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Dinosaur discoveries boost bird evolution theory, according to articles in news@nature, *Science News*

and BBC News. Palaeontologists have recently found bird-like features in dinosaur fossils and claim these are more evidence that dinosaurs evolved from birds. A team led by Mary Schweitzer of North Carolina State University, Raleigh, found a substance similar in structure to medullary bone inside a

T. rex

bone. Medullary bone is a special kind of dense bone with lots of blood vessels that living female birds use as a calcium store for their eggshells. When the bird is ready to lay an egg, calcium can be quickly extracted from the medullary bone, without weakening the rest of the bird's bones.

Another "egg-citing discovery" was a fossil consisting of eight vertebrae, some pelvic bones and two eggs found in China. There was not enough of the animal to identify it, but Tamki Sato of the Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa, who studied the fossil, believes it was an Oviraptorosaur. The eggs filled most of the pelvis, indicating that it had two oviducts and could only lay two eggs at a time. Palaeontologist David Varricchio commented that this finding fits with previous studies of oviraptorosaur nests, which contain large numbers of eggs that appear to be grouped in twos. Together these findings indicate oviraptorosaurs had a combination of bird and crocodile like reproduction. Present day birds have only one oviduct and lay one egg at a time, to gradually build up a clutch. Crocodiles have two oviducts but produce multiple eggs in each.

Meanwhile, Patrick O'Connor of Ohio University, Athens (USA) and Leon Claessens of Harvard University, Massachusetts, have found hollow spaces in the vertebrae of a dinosaur named *Maj ungatholus atopus*

, a theropod dinosaur - the group of dinosaurs believed to be the ancestors of birds. Birds have hollow spaces in their vertebrae and other bones that contain air sacs that are part of their special breathing system. O'Connor and Claessens claim the holes in dinosaur vertebrae are evidence that dinosaurs had a similar breathing system to birds. Paul Barrett, a palaeontologist at the Natural History Museum, London commented: "This study forms part of an increasingly robust story that says birds are essentially dinosaurs, but smaller".

BBC on medullary bone, BBC on dinosaur eggs

Editorial Comment: These findings are all interesting and certainly add to our knowledge of

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dinosaurs, but do they prove living birds evolved from small theropod dinosaurs? The pelvis fossil reminds us that theropod dinosaurs have an important feature in their skeletons that is against the theory that dinosaurs turned into birds. The pelvis of all birds is distinctly different from that of living reptiles. In birds the pubis (the front part of thepelvis) faces backwards and in reptiles it faces forwards. Dinosaurs can be classified into two groups called "saurischians" or "lizard-hipped" and "ornithischians" or "bird-hipped" depending on the shape of their pelvis. Theropods, which supposedly gave rise to birds, are "lizard-hipped". Evolutionists try to explain this away by claiming that the bird-hipped pelvis evolved twice, as in the following paragraph from the website of University of California, Berkeley, <u>Museum of</u>

"Living birds had common ancestors on the theropod lineage. Oddly, birds are derived from the "lizard-hipped" dinosaurs and not from the "bird-hipped" ornithiscian dinosaurs. The "bird-hipped" condition of a pubis pointing toward the back of the animal occurred twice independently, once in the ornithischians and once in the lineage leading to birds, an example of convergent evolution. Thus "ornithischia", taken literally, is a misnomer, since the ornithischian-like pelvis, not bird-like. Only birds (and their immediate ancestors) have bird-like pelves."

In fact, the dinosaur pelvis and the new discoveries described above are all good evidence that dinosaurs are unique combinations of non-unique components. This is exactly what you would expect if dinosaurs were specially created as fully functioning creatures, just as Genesis describes. In addition, a bird's breathing system involves much more than a few hollow bones, so until someone finds a fossilised dinosaur lung it is impossible to know what kind of breathing system they had. The Medullary bone is merely evidence that dinosaurs had a means of storing calcium, which makes sense if they laid eggs that had shells made of calcium. (Ref. reproduction, respiration, dinosaurs)