

June 2004

## HUMMINGBIRDS GET "OLDER" AND A LITTLE WIDER

BY JEFFREY S. GIFT, PH.D.

According to secular scientists, two German fossils recently identified as "amazingly modern-looking" hummingbirds are 30-million years old. This find pushes the fossil record for hummingbirds back an alleged 29 million years. The discovery was made by Dr. Gerald Mayr of the natural history museum Forschungsinstitut Senckenberg in Frankfurt and reported in the journal *Science*.<sup>1</sup> Mayr found the fossils in storage in a Stuttgart museum. They had been donated by a private collector who uncovered them in a clay pit near Frauenweiler in southern Germany. Mayr said he recognized particular features of the birds' anatomy in the fossils, which are less than five centimetres long. "I'm convinced they're hummingbirds," he said. "They're very, very distinctive in the wing bone, which is adapted to hovering and nectar feeding." The bone and shoulder joint allow the wings to beat in a figure-eight pattern. One of the fossils also has a long beak, like modern hummingbirds. The only other fossils of modern hummingbirds are about 1 million years old. Assistant Professor Margaret Rubega of the University of Connecticut told *Science* she was "amazed" by the find. "The amazing thing about this fossil is that it's essentially a modern hummingbird," she said. "My mind is a little blown."

### A Bug's Life

There are other creatures alive today which are "mind blowing" in the way they are virtually identical to fossil forms believed to have lived 'millions of years ago.' The insect fossil record is particularly remarkable for its evidence of *stasis* (no change). Evolutionists had long said that no insect fossil exists that can be matched with a living representative. It has now been conclusively documented by many, including Dr. Joachim Scheven<sup>2</sup> that the reason they were not found is because they were not looked for. Dr. Scheven alone has found many examples of insects fossilized in amber that are identical to their living counterparts.

Evolutionists also acknowledge this fact about the fossil record. Dr. Betty Faber, entomologist, American Museum of Natural History says:



The fossilized remains of *Eurotrochilus inexpectatus*, a 30-million-year-old hummingbirdlike species, have been found in clay deposits in Baden-Württemberg, Germany. The bones represent the first hummingbird-like fossils found outside of the Americas.

"Several cockroach fossils...from the Carboniferous Period of Earth's history make one thing clear. Even back then, about 350 million years ago, the cockroach looked *disgusting*. It hasn't changed much since."<sup>3</sup>

### Gladiators for God

Recently, swarms of insects thought to have been extinct for millions of years have been found on a stony mountain top in Namibia, near South Africa.<sup>4</sup> These insects have been nicknamed 'Gladiators' because of their 'fear-some' appearance and the armor that covers them as young nymphs. The insects were first noted from specimens fossilized in amber 'dated' at 45 million years.<sup>5</sup>

News reports described the find as 'totally unexpected,' likening it to the discoveries of the Coelacanth, a 'prehistoric' fish thought to have died out with the dinosaurs 65 million years ago, and the Wollemi Pine, 'the dinosaur tree,' previously known only from fossils dated at 150 million years.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>7</sup>Dicks, L., The creatures time forgot, *New Scientist*, 164(2209):36–39, 1999.

## COMING EVENTS

**Thursday, June 10, 7:30 P.M., Providence Baptist Church, 6339 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh.**

We will discuss the new book *Doubts about Darwin, A History of the Intelligent Design Movement* by Thomas Woodward. We will discuss the contributions of Michael Denton, Philip Johnson, Michael Behe, William Dembski, Charles Thaxton, and Jonathan Wells among others. The discussion will include irreducible complexity, the explanatory filter for the detection of design, metaphysical and methodological naturalism, and the Cambrian Explosion. Woodward argues that ID has made headway in academic circles, mainly by persuading some evolutionists that belief in Darwin is based more on philosophical presuppositions than empirical fact. The goals and strategies of ID and its opponents will be highlighted.

**June 24-26, Intelligent Design Conference, Highlands, North Carolina.**



Why have these life-forms stayed the same for all that time? Are “chance” and “luck” the answer? Some believe the cockroach (reputed to have remained virtually unchanged in the fossil record for 250 million years) demonstrates that the key to success is to “be abundant and live everywhere.”<sup>7</sup> However, many “living fossils” are in fact highly specialized, such as the Coelacanth, superbly suited to living in deep-sea caves. Scientists suggest that the Coelacanth remains unchanged because its habitat has not changed. But this applies also to many other species, living and extinct.

