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## DID DINOSAURS EVOLVE FROM BIRDS?

By Joe Spears

You may have heard that dinosaurs evolved from birds. What evidence is there to support this? According to <http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/november/new1115d.htm> a bird-like creature lived 75 million years before the dinosaurs. Now, that makes it hard for dinosaurs to be the ancestors of birds; the descendants would have lived 75 million years *before* their ancestors.

Some evolutionists claim that birds evolved from running dinosaurs, while others claim that birds evolved from crocodylomorphs, reptiles that glided from trees.<sup>1</sup>

Each side of this issue has supported its claim by attempts to show why the other must be false. Before going into some of the details, one should note this salient point: if both sides show why the other could not possibly be true, then we must not discount the possibility that BOTH are untrue! Possibly, birds did not evolve from dinosaurs or reptiles at all.

In fact, there is now a position that holds that the opposite occurred—rather than birds evolving from dinosaurs, dinosaurs supposedly evolved from birds.<sup>2</sup>

Well, opinions may vary, and honest opinions at that. But note that these are opinions. The fossils are facts. Interpretations of them, especially varying interpretations among experts, may be considered as opinions.

Now, back to the first case: birds evolved from running dinosaurs. There have been reports of finds of “feathered dinosaurs”. In 1996 there was a discovery of a so-called feathered dinosaur in China. It was named *Sinosauropteryx prima*.<sup>3</sup>

John Ostrom of Yale is the father of the theory that birds evolved from dinosaurs.<sup>4</sup> Yet he himself found that so-called “feathers” of *Sinosauropteryx prima* were actually not feathers, but something else (possibly collagen fibers). Yet, this “discovery” is still described at <http://www.peabody.yale.edu/exhibits/cfd/CFDsino.html> as a feathered dinosaur. It was discovered in 1996, and Ostrom (and three other paleontologists) decided in 1997 that the “feathers” were not really feathers.

It is very interesting that the judgment that there were not any feathers on *Sinosauropteryx* comes from the father of the dino-to-bird theory. We do not expect bias from someone like this. And any possible bias would seem to be in the opposite direction.

In reading the book *Refuting Evolution*<sup>5</sup> recently, I was struck by one point—how often evolutionists themselves will argue against one specific species’ evolution from another, though still believing in evolution. I have heard it described like this: experts in one area know that one certain species didn’t evolve from some other specific species; however, they think that some other species *did*—another species which they are not expert on. But experts on *that* other species can be found to deny its evolution, although they believe in evolution of other species, and so on.

There are some other so-called feathered dinosaurs mentioned at the web site referred to above. Two of these are dated at 120 million years old. Yet these ancestors of birds lived after, not before, true birds (140-150 million years ago). How can they be ancestors of birds and live after birds? One researcher claims it is impossible for these animals to evolve into birds.<sup>6</sup>

Another thing I note is that, when you look at the evidence closely, you see little problems like this—details that throw a monkey-wrench into the theory. There seem to be many of these.

One study indicates that the bones that make up the wings and feet of birds and the theropod dinosaurs are not derived from the same digits. This argues against birds having evolved from dinosaurs.<sup>7</sup>

Well, if dinosaurs didn't evolve into birds, maybe some other reptile did. This is known as the arboreal theory. James Carey from UC-Davis asserts, “If the arboreal theory were accurate, birds’ early ancestors would more likely have been four-legged creatures that developed membranes between their front and back legs, much like flying squirrels or bats”.<sup>1</sup> He holds that such is not the case.

Bird lungs are interesting. They don't expand and contract as do other animals' lungs. Air is taken in and flows out in one direction, while blood flows another direction. This increases the oxygen transfer from air to blood. The problem with this is that it is useful only to birds flying high, where there is little oxygen. Bats fly and do quite well without this mechanism.<sup>8,9</sup>

So, what is the problem? Evolution says that the useful, survival-enhancing characteristics are selected for. However, for a gliding tree-dwelling reptile, such a lung would not be advantageous or necessary. It would be even less so for a land-dwelling dinosaur. Again, this is another little detail and problem for evolution.

