
Creation Answers

Creation Education Materials, P.O. Box 182003, Arlington, TX 76096

Who does this newsletter?

This newsletter is produced by Wayne Spencer of Creation Education Materials on a Quarterly basis. Its purpose is to bring creationary research within the reach of Christian families and provide up-to-date reliable information on the creation issue. Wayne Spencer is a creation researcher and former teacher who has presented papers at the International Conference on Creationism and contributed to radio programs for the Institute for Creation Research.

This newsletter is meant to help people plug into creation resources and get informed about creation and evolution. It is provided free of charge on request. It is provided as an Adobe Acrobat file, a Microsoft Word 97 document, or a plain text e-mail. The Adobe Acrobat Reader, available for download on the internet, is the best way to view the newsletter. There are no restrictions in copying this newsletter or passing it on to others. To request to be placed on the e-mail list, send a request to Wayne at w.spencer@attglobal.net.

More information on Wayne Spencer's education and publications can be found on the **DFW Creation Net** web site. You'll also find a variety of articles, teaching aids, and how to contact creation organizations. <http://pws.prserv.net/creation/creation.htm>

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A Personal Note from Wayne Spencer

I would like to thank those who've had encouraging complements on my newsletter, especially on the articles on Creation Biology. Please share this newsletter with others. I welcome any feedback or suggestions. My web site now has a download page where some previous issues of the newsletter can be downloaded.

Be sure to read about the Creation 2001 conference sponsored by Answers in Genesis taking place Labor Day weekend. This is an exceptional opportunity to become informed on the creation issue and meet some of the best speakers available. I plan to attend; I am not going as a speaker.

Lately I have felt fortunate to receive some speaking engagement requests. On September 20, 2001 I will be speaking at a creation meeting in Oklahoma City. This will be for a new creation organization, The Creation Science Fellowship of Oklahoma. You can contact Scott Mahathey at (405) 946-7042 or csfok@prodigy.net. I will also be speaking at a creation meeting on Saturday afternoon July 7th at The Colony Church of Christ in The Colony, Texas, just north of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. To get details contact Randy Herzog at (972) 335-0244 or by e-mail at randyherzog@home.com.

Wayne Spencer, M.S., Physics

Introduction to Creation Biology, Part 3

Wayne Spencer

Previous parts of this series explained microevolution and macroevolution and addressed what are considered to be the mechanisms for macroevolution, mutations and natural selection. This article will address the evolutionary argument from similarity. This general subject is known as homology. It is the idea that all living things, from people to potatoes, have all descended from a common living ancestor that lived in the distant past. The evolutionary argument has it that the similarities found in different living organisms are there because of a common ancestor that had those traits.

By this logic, a squid and a human, for example, both have very similar eyes because there was some ancient ancestor in the lineage of both squid and humans that evolved an eye like what we have today. Squid and human eyes would actually be an example difficult for evolutionists to explain. This is because if you go back in time far enough to find a common ancestor of man and squid, the ancestor would probably be a primitive fish that could not have such eyes. A more common example would be in the skeletons of vertebrates. You can compare the number of bones and arrangement of arms or limbs for humans, land mammals, bats, and even fish and the similarities of the skeletons is striking. Thus the structure of a fishes fin may be similar to the wing of a bat, though the size and proportions of the bones are very different. There are obvious similarities of the skeletons even though these organisms are very different.

Evolutionists define homologous body parts, like the fish's fin and the bat's wing as structures that are similar and that can be shown to have a common ancestor. This definition is a problem. The similarity of the body structures is a fact anyone can see. The common ancestry is unverifiable by

experiment or even by fossil evidence. Since evolutionists know that it is not possible for squid and humans to have a common ancestor with an eye like they have today, squid and human eyes are not considered to be homologous. Instead, they would be called an example of "convergence." The idea of convergence is that the same thing evolved more than once independently. In other words, by macroevolution, it would take millions of years for the squid to evolve their eyes, it took even longer for humans to evolve and human eyes just happened to turn out very similar to squid eyes. There are many many examples of "convergence" like this among living things. Evolutionists do not really have any explanation for this frequent convergence, they just have a name for it.

