

THE CASE FOR CREATION: 6

THE FOSSIL RECORD

*Genesis 1:21,25 -- And God created the great sea monsters,...
and God made the beasts of the earth after their kind...*



Introduction

1. Renowned evolutionist LeGros Clark once remarked that "...the really crucial evidence for evolution must be provided by the paleontologist whose business it is to study the fossil record".
2. If there is ever to be any empirical evidence for evolution, by necessity it will have to come from what has been called "the record of the rocks," for it is here that the actual historical evidence of any evolutionary scenario will be found.
3. As it turns out, however, some of the strongest evidence for creation is to be found within the fossil record instead.

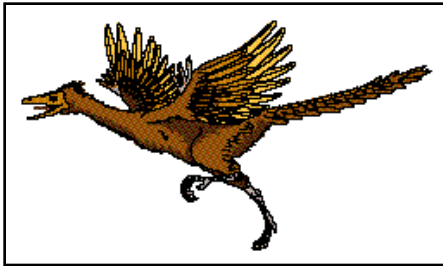
A. Facts and their Interpretation

1. The fact that fossils occur, and represent the environment in which they once lived, is not under dispute. It is the interpretation placed on those fossils by evolutionists that creationists call into question.
2. The methodology of interpreting both the location and importance of various fossils is widely recognized as being circular. It is assumed that progress goes from the simple to the complex (i.e., that evolution is true). Fossils are thus arranged that way and thus supposedly prove evolution.
3. This logical fallacy has not escaped evolutionary scholars like R.R. West who observed: "Contrary to what most scientists write, the fossil record does not support the Darwinian theory of evolution because it is this theory (there are several) which we use to interpret the fossil record. By doing so, we are guilty of circular reasoning if we then say the fossil record supports this theory."
4. In order to establish neo-Darwinian evolution, its proponents must be able to show intermediate or transitional forms between animals and plants in every major taxonomic subdivision. Charles Darwin himself postulated that there should be "innumerable transitional links" in the fossil record. However, he went on to admit: "Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and serious objection which can be argued against this theory. The explanation lies, I believe, in the extreme imperfection of the geological record."
5. However, after 125 years of additional paleontological work, there still is no further help. It is like a prosecuting attorney trying a murder case, and saying in his opening speech: "We know that the defendant is guilty of murder, although we cannot find a motive, the weapon, the body, or any witnesses."
6. It is to this point that scientists like Mark Ridley, the British evolutionist, admits: "No real evolutionist, whether gradualist or punctuationalist, uses the fossil record as evidence in favour of the theory of evolution as opposed to special creation."

B. Predictions of the Two Models

1. As the evidence from the fossil record is considered, it is essential to know exactly what the evolution and creation models predict, so that the predictions can be compared to the actual data.
2. Creation predicts:
 - a. The "oldest" rocks do not always contain the most "primitive" forms of life.
 - b. "Simple-to-complex" gradation of life forms does not always appear.
 - c. There would be a regular and systematic absence of transitional forms.

3. Evolution predicts:
 - a. The “oldest” rocks contain evidence of the most “primitive” forms of life.
 - b. “Younger” rocks would exhibit more “complex” forms of life.
 - c. A gradual change from “simple-to-complex” is apparent.
 - d. Large numbers of transitional forms will be present.
4. As one examines the data, it becomes clear that the evidence from the fossil record is strongly against evolution and for creation. First, there has been no simple-to-complex gradation of life forms. As one science textbook put it: “Even theoretically, to make the vast biological leap from primitive organisms to the Cambrian fauna poses enormous problems. A remarkable series of transformations is required to change a single-celled protozoan into a complex animal such as a lobster, crab, or shrimp... The new Cambrian animals represented an astonishing leap to a higher level of specialization, organization, and integration.”
5. Second, there are no transitional forms found in the fossil record. Harvard paleontologist Stephen J. Gould has written: “The absence of fossil evidence for intermediary stages between major transitions in organic design, indeed our inability, even in our imagination, to construct functional intermediates in many cases, has been a persistent and nagging problem for gradualistic accounts of evolution.” (1980)



The classic example is the extinct Archaeopteryx which was hailed as the “missing link” in the alleged scenario of reptile-to-bird evolution. Although the soft parts do not remain, and certain skeletal features are similar to some reptiles, its feathers and wings are fully formed for the act of powered flight. A study of the brain form from the

- inner crania of the specimen also suggests that it should be classified as completely avian, and not a reptile-like bird or a bird-like reptile (Jerison, 1968).
6. Peculiar organisms have been discovered in the ocean depths, or in various fossil-rich strata, but all of them were previously unknown forms. A few are so distinctly different, and hence unrelated to other species in any evolutionary sense, that whole new phyla had to be created to classify them.
 7. Also, when certain organisms appear in the fossil record, they seem totally adapted to their environment and completely conformed to their distinct type. Bats, for example, appear suddenly in the fossil record 60 million years ago (according to evolutionary tables), yet were not preceded by any known transitional forms; or do they differ greatly from modern species.
 8. Dr. Gould also pointed out: “...the extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology. The evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches: the rest is inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of the fossils.”
 9. Dr. Gould also lists two characteristics of the fossil record that cannot be ignored: (1) Stasis: Most species exhibit no directional change during their tenure on earth. They appear in the fossil record looking much the same as when they disappear.... (2) Sudden appearance: in any local area, a species does not rise gradually by the steady transformation of its ancestors; it appears all at once and “fully formed.”
 10. The creation model predicts a sudden “explosion” of life - fully formed plants and animals. The creation model predicts a mixture of life forms. The creation model predicts a systematic absence of transitional forms.
 11. In his 1976 presidential address before the British Geological Association, Derek V. Ager stated: “It must be significant that nearly all the evolutionary stories I learned as a student... have now been debunked...”