

SEEING WHAT DARWIN SAW IN THE GALÁPAGOS

A new tour to the Galápagos Islands, Ecuador, was completed May 20, 2003. This is ICR's third international tour to important places where the creation/evolution controversy was presented in an informative and scenic way. Previously, we took groups to the Holy Land and England. During this seven-day tour, 20 tourists and 3 scientists visited Quito, the capital of Ecuador, global radio station HCJB where Christian broadcasting is sent around the world, Mitad del Mundo, the middle of the world (Equator), and the enchanted isles of Darwin and Beebe fame.

Darwin stopped at this archipelago for five weeks while sailing around the world on a five-year research study of the geographical positions of many South American coastal sites. This was a period when the British Navy was using state-of-the-art longitude determining methodologies to support the maritime fleet with accurate maps and natural history surveys.

ICR is now interested in reexamining the second major *icon* in the evolutionary repertoire of field sites where hearsay suggests there is evidence for evolutionary theory—the Galápagos Islands. The first site was that of Grand Canyon that has yielded many evidences for a creation interpretation of history using paleontological, geophysical, and chronometric studies to challenge the old-age

interpretation of history. We will be focusing on the genetic history and population dynamics of the biota of these unique islands. We will also reexamine the time frame and mechanisms for the tectonic events that formed this offshore cluster of sea mounts.



Monument at the equator in Ecuador.

The tour used TAME Airlines to fly into Baltra which is one of the central islands in the cluster. This airfield is presently managed by the Ecuadorian military but has been used by the US military in the past to control access to the Panama Canal. From Baltra the group boarded a 300-foot cruise ship—Legend—to travel to Bartolomé, Fernandina, Isabela, and Santa Cruz. Once a



Bill Browning at entrance to Darwin Station.

day the group went snorkeling to see the coastal marine life and experience close encounters with sea lions, penguins, and flightless cormorants. Twice a day there were field hikes to see the remarkable habitats.

One whole day was spent on Santa Cruz visiting the highlands and the Darwin Research Station. One could walk among the feeding and sleeping reptiles in their native settings. At the science station thousands of young tortoises can be seen in rearing pens with their color-coded numbers representing the various sites where the eggs were collected and to which they will be released after reaching a size that they can survive on their own.

Perhaps you can join us on a future visit to this equatorial preserve to see much of what Darwin saw. Hopefully you will come away with a different interpretation of the beaks of the finches and an appreciation for the created world. One of our guests wrote, "It was a wonderful tour with wonderful people." ☘



DISCOVERING THE GALÁPAGOS ANEW

Gregor Mendel (1822–1884), the Augustinian monk, published his fundamental principles of inheritance in 1866:

1. Single characters are inherited as alternate expressions of a pair of discrete inheritable factors.
2. One factor can be dominant over its alternate expression.
3. Multiple characters can be inherited independent of each other. Mendel studied characteristics of garden peas such as size (tall vs. small), flower color (red vs. white), and seed coat (round vs. wrinkled). From these we conclude that attributes of plants such as size, form, and appearance are a result of the mixing and matching of inheritance factors for many traits. Organisms today follow similar rules with special exceptions for unique reproductive circumstances.

In like manner the plants, animals, and other organisms of the Galápagos Islands follow predictable inheritance principles so that the shell form (dome vs. saddle)

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Editor: John D. Morris

Co-Editor: Henry M. Morris

Managing Editor: Donald H. Rohrer

Assistant Editor: Kelly Griffin

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This month on “Science, Scripture, & Salvation”:

Weekend of: _____ **Title/Topic:** _____

of the Galápagos tortoise is expressed in three versions—saddleback, intermediate, and dome shapes. On the islands of Española, Pinzon, Pinta, and Fernandina the saddleback type is prominent. On Santa Cruz and Isabela, the dome shape is dominant. Finally, there are intermediates where the two variants meet. In spite of their differences, these different tortoises from different islands are all one species and can interbreed.