Convergent traits are considered rare exceptions that are not important to explain at all. Since the squid and human eyes are defined out of consideration as not being homologous, evolutionists do not have to explain how they could evolve with similar eyes. But other example organisms that may be easier to argue as being related by evolution, are called "homologous." The flipper of a porpoise and the bat's wing are used as evidence for evolution because of their similarities. But wait, the evolutionist's definition of homologous assumes evolution! So, homologous structures are not really *evidence for* evolution, since the definition of what constitutes homologous assumes evolution. This is an example of circular reasoning found in many science textbooks.

Common Ancestor vs Common Design

If the similarities in organisms do not give evidence of macroevolution, then what do they really mean? I think they point to an intelligent Creator who is simply a great engineer. When an engineer finds a design that works well, he may use it in many different kinds of devices. This is very true

in the field of electronics and computer technology. Certain kinds of electronic components (such as capacitors or transistors) can be found in all sorts of devices from televisions, to loudspeakers, to computer motherboards. This doesn't mean that motherboards evolved from televisions for instance. It is just that transistors are very useful and so it is a design that is reused a lot.

There are many characteristics of living things where the Creator has used a similar design in different organisms. This is not surprising when you think about it. After all, living things on Earth are all made to live on the same planet. Life on Earth shares the same air and water, and animals often eat similar foods and have similar lifestyles and behaviors. In fact, if plants and animals were too different biochemically than us humans, we wouldn't have anything we could eat! So, it is not surprising that there would be some similarities. But having designed-in similarities does not mean God carbon-copied parts and stuck them together. The Creator is not limited to only doing things one way. So even when a basic idea is used in different organisms, there may be unique variations of it in different creatures.

Flight in the living world is a good example of this. Flight is something that by evolution would have to have evolved four separate times, in birds, insects, bats, and flying reptiles (which now seem to be extinct). All these different groups of living things fly but they all fly differently! The principles of flight are basically the same but bats are very different from birds and so are insects, yet they all fly. Is it really plausible to say that flight just happened to evolve four times? Modern scientific research from the evolutionary view has not been able to answer how similar traits could come about in different organisms. It is not that similar traits come from similar genes in the DNA, because the same gene sequence often means something different in different organisms. Flight is a complex thing. Considering flight, the respiratory system, skeletal system,

nervous system, and muscles must *all* be made for flight. If any one of these body systems does not allow the organism to fly, then the creature might eventually go extinct or flight would not evolve.

A Creator is necessary to explain how flight could exist in four different types of creatures that are so different from each other. The Creator applied the basic principles of flight in different ways in different living things. And in each type, the various body systems were designed to be coordinated with the purpose of flight. Thus, birds have hollow but strong bones to make them lighter, they have special flow-through "lungs" that helps them breathe while flying, and the nerves and muscles of a bird's body are able to control flight and maintain flight for long periods. Insects and bats are different than birds and they fly just as well for what they need as birds do, though it is done without feathers. Insects are much smaller than birds (though there is fossil evidence that there used to be insects much larger than today). This makes flying somewhat different for insects than for birds. (So insects don't really need feathers, for example).

The problems with the evolutionist concept of "convergence" is most evident in the many interesting cases of multiple convergence. One example is the sea horse and chameleons. Both have a coiled prehensile tail and independently moving eyes, though they could not have a common ancestor with both of these traits. The duck-billed platypus has multiple examples of multiple convergence. It has a duck-like bill and lays eggs similar to birds or reptiles. It also has highly developed sonar and detects electrical currents in water similar to some fish. It has a poisonous claw similar to a snake's fang on it's hind feet as well, similar to snakes, though the platypus is a mammal and it suckles it's young. The platypus, has a unique combination of intelligently designed and fully functional traits, not a haphazard mix of characteristics that evolved by chance.

Embriology and Similarity

There is one special topic where evolutionary arguments, though incredibly out of date and absurd, still persist in textbooks today. This the idea that developing embryos of various organisms follow stages similar to their evolution. Biologist Jonathan Wells describes it this way, "similarities in early embryos not only demonstrate that they are descended from a common ancestor, but also reveal what the ancestor looked like." The technical term for this is embryological recapitulation. This argument originates from an evolutionary German biologist named Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919). Haeckel had made drawings of developing embryos of different animals, arranging them in a series and then arguing that the similarities in them were because of descent with modification from a common ancestor (which is macroevolution). These drawings were done even before Charles Darwin wrote his book *The Origin of Species* in 1859. Darwin was very impressed and influenced by Haeckel's drawings.

