: [BBC](#), [ScienceDaily](#)

ED. COM. Pretty ... yes they are ... but pretty degenerate actually. Even the white tigers in the wild, were lacking a characteristic that the much more viable normally pigmented tigers have. The fact that this “natural polymorphism” may also stop a transporter protein from working properly, combined with the fact that inbred white tigers have defects reminds us that mutations only degrade genetic information. Mutations are evidence that the living world is devolving, changing from complex to simple, not evolving from simple to complex. Such defects are testimony that the real history of life on earth has been the perfection of God’s creation to the degeneration first commencing when man sinned, just as the Bible tells us. (Ref. felines, pigmentation, genetics)

**3. VELVET BLACK VIPER** revealed in reports in Wired Science 16 May 2013, ABC News in Science 17 May 2013 and Nature Scientific Reports doi:10.1038/srep01846 16 May 2013. The West African Gaboon viper (*Bitis rhinoceros*) has a distinctive geometrical pattern of black, brown and white patches on its skin. The black patches are a particularly dense black, sometimes called ultra-black or velvet black, which means the shape of the snake is lost to view amongst the shadows and dappled light as it lies in the leaf litter on the forest floor. As such, the snake is considered to be “a master of disguise among snakes” well designed for ambushing prey, and avoiding being eaten by anything else. A team of German scientists have examined the snake’s skin scales under a scanning electron microscope (SEM) and compared the structure of the black regions and lighter regions to find the secret of the ultra-dense blackness. They found “a unique hierarchical pattern of leaf-like microstructures striated with nanoridges on the snake scales that coincides with the distribution of black colouration”. This “micro-ornamentation” was not found in the lighter patches of skin, indicating the darkness was not just from black pigment. They also recorded temperature of the skin after being exposed to light and found the black regions were warmer. The scientists suggest the complex texture helps guide sunlight deep into the scale where dark pigment absorbs it. According to Wired Science the findings of this study “could help engineers design ultra-black artificial materials, useful in a variety of capacities from military camouflage to solar heat collectors”. The research team commented in their report: “The micro-ornamentation on the snake’s velvet black scales is a further example that the same physical law applies to both nature and technology and leads consequently to similar constructions”.

Links: [ABC](#), [Wired Science](#)

ED. COM. We are often asked why would God create animals with camouflage if they were meant to live in a very good world without death and predation. The potential application of this snake’s “micro-ornamentation” in the design of solar heat collectors gives us a clue. Cold blooded animals, such as reptiles, use solar energy to warm themselves, and other studies of reptile pigment have shown that dark skin pigment is used in thermoregulation. Thermoregulation is a useful function in a very good world, and it seems this snake has very good solar collectors. After the world ceased to be very good, and the snake had enemies that would kill it, then the densely black pattern proved to be a useful attribute for survival on a forest floor, but that does not explain how the complex surface features that give the deep black colour, came into existence. The researchers’ comment about the same physical laws applying to “both nature and technology” hints at what is needed for such a complex structure to come into existence. Technology is the process of applying the laws of physics and chemistry to get a desired outcome, and it only happens when creative design is used by an outside intelligence, who is not part of matter and energy being manipulated.

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Physical laws alone will not result in producing any solar heat collecting technology, and it is just as foolish to believe that physical laws alone produced the particularly high-tech solar heat collectors in this snake's black patches. (Ref. reptiles, serpents, pigmentation, nanotechnology, design)

**4. CARS CAUSE BIRDS TO EVOLVE**, according to articles in ScienceNOW and Nature News and New Scientist 18 March 2013. Cliff swallows can build nests that hang off vertical surfaces, and some build nests on highway overpasses and bridges. This puts the birds in danger of being hit by cars and trucks. Charles and Mary Brown have been studying roadside swallows since 1982 and noticed recently there has been fewer birds dying on the roads in spite of an increase in traffic. Their studies involved taking measurements of the birds, and they found the average wing length of the living birds in the population had become shorter over time, from 111mm in 1982 to 106mm in 2012. However, birds that died on the road in 2012 had an average wingspan of 112mm. The researchers suggest birds with shorter wings are able turn more rapidly and thus dodge the traffic more easily, whilst the longer-winged birds are more likely to end up as road kill because they are less manoeuvrable. According to ScienceNOW, "The results suggest that shorter wingspan has been selected for over this time period because of the evolutionary pressure put on the population by cars". According to Ronald Mumme of Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania, "Everything fits with the idea that it's vehicular selection". The New Scientist article claimed the birds "have evolved shorter wings, which may help them avoid dying on roads by taking off quickly and darting away from cars".

Links: [Nature News](#), [New Scientist](#)

ED. COM. Let us coin a phrase for this process ... 'auto -selection'. New Scientist may claim birds have evolved shorter wings, but this change is not evolution, but a good reminder that selection, whether it be natural, or "auto" (vehicular) can only work by removing individuals with a particular pre-existing characteristic from the population, leaving the now depleted gene pool to reproduce. Therefore, whatever changes are seen in that population, it involved loss of genetic variation, which is the opposite of evolution. Furthermore, selection can never explain the origin of living creatures. The loss of longer winged birds does not explain how birds got wings in the first place, and will not enable the birds to evolve into some other kind of living creature. The study should also remind liberal theologians that selection is a process of death and destruction, and therefore could not have been a process the good God used to create a world he called "very good". (Genesis 1:31) Natural (and unnatural) selection only became a force of nature after the world was afflicted by death and degeneration following human sin and God's judgement. (Ref. aerodynamics, birds, ornithology, flight)

**5. OBAMA'S "CARBON POLLUTICS"** described in a White House press release 25 June 2013. After citing a list of recent natural disasters and claiming "the 12 warmest years in recorded history have all come in the last 15 years", President Obama has announced "a plan to cut carbon pollution; a plan to protect our country from the impacts of climate change; and a plan to lead the world in a coordinated assault on a changing climate".

Link: [White House Press Release](#)

ED. COM. We would remind President Obama that "recorded history" of precise temperature measurements referred to above only goes back about 150 years. Yet the historical evidence, reluctantly accepted by global warming advocates, is that there have been warm periods in the past, e.g. The Medieval warm period, the Roman Empire warming, none of which were caused by "carbon pollution" from industry and motorised transport. President Obama may have the most powerful position in human politics, but he cannot legislate to change the activities of the sun, ocean currents, clouds, volcanoes and other natural phenomena that contribute to the earth's climate. Furthermore, we would remind Obama that carbon dioxide, the main target of "carbon pollution" reduction schemes, is not pollution. It is a natural

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component of the atmosphere and is an essential resource for plant growth. The more the plants have the better they grow and the more oxygen they can make for us.

We have written much about these and other climate issues in many newsletters. For more details see our Climate file [here](#), or search for individual items in the [Fact File](#).

For a critique of Obama's speech see "Obama's global-warming claims demolished" on World Net Daily [here](#).

**6. FROM THE ARCHIVES:** [Pale Pigment Gene](#), [Ultra Black](#), [Bird Aerodynamics](#)

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