In the reptile, air flows in and out of the lungs in opposite directions, but in the bird, as stated previously, air flows in one direction. Evolution from reptiles to birds would require some intermediate stage. An intermediate or transitional animal having transitional lungs would find its lungs useless. This would not be a survival-enhancing condition.

Bird feathers supposedly evolved from reptilian scales; yet it can be argued that feathers are closer to mammalian hair than to reptilian scales.<sup>10</sup> What stands out to me is that the "feathered dinosaur" has been described as "proof" of evolution—that birds evolved from dinosaurs—and yet we see experts (who are *not* creationists) claiming that birds could not have evolved from dinosaurs.

Archaeoraptor, though described as a feathered dinosaur, appears to be either a fraud or a mistake—in either case, not what it was claimed to have been.<sup>11</sup>

Of course, there is also the theory that dinosaurs evolved from birds rather than birds evolving from dinosaurs.<sup>12</sup> So we see that in spite of the attention devoted to "feathered fossils", there really is little evidence, and it has not been absolutely proven that birds evolved from dinosaurs, even according to some evolutionists themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Patricia Bailey, 2002, New theory of the evolution of bird flight linked to parental care [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2002-01/uoc--nto012902.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2002-01/uoc--nto012902.php),

<sup>2</sup> Ohio News. 1999, <http://www.ohiou.edu/news/extras/news3.html>

<sup>3</sup> China's Feathered Dinosaurs, 1999, Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, <http://www.peabody.yale.edu/exhibits/cfd>

<sup>4</sup> Susan Milius, Overlooked fossil spread first feathers, Science News Online, <http://www.sciencenews.org/20000624/fob2.asp>, 2000; 157: 26

<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Evolution*, Brisbane, Australia; Answers in Genesis, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> Ann Gibbons, New Feathered Fossil Brings Dinosaurs and Birds Closer, *Science* 1996, 274:720-721.

<sup>7</sup> Burke and Feduccia, Developmental Patterns and the Identification of Homologies in the Avian Hand, *Science* 1997, 278: 666-668.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Denton, Blown Away by Design, *Creation Ex Nihilo*, 1999, 21(4):14-15.

<sup>9</sup> Blown away by design. Michael Denton and birds' lungs. *Creation Ex Nihilo*. 1999, 21(4):14-15, [http://aig.gospelcom.net/docs/4217cen\\_s1999.asp](http://aig.gospelcom.net/docs/4217cen_s1999.asp)

<sup>10</sup> David Menton with Carl Wieland. Bird Evolution flies out the window. *Creation Ex Nihilo*. 1994, 16(4):16-19, <http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs/1352.asp>

<sup>11</sup> Jonathan Sarfati. Archaeoraptor—Phony 'feathered' fossil, <http://www.answersingenesis.org/docs/4208news2-3-2000.asp>

<sup>12</sup> Canadian paleontologist one of privileged few to view exciting new fossil discovery. 1996 <http://www.scienceweb.org/can/news/nov96/n110896d.html>

## EVIDENCES FOR CREATION OVER EVOLUTION

**Editor's Note:** The following is argument No. 19 of 21 arguments compiled by various persons who believe that true science and biblical Christianity go hand in hand. Earlier parts in this series covered arguments 1-18.

*This was produced jointly by the Creation Research Society, St. Joseph, Missouri, and Skilton House Ministries, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Editors: Paul G. Humber and Glen W. Wolfrom. Contributors: Harry Akers, Robert Gentet, Ed Garrett, Lane Lester, Ron Pass, Dave Sack, Curt Sewell, Helen Setterfield, Doug Sharp, and Laurence Tisdall.*

19. When we look at nature, we see, no matter what part of the world we are in, truly complex relationships among various living things: plants require insects for fertilization, animal populations are kept in check by a predator/prey relationship, ants "farm and milk" aphids which live on plants. Food chains are not simple chains but can be very complex. Some life forms are parasitic of others and some depend on others for their existence even though they are not parasites. Evolution declares these complex series of relationships developed accidentally through time. Rational thought, however, is enough to deny this, for the members involved in a complex series of intricate relationships must all be there from the start for those relationships to exist. In other words, rationality is what agrees with the Bible—and denies the evolutionary claims.

