Aussie Fossil Ate Soft Leaves

Written by Administrator Wednesday, 12 June 2013 05:44 -

Aussie fossil ate soft leaves claim scientists, according to a report in ABC News in Science 29 May 2013 and a University of Queensland (UQ) press release 30 May 2013. Scientists working at Riversleigh in north Queensland, Australia, have found "an exceptionally well-preserved partial skull" of an extinct species of koala. The animal was about half the size of a modern day koala, but had larger eye sockets. It has been named *Litokoala dicksmithi* and is dated as being over 20 million years old. The researchers suggest large eyes and small body size indicate it had better vision, and was more agile and active than living koalas, and may have been nocturnal. According to the UQ article: "Unlike today's eucalypt-munching koala species, *Litokoala dicksmith*

fed on the rainforest plants that covered much of northern Australia 20 million years ago and may also have eaten some fruit. The onset of drier conditions in Australia about 15 million years ago led to the contraction of rainforest habitats and the apparent extinction of many koala species including

Litokoala dicksmithi

". There are now 18 extinct fossil koala species, but only one still living.

ABC

Editorial Comment: This rather elaborate story built on one partial skull may be true, but not because of evolution. If 18 species of koala once lived in a fully rainforested Australia, that is good evidence both the Australian environment and koalas have gone downhill. The one species of koala that survives in the eucalypt forests of Australia is another good example of survival, but not of evolution. It survives because it can digest the tough eucalyptus leaves and is able to tolerate the oils and other chemicals in these leaves. However, it pays a heavy price for this. This apparently cute cuddly animal expends most of its energy on digestion and detoxification, and therefore spends most of its life in a somnolent state sitting high in gum trees, with little energy for anything else. Even cuddling tourists exhaust them. They survive because there is no competition for eating eucalypt leaves, and no predators that want to eat them.

If koalas were once more numerous, more agile and ate soft leaves and fruit, that is more consistent with the Biblical history of the world, rather than the evolutionary one. Genesis tells us that God created a very good world, but following the Fall of Man and God's judgement, the world has degenerated significantly, especially after Noah's flood when extremes of climate set in, and the land mass we now call Australia has dried out. Eucalypts became the dominant trees in the temperate and subtropical regions, not because they evolved here, but because they could survive the harsh environment and other trees could not. As the trees with soft leaves and fruit died out, so did the animals that could only eat soft leaves and fruit. (Ref. marsupials,

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