Also, beak size and shape in Galápagos finches can be expressed in varieties from large and coarse, to small and precise. So, what is needed to sort out the significance of all these varieties of expression? A careful compilation of genetic traits (alleles) for external features would go a long way in discerning how the supposed 13 species of finches came to exist and how fast. Usually this would



Tortoise with dome-shaped shell.

be done through hybridization crosses. Much more has been done, but much more is needed to determine if permanent speciation has occurred and, if so, does it have anything to do with macroevolution.

Now it is time for us to review this literature, evaluate what is known, and propose a research program to explain the present Galápagos Islands biome from a creation perspective. The recent ICR study tour to the islands helped these ideas to gel. Just as evolutionists have used Grand Canyon as the flagship to show long ages in geology, the Galápagos story has stood for proof for biological speciation. It's time to fly a new flag. 🚩

Aug. 2 From Scales to Feathers

The creation story tells us that God made all creatures during Creation Week—frogs were created as bats, and so on. But why do evolutionists claim that creatures evolved into other creatures, like dinosaurs into birds? Find out on this week's broadcast!

Aug. 9 Pangaea

Many scientists believe that the Earth of today is very different from the Earth of centuries ago. Some evolutionists and some creationists hold that idea, specifically when it comes to a super continent called *Pangaea*. So what was *Pangaea*? Tune in for the answer!

Aug. 16 The Many Dimensions

There are many mysteries in the Universe—some are visible and some are invisible. One of the greatest invisible mysteries is the reality of dimensions. What are dimensions and why are they so mysterious? Listen in as scientists share their perspectives.

Aug. 23 Rotation of the Earth

When we look out into space, we see many amazing creations. But in order to see one of the most amazing, we need to look at our own planet. Our Earth does some incredible things. What's one of the most incredible? Tune in!

Aug. 30 The Milky Way

The Universe is made up of billions of galaxies. And our “Milky Way” Galaxy is one of the most special. Do you know how the heavens give glory to God? Don't miss this fascinating broadcast! 🚩



THE “JUST-SO” STORY OF ENZYME ORIGIN

The origins debate will always be regarding the origin of species—or macroevolution. Creationists look to the God of the Bible—the Creator—as explanation for the origin of everything. Evolutionists place their faith in chance, time and natural processes (“Every living thing is descended from the same primordial cell . . .”). The secular worldview includes the origin of biological molecules—such as a critical group of very large proteins called enzymes. These amazing units are designed to promote or speed up biochemical activity within the cells of plants, animals and people—but at a lower temperature. If it weren’t for enzymes it would literally take *decades* for us to digest our meals!

According to evolutionism, organic (carbon-based) life evolved from inorganic non-life. This means there would have to literally be a self-assembly of something as extremely complex as a living cell. This involves nucleic acids forming RNA and DNA, as well as amino acids (the left-handed variety only!) just happening to form proteins such as enzymes. To get around the enormous problem of the random coupling of amino acids to produce a functioning enzyme, atheists such as Trevor Palmer, of England’s Nottingham Trent University, appeals to the god of natural selection,

. . . the Darwinian view would not be that the 2000 enzymes had suddenly and simultaneously been assembled from their constituent amino acids in one go, but that their structures had evolved from simpler ones over a period of time by a process involving natural selection . . .²

Another secular author stated:

Where do enzymes come from? All of the enzymes that exist in nature are the product of Darwinian evolution, based on natural selection.³

These are hardly scientific explanations. Natural selection presupposes a population of *living* organisms so that particular combinations of their genes (DNA) may be eliminated or passed on. Darwin emphasized that natural selection is differential success in reproduction—but there was no reproduction in evolution’s primordial, non-living planet. *How then, could the process of natural selection operate in a lifeless world?* Achieving the gigantic step of life from non-life will always be a significant scientific thorn in the side of Darwinists (see, for example, Fenchel, T., *Origin and Early Evolution of Life*, Oxford Biology, 2002). Furthermore, “How natural selection operates at the molecular level [e.g., enzymes] is a major problem in evolutionary biology.”⁴

Meanwhile, creationists see natural selection primarily as a conserving force in nature, reducing the number of maladapted animals and plants that occur through, for example, birth defects. A basic law of population genetics is the Hardy-Weinberg Law, one that predicts that populations will stay in equilibrium and act to conserve the variability God created. The end result is the adaptation of populations of plants or animals to their surroundings, but not the *origin* of new organs, tissues, or structures.

