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*"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).*

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# Where Can We See Young-Earth Evidence?

by John D. Morris*

Rocks and fossils do not come with labels informing us of their age. They must be understood in light of their geologic context, and interpreted within a worldview. Unfortunately, my evolutionary colleagues are often so dominated by uniformitarian brainwashing they can't objectively understand young-Earth evidence. Nevertheless, some of the evidence is clear and open for all to see.

One such clear piece of evidence is in Kodachrome Basin State Park in Utah. Named by a former director of *National Geographic* magazine for its photographic beauty, it can be found near the better-known Bryce Canyon National Park. Here one can see numerous clastic "pipes" rising many feet into the air.

A *clastic* rock consists of eroded fragments of a previous rock. For instance, sandstone consists of sand grains, usually derived from a previously existing granitic source. When sand grains are deposited and cemented together it becomes a sandstone. These clastic pipes are sandstone, nearly identical with a deeply buried sandstone source.

Evidently a tectonic event fluidized an unconsolidated sand deposit, and squeezed it up like toothpaste into piercements in the overlying rock. Once emplaced as a liner "dike," or in this case a vertical "pipe," it hardened into resistant rock. Eventually the surrounding, more easily erodable rock was washed away, leaving only a vertical pipe.

The timing of the deposition, squeezing, and erosion provides the young-Earth argument. According to conventional dating methods, the pipes squeezed up some 150 million years ago, but the source sandstone bed is 175 million years old. Thus, the mother bed remained soft and unconsolidated for 25 million years before it squeezed up.

In the presence of a cementing agent to bind the grains together, which both the source and daughter pipes have, loose sand can harden into a sandstone in a short time, perhaps just years. The fact that the pipes exist at all is evidence that little time passed between deposition and squeezing. Thus, the millions of years postulated by old-Earth advocates never happened.

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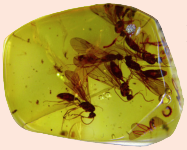
# Amber: A Window to the Recent Past

by Frank Sherwin, M.A.*



Beautiful, golden fossilized amber begins as resin. Exuded as a sticky liquid from bark or wood, it polymerizes into solid amber. It slowly degrades when left in the open and therefore must be rather quickly buried in dense sediments. There are about twenty amber deposits, the most prominent locations are in the Baltic and Dominican Republic.

Many thousands of amber pieces contain fossils. A variety of animals are preserved in those golden tombs, including insects, crustaceans, tadpoles, lizards, annelids, snails, and spiders. In 1997, a piece of Dominican amber was appraised at $50,000 because it contained a frog. Even hair of mammals has been found. Such preservation gives us an idea of the pre-Flood ecosystem thousands of years ago.

The beautiful and aromatic blue amber of the Dominican Republic is the most rewarding of the ambers for aesthetic and scientific reasons, and holds the record when it comes to fossil content. Not only does this amber contain ten times more insects than Baltic amber, it also is 90% more transparent. Some of the fossilized creatures are extinct, but this is hardly evidence for vertical evolution.

There have even been discoveries of preserved animal and plant DNA, "Amber has preserved ancient life to such infinitesimal detail that it even captures fragments of DNA of the organisms entrapped in it."[1] The discovery of DNA segments is not surprising for the creationist. However, it stupefies the Darwinist, because evolutionists maintain that amber is many millions of years old.

The oldest known amber containing insects is—according to evolutionary dating—146 million years old. But what is found are animal forms that remain unchanged. Secular biologists are constantly amazed that creatures displayed in such a clear sarcophagus can be identified down to genus or even species. For example, small oak tree flowers have been found dated at "90 million years old," but they are still oak. The same is true for the oldest feather (100% feather —*not* a transition from a scale), the oldest mushroom, mosquito, biting black fly, and fig wasp. All that is seen in these organisms is *no change* ("stasis") or the possibility of extinction. This in no way supports the case for macroevolution, but is certainly what creationists expect.

To conclude, just as the mineralized fossils found in sedimentary rock units worldwide fail to support macroevolution, the same holds true for animals and plants found in "ancient" amber. Creation scientists aren't particularly surprised by the plants, animals, and DNA found in amber considering the youth of this planet. Furthermore, creationists have been requesting these creatures in amber should be subjected to Carbon 14 dating. A similar requst is made to date the "70 million year old" *soft* dinosaur tissue recently discovered in eastern Montana (see Origins Issues "The Devastating Issue of Dinosaur Tissue").[2] But secular scientists are reticent. Why? The search for truth should actively go where the physical evidence leads.

## Endnotes

1. http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/amber/
2. See also Yeoman, B. April 2006. Schweitzer's dangerous discovery. *Discover,* p. 37.

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# I Love Lucy?

by William A. Hoesch, M.S.*

Lucy, to TV audiences of the 1950s and 1960s, was a spunky red-headed actress. To our more educated schoolchildren today, however, "Lucy" means something quite different. She is the celebrated fossil that appears in textbooks as a hairy, semi-naked, upright-walking ape striding boldly across a treeless African landscape. Her jaw is set and she leaves behind her a set of trailing footprints. As the unquestioned icon of human evolution, her fame is comparable to that of the former actress. Why is it that all public school children have heard of this fossil? Let us consider Lucy and her species, *Australopithicus afarensis*.