Though it is well known in the scientific community that Haeckel misrepresented the facts in his drawings, the argument has persisted in many textbooks to this day. It is also used frequently by abortionist Doctors to persuade women to get abortions. The woman will be told something like, "the life inside you is not really human, it is only in the fish stage." This embryological argument for evolution from Ernst Haeckel is one of the clearest most undisputed cases of misrepresentation in science. Even before the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* Haeckel's ideas were soundly refuted, especially by embryologist Karl Ernst von Baer (1792-1876). Darwin even misquoted and distorted von Baer's work to support the idea, something von Baer objected to.

Haeckel's drawings of embryos have appeared in many books and publications. It has been known for over a century that they distort the facts to make the embryos appear more similar than they are. Haeckel's

drawings include embryos of fish, salamander, tortoise, chicken, hog, calf, rabbit, and human. For one thing, Haeckel's drawings started at a midpoint in development and skipped over significant differences in these embryos that is evident from earlier stages. Secondly, two classes of fishes were omitted from Haeckel's drawings, the jawless and cartilaginous fishes. They would not have fit in well. He used a salamander to represent amphibians, which happens to appear to fit his argument. But if he would have included a frog, which is more representative of amphibians, it would not have fit his argument at all. So, Haeckel had a very biased sample of carefully selected cases that implied more similarity than was realistic.

In 1995 a British embryologist Michael Richardson wrote that "These famous images are inaccurate and give a misleading view of embryonic development." Richardson is not a creationist. Haeckel and Darwin thought that at the earlier stages the various embryos were more similar and they became less similar in their later stages of development. This has been soundly disproven by recent research. In 1997 Michael Richardson and an international team of scientists reexamined Haeckel's drawings again and compared each drawing to modern high quality photos of the actual embryos. This study thoroughly demonstrated again that Haeckel's drawings misrepresent the truth. Yet the embryological recapitulation argument is still found in various forms in many high school and college level textbooks. Even many scientists and biology professors are not aware of the problem, because embryology is not their specialty.

Each type of living thing develops as an embryo in a unique way. There are stages where there are superficial similarities of appearance between them, but the real function and nature of the embryo's structures are different from each other. For instance, there is a point in the

development of a human embryo where the embryo has something that looks similar to the gill slits of a fish embryo. These structures are known by embryologists as pharyngeal folds. In fish these structures do develop into gills, but in reptiles, mammals, and birds, they develop into totally different organs that have nothing to do with respiration. Even in fish, they are not gills until a later more mature stage. In humans, they develop into the tonsils, the middle ear canals, and the parathyroid and thymus glands. So, in humans, since they are not slits and they have nothing to do with gills, human embryos certainly do not have gill slits. There are many special structures in embryos whose only purpose is for during the development process, then they no longer function in the adult. This explains a lot about how embryos develop. This is just how God planned and designed life to be.

Though the area of embryology is not my field of expertise, I would say that the development of a human embryo demonstrates a great intelligence and wisdom far beyond chance. It clearly points to creation, not evolution. The many examples of similarity between very different living things is not surprising from a Biblical point of view. God as a divine engineer can reuse His designs however he wants. Furthermore, God's reused designs do not have to show up in the ways predicted by evolution. Evolution theory assumes there was no God involved and that everything just turned out as it is by random mutations and natural selection. So, from a creation point of view, both the "homologous" and the "convergent" traits of living things come from the same Creator.

Frozen Mammoths - What Really Happened?

Recently the Discovery television channel aired two programs called *Raising the Mammoth* and *Land of the Mammoth*. These very interesting programs tell about the discovery and excavation of the remains of a

particular mammoth in Siberia, discovered a few years ago. It's been called the Jarkov Mammoth. Scientists removed a large block of frozen ground with the mammoth remains inside it and took it away for study. The frozen ground of Siberia has been known for many years to contain mammoth remains. Estimates of the number of buried mammoths is in the millions. Fisherman working in the Black Sea North of Siberia also have found many mammoth bones or tusks or other remains while fishing. There has been a thriving ivory trade in Siberia for years from the mammoth tusks. The ground of Siberia is frozen much of the year, when it is not frozen it is soft and sometimes very wet and boggy. The wet mixture of clay, silt, mud, and water is known as "tundra."