To read about the origin of species, consult *the* book of beginnings—Genesis.

1. Trefil, J., *101 Things You Don’t Know about Science*, Mariner Books, 1996, p. 283.
2. Palmer, T., *Controversy: Catastrophism and Evolution*, Kluwer, 1999, p. 267.
3. Joyce, G.F., “Evolutionary Chemistry,” *Science*, vol. 276, June 1997, p. 1658.
4. Yokoyama, S., “Color vision of the Coelacanth” *The Journal of Heredity*, May/June 2000, p. 217.



President's Column

by John D. Morris

Our Lord regularly showers us all with blessings, but some are so wonderful they must be shared. As part of the ICR family, may I share one with you?

My first foray into creation work was the 1972 expedition to Mt. Ararat in search of Noah's Ark. That expedition, of which I was the leader, experienced many stunning answers to prayer, and was a defining moment in the lives of each of the five expedition members. Recently, the five of us got together for a reunion after some 31 years.

There had been a few expeditions in the 1960s and even before, mostly by Seventh Day Adventists, but the work was not well-known among evangelicals. The early groups had mapped part of the glacier and done geological and botanical studies, but the Ark search had not been their sole focus. Soon after ICR was founded in 1970, one search veteran, an ex-Adventist by the name of Eryl Cummings, asked ICR to publish a book on the subject by his wife, Violet, entitled, *Noah's Ark: Fact or Fable*. It presented captivating eyewitness accounts of people who claimed to have seen the Ark throughout history. The research led to the inescapable conclusion that some man-made structure, the general size and shape of Noah's Ark given in the Bible, still remained high atop the 17,000 foot Mt. Ararat in Eastern Turkey. I was an engineer working in Los Angeles at the time, living a defeated Christian life. My father let me read the manuscript in hopes that God would use it to capture my attention and encourage me to return to God. Thankfully He did, and soon I had fully surrendered to Him.

Before long I had met several others involved in the search and was accepted



Above: THEN; Below: NOW



L to R: Seiter, Morris, Bultema, Losier, Ellison

on the 1971 expedition which never actually left for Turkey. The idea began to grow that I could lead a low-profile group of strong climbers with the search as our only goal, and so I made a preliminary trip to acquaint myself somewhat with the area. Several people heard about my plans and wanted to join; but four men stood out and were selected.

John Bultema, an industrialist from Michigan, was and still is one of the most likeable and sincere Christian men you'll ever meet. He was 49 at the time, while the rest were 19–28. His maturity and wisdom were invaluable.

Roger Losier, graduate of Dallas Bible College, grew up in Rhodesia as a missionary kid. He had climbed Kilimanjaro and seemed part mountain goat. Cross-cultural skills were a real plus.

John Seiter, an experienced outdoorsman and backpacker, became the unofficial "chaplain" of the group.

Bill Ellison, the youngest, was easily the most experienced mountaineer. An intensely spiritual young man, he was on the Southern California Mountain Rescue Team.

Together we saw abundant answers to prayer, especially preservation in times of mortal danger. Thieves shot at us on several occasions. We were often attacked by vicious packs of renegade wolf dogs. Three of us were actually struck by lightning at the 14,000-foot elevation and paralyzed for hours on the glacier. God provided impossible permissions to climb into forbidden areas. We acquired a “miracle minibus” for transportation after the one we had rented was taken away. The list could go on and on. The diary of that trip appeared as my first book, *Adventure on Ararat* in 1973 (now out of print). Some of the highlights are in my *Noah’s Ark and the Ararat Adventure*.

The reunion consisted mainly of remembrances of God’s provision and protection. The more we talked, the more we remembered. To compare each one’s memories and perspectives was priceless.