The human evolution story usually begins with the more primitive australopithocines (literally, "southern apes") that transition into the genus Homo (or human), through either *Homo habilis* or *Homo erectus*, depending on who you talk to. *Homo habilis* is a mixed taxon of both human and ape remains, and has fallen into disrepute. As for *Homo erectus*, a great many suggest this category be subsumed into *Homo sapiens*. Thus "Lucy" and the afarensis fossils occupy a critical place in the human evolution story, squarely between that of the truly apish australopithocines and humans.

Lucy's skeleton was about 40% complete and was a remarkable discovery when unearthed by Don Johanson in 1974. The creature would have stood 3.5 feet tall, about the height of a chimpanzee. Its skull was grossly ape-like, and also about the size of a chimp's, with very little in the way of human-like features. Lucy possessed very long fingers with a decided curve to them, like modern apes possess for tree-swinging activities. From other *A. afarensis* finds, it is believed Lucy possessed long toes with a curvature that also suggested prehensile and arboreal behavior. Lucy's upright-turned shoulder joint enabled suspensory behavior and her hands, wrists, and arms were powerfully prehensile. And so you ask, what makes Lucy such a great missing link? Angles of bones in the (reconstructed) hip joint and knee joint suggest that Lucy spent *part of her time* walking upright. That is as strong as the evidence gets that she was related to humans. Virtually no anatomists will support Johanson's claim that Lucy was a habitual upright walker, yet this is what most textbooks boast.

There is one more piece of evidence that has been used to argue that Lucy was an upright walker: the Laotoli footprints. In strata comparable in age to those from which Lucy came are a set of very well defined fossil footprints. Remarkably, anatomists are unanimously agreed that the footprints are indistinguishable from those made by modern man on a beach. Rather than admit this as evidence that man and Lucy lived side-by-side in the past, it is claimed that an ape like Lucy *must* have made the footprints because "we all know" that man hadn't evolved yet. This, despite the fact that it is almost inconceivable that an austro-lopithocine foot could have done it! It is only by circular reasoning that this can be admitted as evidence for human evolution yet this is exactly what is being done in our public schools today.

If you want to know why Lucy is hailed the greatest of missing links it is because she is *the best* the evolutionist can come up with! There can be no other explanation. It is a credit to an educational establishment that banks on the ignorance of taxpayers that Lucy remains a "missing link."

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# Astrobiology: Follow the . . .

by David F. Coppedge*

"Astrobiology" is a curious science. Like its predecessor "exobiology" it is, as George Gaylord Simpson once quipped, "a science without a subject." We know about astrophysics and astrochemistry, but where is the biology in astronomy? So far, it's only in the imaginations of evolutionists, who think the recipe for life is as simple as "just add water."

Today, astrobiology is a dynamic, interdisciplinary field that is (as long as the NASA money flows) attracting a great deal of vibrant research into many interesting questions: What is life? What are the conditions for life? How can we detect it? But it is still a science without its prime subject. Nevertheless, there is motivational power in a suggestive name like astrobiology.

Another phrase motivates much of NASA's astrobiology quest: "follow the water." Since life as we know it depends on liquid water, it seems that watery environments are the best places to look. Doubters that water is essential for life usually do more armchair speculation than lab work. Most realists understand water's incomparable qualities.

"Follow the water" explains the excitement any time scientists find evidence for water at some planet or moon, such as last November's announcement that Saturn's moon Enceladus might have liquid under its erupting south pole. Due to its chemical properties, water can only exist under narrow conditions of temperature and pressure. For many years, scientists assumed this meant that only the surfaces of terrestrial planets within a star's habitable zone, where water could exist as a liquid, could host life. Inferences for watery environments under the ice of moons far outside the habitable zone opened up new vistas for imagination.

Another finding bolstering astrobiological hopes was the ubiquity of life in extreme environments. "Extremophiles" have been found around deep sea vents, under Antarctic ice and in boiling-hot springs. These discoveries, however, beg the question of how these hardy life forms originated.

The "follow the water" motto suffers from a logical flaw: water is necessary, but not sufficient for life. It is no more logical than assuming that if iron is found on a planet, skyscrapers can't be far behind. The key to life is the way its ingredients are organized, not just the materials used.

Though life is notoriously difficult to define, Benton Clark of the University of Colorado captured this essence in his definition of life in an article in *Astrobiology Magazine*: "life reproduces, and life uses energy. These functions follow a set of instructions embedded within the organism."

This suggests a different motto than "follow the water." If taken seriously, it might turn astrobiology in a completely different direction: one that takes seriously intelligence as a cause, and views design detection as the most fruitful approach. It might even lead a scientist to start with John 1:1–3 as a foundation for research. Instead of "follow the water," try "follow the instructions."

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