To Christians, there should be no mystery about these so-called “living fossils.” We have an eyewitness account of how these creatures were created to be fruitful and multiply after their kind. So the fact that modern creatures have “stayed the same” as their fossilized ancestors is no surprise at all. The next time you hear a news report like the hummingbird or the ‘Gladiator’ story, remember that these “living fossils” are much more consistent with the Bible than with the secular belief in evolution and millions of years. No matter how long the time that has passed, no evolution has taken place. Rather, in accordance with the Bible (Genesis 1), these so-called “living fossils” have been happily reproducing “after their kind,” just as they were designed to do. ☺

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<sup>1</sup>Mayr, G. Old world fossil record of modern-type hummingbirds. *Science* 304 (May 7):861-864, 2004. Abstract available at <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/304/5672/861>.

<sup>2</sup>Wieland, C. *Creation Ex Nihilo*, March-May, Volume 15(2); 1993. Scheven, J *Creation* 21(3):26–27, June 1999. (See articles by Dr. Scheven online at [answersingenesis.org](http://answersingenesis.org).)

<sup>3</sup>Kusnitz, M. *Science World*, 4 Feb. pp. 12-19, 1983.

<sup>4</sup>“Extinct” insect found on peak, *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, p. 34, 22 March 2002.

<sup>5</sup>A new insect order?, *Science* 297(5582):731,2002.

<sup>6</sup>The Wollemi Pine of the insect world, *ABC News in Science*, 17 Oct. 2002.

### CONFERENCE GOALS

- Present sound proof from a wide range of scientific research as verification of Intelligent Design.
- Educate participants about the compelling scientific evidence that dispels Darwinian evolution.
- Inform teachers, educational leaders and parents about legal rights when bringing Intelligent Design concepts into the classroom.

- Provide resources to aid teachers in developing effective teaching formats.
- Show young people the truth on Intelligent Design in order to prepare them for other theories they will receive in colleges or universities.

#### SPEAKERS

The Conference will ask the “right questions” because it has invited the right speakers. Look at this list of renowned experts and their topics:

Darwinian Evolution As It Affects a Christian Worldview - Chuck Colson  
 Biochemical Limitations - Dr. Charles Thaxton  
 Evidence from the Fossil Record - Dr. John Morris  
 DNA as an Information System - Dr. Thomas Woodward  
 Irreducible Complexity of All Living Things - Dr. Michael J. Behe  
 Origins and Purpose in Life - Mark Eckel  
 A Physicist’s Perspective - Dr. Russell Humphreys  
 Legal Rights in the Classroom - Finn Laursen  
 The Creator and the Cosmos - Dr. Hugh Ross  
 Order, Design and Complexity of the Universe - Dr. Kenneth Boa

#### CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Registration, discount lodging and travel information are located on this web site: [www.idconference.org](http://www.idconference.org)

#### Costs:

Early Registration - \$ 95.00  
 After April 30 - \$115.00  
 Students/Teachers - \$65.00  
 Youth Conference - \$25.00

If you have any questions please go to our contact page [http://www.idconference.org/html/contact\\_us.html](http://www.idconference.org/html/contact_us.html) or call (828) 526-4685, Community Bible Church, P.O. Box 1486, Highlands, NC 28741



#### WORLDVIEW YOUTH CONFERENCE

Conference Purpose: To introduce Jr. and Sr. High Youth to two worldviews.

1. The secular worldview which is humanistic in nature placing man at the center of all philosophy.
2. The Biblical worldview which looks to the Bible as the ultimate authority of all truth.

Location: Highlands Conference Center, Highway 64 East, Highlands, North Carolina 28741

Date: June 24 - June 26, 2004

Cost: \$25.00 - Registration is required.

What to Bring: Casual clothing, recreation equipment (hiking, softball, and swimming are options), Bible.

#### SPEAKERS

Mark Eckel, Associate Professor of Educational Ministries at Moody Bible Institute, speaker on the origin of life and how it relates to worldview.

Dr. Kenneth Boa, President of Reflections Ministries, presenter of the Powers of Ten, designed to expand the viewer’s appreciation for the greatness and glory of God through His creation.

Dr. Michael Behe, Professor of Biological Science, author of Darwin’s Black Box – The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution.

Chuck Colson, International speaker and author on worldview and cultural issues.

Casey Luskin, Co-president of the Intelligent Design and Evolution Awareness (IDEA) Center, a ministry focused on equipping students to promote Intelligent Design.

**Thursday, July 8, 7:30 P.M., Providence Baptist Church, 6339 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh.**

*Does It Matter What We Believe?* Video by Mike Riddle of ICR. The following will be covered and we will discuss relative to TASC's mission:

- Seven Biblical truths that declare the Bible and evolution to be incompatible
- Scientific Laws
- The fossil record and textbooks
- Why it matters what we believe.

I would like to subscribe to the *TASC* newsletter.  
(Suggested annual donation is \$10 to go to publication costs.)

I appreciate the educational outreach of *TASC* and would like to contribute to ongoing and new outreach activities.

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