Each expedition member has walked with God ever since. Bultema is now in his 80’s and is a leader in his church and community. Losier has owned several businesses and is a lifelong adult Bible teacher in his church. Ellison still does mountain rescue, but has expanded this into work with the fire department and SWAT Team. Seiter has pastored several churches and seen fruit as a marriage counselor. All have successful lives, marriages, and ministries.

That 1972 expedition didn’t discover the Ark, but it did mark a turning point in the search. Others that followed benefited by our trials and began on better footing. We did, however, discover more of God on that trip, His nature, His power, and how we could fit into His plan. It was truly a “mountain-top experience” for all of us, and the reunion was a special time of remembrance and praise. 🌿



Houston, Texas

SETHSA (South East Texas Home School Association) held its annual home school convention June 6–7. Many homeschooling couples sought ICR products that would refute evolution and gave testimonies of how much the keynote speaker, ICR’s Mike Riddle, helped them to “train up a child in the way that he should go” (Proverbs 22:6).

St. George, Utah

Dr. Gary Parker and Frank Sherwin spoke at the “Case for Creation” seminar held May 16–17 at Westside Baptist Church. A survey participant exclaimed, “Great information for use in the trenches!” 🌿



VARDIMAN TEACHES ORIGINS AT SHASTA BIBLE COLLEGE

Dr. Larry Vardiman taught a class on Scientific Creationism at Shasta Bible College this spring. President David Nicholas invited Dr. Vardiman to teach at Shasta, a four-year Bible College in Redding, California. This was his second time to teach a course on Origins there. Other creationists like Dr. Duane Gish, Dr. Kurt Wise, Dr. Danny Faulkner, and Mr. Frank Sherwin have previously taught at the College during the spring module devoted to Origins. Fifteen students attended the two-week course. On Thursday of the second week, a full lunar eclipse occurred during class enlivening the discussion on astronomy. 🌿

“Colleen’s Choice”

That was the title and the message of a recent article in the AARP magazine. This very emotional and sad story told of the struggle that Colleen had with cancer, and her ultimate decision to take her own life with “dignity.” Her decision had been legalized by the state of Oregon and twice approved by the voters of Oregon. Even though the Federal government, under the direction of Attorney General Aschroft, has directed the Drug Enforcement Agency to forbid doctors to write prescriptions that would carry out Colleen’s wishes, the “Death with Dignity Act” gave her explicit permission to commit suicide.

Did Colleen have the “right” to choose?

The loud, bold, all-consuming mantra of our Western society seems to be: “the right to choose.” A woman has the “right” to an abortion. Homosexuals have the “right” to their lifestyle. Everyone has the “right” to “do” anything that “feels right.”

Did Colleen make the “right” choice?

Were it not for the authority of God over our lives as Creator and Owner of all things (Isaiah 45:5–12), man would have “total” choice freedom. Where do our “standards” come from? If from the statistical norms or the popular vote of society, then Colleen has indeed made a “right” choice. If, however, authority over man rests in the Creator of man in the “image of God,” then Colleen made a “wrong” choice. Ultimately, all the issues of life begin with our conscious “choice” about who “God” really is (Romans 1:18–25).

ICR wants to help the “Colleens” of our world understand the true “liberty” that is found in the Creator (Romans 8:20–21; Galatians 5:1). That freedom starts with a belief in the God of Creation (Hebrews 11:3,6) and grows with the knowledge of His Word (Colossians 2:2–10).

The enemies of God and His Word are many and powerful. We are not intimidated (I John 4:4), but the opposition is very real (I Corinthians 16:9). Will you help us in this intense battle? We need your financial support as well as your prayer support. Please contact me if I can be of help.



Dr. Henry Morris III, ICR Executive Vice President for Strategic Ministries.
P.O. Box 2667, El Cajon, CA 92021; Phone 619/448-0900; E-mail: hmmorrisiii@icr.org
Donations can be made on-line at www.icr.org/contribute.html