Aussie Fossil Animals Are Plants

Written by Administrator Tuesday, 19 March 2013 10:37 -

Aussie fossil animals are plants, claims University of Oregon scientist, according to articles in ScienceNOW 12 December 2012 and ABC News in Science 13 December 2012. The Ediacaran fossils are imprints of creatures found in the rocks in South Australia dated as 635 to 542 million years old, i.e. before the Cambrian explosion. They have been interpreted as being soft bodied animals that lived on the sea floor long before there was any life on land. Gregory Retallack, a paleobotanist (expert in fossil plants) at the University of Oregon claims that some of the frond-like and sack-like fossils are more like land dwelling lichens, and the rocks in which they are formed were once soils rather than sea floor deposits.

This claim is controversial because, according to the ABC, "If true, the finding would push back life's transition from sea to land by tens of millions of years—and possibly by 100 million years or more". Furthermore, Retallack commented: "This discovery has implications for the tree of life, because it removes Ediacaran fossils from the ancestry of animals". Ediacaran creatures are believed to be the evolutionary ancestors of the numerous marine invertebrates that rapidly evolved in the Cambrian explosion. However, according to ScienceNOW, "If Retallack is correct, it means that Ediacaran fossils represent an independent branch on the tree of life, and that life on land during this time may have been more complex than life in the sea".

Jim Gehling of the South Australian Museum is critical of the claims because if the approximately 600 million year old Ediacaran fossils were not the ancestors of animal life, then the Cambrian explosion would have come from "nowhere". He commented: "I'm sorry, I'm not a creationist. I do not believe that the Cambrian animals popped into existence out of the blue at the beginning of the Cambrian".

Paul Knauth, a geochemist at Arizona State University is open to Retallack's claims because he says some of the Australian strata "are dead ringers for paleosols". He commented: "We're trying to interpret what happened long ago, and none of the evidence so far is unequivocal. The truth is, we just don't know."

ABC

Editorial Comment: What is most interesting about this report is the reason the expert at the South Australian Museum uses for rejecting the claim. As stated above from Jim Gehling: if the Ediacaran fossils were not the ancestors of animal life, then the Cambrian explosion would have

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come from "nowhere" ... "I'm sorry, I'm not a creationist. I do not believe that the Cambrian animals popped into existence out of the blue at the beginning of the Cambrian". And people say scientists are open-minded, willing to investigate all options? What a lie – most scientists operate exclusively in the atheistic naturalistic framework, and live and write in public denial of it.

Knauth is very correct about the problem of working out what happened long ago – scientists can only directly study the present. The Ediacaran fossils are a curious collection of organisms, which this editor has personally investigated on site. Some can be identified as jellyfish because they look like living jellyfish. Others, such as the ones Retallack refers to, don't look like any currently living creature, so Retallack's suggestion is as good as any. One thing we can be dogmatic about is that all the jellyfish fossils in our collection from Ediacaran type strata are easy to recognise, and are no help to any theory that says they evolved from something lower down the evolutionist life chain. But then we stress that as a usually winning point in debates, much to the frustration of the evolutionists. (Ref. Precambrian, invertebrates, fossilisation)

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