## MEETING NEWS

At the August meeting of TASC, Mark Stephens, Chairman, shared to a good turnout of attendees his experiences and pictures of his May Institute for Creation Research (ICR) trip to the Galapagos Islands. Three professors from ICR accompanied the group of twenty on the tour and during the night sessions contrasted the creation science version of Galapagos versus the touted "Galapagos, evolution in action" message. Dr. Roger Sanders, one of the ICR professors, concluded that the variety of animals and plants on Galapagos and elsewhere, "has everything to do with the expression of information that was there from the creation." God put it there (in the kinds) and provided for the rapid subdivision of that information and for the flexibility He knew that organisms would need to survive and flourish in a fallen, patchy, and often inhospitable world. This does not represent chance development of new genetic information to produce new organisms as the naturalistic evolutionary theory would propose, but simply new varieties of organisms from the expressed genetic information programmed by God into His original created kinds.

Regarding the Darwin finches on Galapagos Islands, one of the visiting professors, Dr. Ken Cumming, Dean, ICR Graduate School, pointed out that Darwin collected, preserved, and sent the finch specimens back to his ornithologist friend, Gould, in England. Gould did not observe the finches live in their habitat or their breeding habits but merely postulated to Darwin that these different varieties of finches may have evolved from one another. Gould categorized them into 13 different species. Darwin later simply massaged the data and observations after the fact, and with a blend of his observations, recollections and conjecture, came up with his theory of evolution, not based on scientific fact. Later, the Galapagos finches were researched by a husband and wife team, the Grants, in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They were able to come up with only three proposed species of finches in a new schema of reticulate evolution. It has been noted by the staff at the Charles Darwin Research Station on the Galapagos island of Santa Cruz that "only God and Peter Grant can recognize Darwin's finches".<sup>1</sup> Dr. Cumming further declared that if we put the biological species test to the proposed Grants' reticulate evolution, we believe it establishes that the hybrid finches and their parents can be nothing more than varieties of a single polymorphic species. It boils down to, "Who do you believe, God or man?"

A part of TASC's mission is to provide under "academic freedom" a balance of information to include factual scientific evidences that support God as our creator. Mark believes that his ICR tour of the Galapagos Islands has helped him to provide needed balance on origins and

belief in God, our Creator. Hopefully, by sharing this information with our TASC supporters, it will help you to do so as well.

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<sup>1</sup>Weiner, J. *The Beak of the Finch*. 1994. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., p. 19.

## COMING EVENTS

**Wednesday, August 27, 7:00 P.M., Brooks Avenue Church of Christ, Brooks Auditorium, 700 Brooks Ave., Raleigh**

**TASC Scientist Speaks Out for Creation.** Please plan now to bring your family and friends to hear Dan Reynolds, PhD, Vice-Chairman of the Triangle Association for the Science of Creation, speak out for God as our Creator and the scientific evidences that support this. Hear Dr. Reynolds refute the media and secular views on origins, the fossil record, dinosaurs, and age theory with true scientific principles and evidences. This meeting will help to equip you and your children to stand confidently for your faith in God as our Creator in contrast to worldviews that would deceive you into compromise or loss of faith. There will be opportunity for your questions and to purchase creation science materials for your family. Attending this talk with your children, age 9 and up, could be one of the most important gifts you could give them as they fight for their faith in this modern world.

**Directions:** From I-40 West take Wade Ave. exit toward downtown Raleigh and turn right onto Brooks Avenue. Go 0.1 mile and church will be on left. Coming off of I-440 beltline from west side of Raleigh, exit onto Wade Ave. toward downtown Raleigh. Turn right onto Brooks Avenue. Go 0.1 mile and church will be on left.

**Thursday, September 11, 7:30 P.M., Providence Baptist Church, 6339 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh**

Plan to come out to view the latest, very exciting find by ICR paleontologists of a nearly complete fossil find of the dinosaur, *Allosaurus*, similar to *T. rex*. This new video from ICR, *Raising Allosaurus*, will provide new scientific evidence that dinosaurs were around only a few thousand years ago, not millions of years ago as proposed by naturalistic evolution. Equip yourself on dinosaur origin to witness to evolutionists.

**Thursday, October 9, 7:30 P.M., Providence Baptist Church, 6339 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh**

Michael Kinnaird, PhD – Topic to be announced

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