Creationists have written about the frozen mammoths for years. Unfortunately sometimes creationists have spread some unreliable information and have not collected adequate facts on this subject. An influential book by a creationist once said that the mammoths must have been quick frozen at extremely cold temperatures like 100 to 150 degrees below zero. Various ideas have also been put forward to connect this rapid freezing to Noah's Flood. These authors usually have argued that the mammoths were living in the pre-flood world and when the Flood began, somehow events occurred that froze and buried the animals. There are several problems with this creationist scenario.

Recently, in the *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, published by Answers in Genesis, there is an excellent new paper on the mammoths. It is written by Mr. Michael Oard, a meteorologist. There are a number of mysteries to this day about these mammoths. Neither creationists nor evolutionists have all the answers. But, by the evolutionary view of Earth history, there have been a number of ice ages and so evolutionists would say the mammoths lived during one of these ice ages. There are a number of problems with the evolutionist view of ice ages, although there is evidence

that something like an ice age occurred. Most creationists with degrees in the sciences believe there was one ice age after Noah's Flood, lasting several hundred years. In fact, Noah's Flood helps explain why there would be an ice age in the first place, something evolutionary geology has trouble with.

The mammoths found in Siberia and Alaska would have lived after Noah's Flood, they are not from the pre-flood world. Mammoths could have multiplied to huge numbers in the post-Flood years. Mammoths required lots of vegetation to eat and they would have lived in grassland areas. Mammoths would not have lived in extremely cold arctic regions. We know this because we know they did not have fur like arctic animals, they had hair. There have been a few carcasses of mammoths that still had hair on them, including the Jarkov mammoth shown on the Discovery channel. We also know they ate flowers and other plants that would not grow in an arctic environment.

When the glaciers of the ice age melted back it would have left the areas where mammoths lived very wet. Somehow a great deal of clay mud and silt was washed into Northern Siberia and Alaska. To this day scientists aren't sure where all the mud came from. Wind blown dust storms and volcanic eruptions could be possibilities. This would have made it impossible for many of the grasses and plants that mammoths ate to survive. The climate would have changed also as the glaciers melted back. The areas that were once beautiful grasslands that supported all kinds of large animals including large cats, mammoths, and even the woolly rhinoceros, turned into a cold frozen wasteland where almost nothing would grow. Then the mammoths had trouble finding food and they often got trapped in deep mud. They would get into ponds and rivers to eat the plants living in the water and then get trapped in the mud. Some were buried quickly and then frozen.

(For a list of sources on the articles in this newsletter, contact Wayne Spencer.)

Creation 2001 Conference

August 30 through September 3, 2001 there will be an extraordinary conference in the Cincinnati area. I felt it was important to mention this. I plan to attend, but I am not going as a speaker. This conference is special because of the wonderful list of 10 well known creationist speakers. Some of the speakers would rarely be available, let alone together in the same conference. Dr. John Whitcomb, Professor at Grace Theological Seminary will be present. He was coauthor with Dr. Henry Morris in 1961 of *The Genesis Flood*, which is the book that started the modern creation movement. Dr. John Baumgardner, research geophysicist at Los Alamos will be there speaking on how plate tectonics relates to Noah's Flood. Biblical Archeologist Bryant Wood, Anatomy Professor David Menton, Physicist Russell Humphreys, Meteorologist Michael Oard, and Ken Ham are also among the speakers. These are perhaps the more well known of the speakers. Dr. Humphreys is known for his research on the age of the Earth from study of its magnetic field and his research on cosmology and how light can reach us from distant stars in a young universe. Some lessor known people among the speakers include physicist Dr. Danny Faulkner, Chemist Jonathan Sarfati, and Information Scientist, Dr. Werner Gitt.

I would highly recommend this conference to anyone who wants exposure to current thinking from creationist scientists. A tour of Answers in Genesis is included also. It runs from Thursday evening through Monday morning, Labor Day weekend. To register call AIG at (800) 350-3232.