Polar Bears Were Irish

Written by Administrator Monday, 17 June 2013 06:52 -

Polar bears were Irish, according to articles in BBC News 7 July 2011 and ScienceDaily 8 July 2011. Scientists in the UK, Ireland and USA have studied mitochondrial DNA extracted from the teeth and skeletons of 17 Brown Bears that were found at eight cave sites across Ireland. Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) is genetic material carried in cellular powerhouses, separate from the main genome, and is passed from one generation to the next by mothers. Researchers correlated their results with the estimated ages of the bones. They found bears in Ireland with older dates, i.e. between 43,000 and 38,000 years ago, had the same genetic signature as brown bears living today in Eastern Europe, but DNA from bears that dated as 38,000 to 10,000 years ago, have sequences that are the closest match found to modern polar bears.

The research team concluded the maternal ancestors of modern polar bears were from Ireland. Polar Bears (*Ursus maritimus*) and Brown Bears (*Ursus arctos*) are considered different species, but the scientists concluded "interspecific hybridization not only may be more common than previously considered but may be a mechanism by which species deal with marginal habitats during periods of environmental deterioration."

BBC, ScienceDaily

Editorial Comment: The Irish connection is an interesting new finding, but we are not surprised by the genetic similarities between polar bears and brown bears, or the evidence of hybridisation. Polar/brown bear hybrids have been known in the wild and in captivity for many years and we wrote about them in 2006 when Canadian scientists tested the DNA of an unusual bear and found it to be a hybrid between a polar bear and a grizzly bear. Grizzlies are a type of brown bear.

The results described above also confirm what we have said about the origin of polar bears following a question about why polar bears were white. The reason polar bear hair appears white is that it does not have melanin pigment, plus it has cavities filled with air within the hair shafts which scatter light. After Noah's flood, bears and humans spread out through North America, northern Europe and Asia due to degeneration of genes some bears (and humans) lost their ability to make pigment in the hair and became white. But white bears would stand out in green forests and grasslands, and although no other animals would hunt them, humans would. Therefore, white bears would be disadvantaged in places where humans live, but could survive in places where humans rarely went as long as they could find food, such as the high arctic. Thus, white polar bears are the result of degeneration, selection, adaptation and survival of fittest, but not evolution.

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This new study of bear genes, along with previous findings, all fit into the Biblical history of the world, i.e. God created bears as a separate kind, and they have reproduced after their kind ever since. As the descendents of the bears that got off Noah's Ark spread out over the earth the Bear kind has divided into subgroups but they remain bears and can interbreed when they have the opportunity. The variations between species are from already existing variation or mutations causing degeneration. (Ref. genetics, hybrids, kinds)

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