

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT PREACHES A SERMON

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Lovers of the out-of-doors are familiar with a little plant which does not have showy flowers but is remarkably regular in its form. It is called "Jack-in-the-Pulpit" or "Indian Turnip," and the scientific name is *Arisaema triphyllum*. To see its peculiar flower arrangement, look in woods anywhere east of Kansas from April to July, according to the latitude.

There are two leaves, each with three leaflets, standing about a foot tall. The stem grows up from a turnip-shaped structure which botanists call a *corm*. It is said that Indians dried and cooked these corms for food. They were wise enough not to taste one raw, for upon acting so rashly it seems that a thousand needles are pricking the tongue. The "weapons" are crystals of calcium oxalate.

At the summit of the erect stem is a large bract called a *spathe* which arches over the tiny greenish-yellow flowers clustered around the stem (hidden in Figure 1). The spathe often is striped with brown or purple.

The first year that the plant bears flowers they are likely to be all staminate (male). In later years, there usually are both staminate and distillate flowers, the latter lower on the stem. Late in the season, the leaves and spathe have dried up and the flowers have grown to a showy cluster of red berries.

How could our evolutionist friends explain the phylogeny of such a "personality"? Its form is not such as to make it win in a struggle for existence. If it were unknown, would a learned botanist predict that such a plant would be discovered? He would be laughed out of court!

The life history of the dragonfly is another bizarre exception to rules. It is not reasonable, according to evolution, that the dragonfly should develop its unique structures, and make such unusual metamorphic changes: (a) As an immature nymph this creature lives in water and "breathes" by means of gills inside the abdomen, drawing in water and forcing it out. (b) When grown to full size it climbs out of the water for the first time and waits until the skin splits down the back, allowing the insect to emerge as a "different" creature. (c) The insect becomes long and slender, beautifully colored, and wings unfold which beat with marvelous speed. (d) The dragonfly is unexcelled as a flier; using muscles which it never used while it was growing up.

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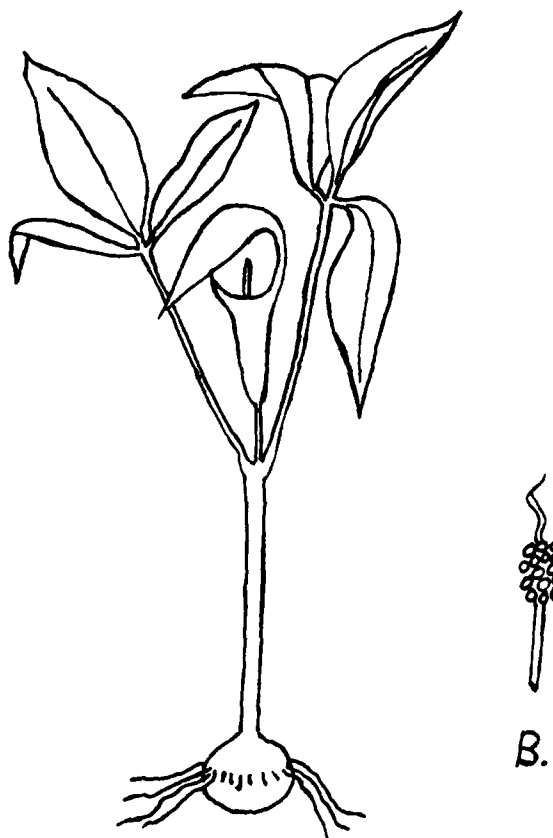


Figure 1. Jack-in-the-Pulpit, *Arisaema triphyllum*. A. Plant with flowers, B. Cluster of berries.

It breathes by air tubes ramifying to all parts of the body.

The doctrine of small, accidental changes in every direction, followed by natural selection of the most useful ones, does not account for either "Jack-in-the-Pulpit" or the dragonfly. In the presence of the diversity of nature, the evolutionist stands silent—he has no real explanation. All he can say is, "That is just the way these forms developed."

The evolution theory thrives on glittering generalities but cannot explain the development of concrete types. Evolution is based upon the assumption of selfish advantage in structure.

A structure which gives the plant or animal an advantage in its living and struggling to get along is supposed to become better developed through natural selection. Traits which do not confer selfish advantage are not accounted for.

The beauty of form and color in plants does not give wild plants a selfish advantage, and thus form and color are not explained by the theory of evolution.

The theory is based also upon the assumption of *gradual* change; but the intermediate forms, of which there would have to be many in the dragonfly, would not be functional and so would be an obstruction in natural selection. This difficulty has been pointed out many times with respect to various creatures.

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durch Abstammung von einer einheitlichen Grundform herleiten.³⁹

(Translation: "Organs which demonstrate the same basic pattern and the same position in regard to the whole in different animal or plant groups are called homologous organs . . . their common basic plan can only be explained in that they point back to descent from a common ancestor.")

The typical plea for support for evolution from basic plan is made here again, the phrase "can only be explained . . . by descent from a common ancestor" somehow reminds one of Dobzhansky's petulant remark: "They do not make sense, otherwise!"

To be sure, our forthcoming *Creation Research Society* text, *Biology, A Search for Order in Complexity*, has done biology a great service, in exposing these false claims for homology as "proof" of evolution, and showing that similarities could be due as easily to one great Mind. Determination, as to whether organisms are closely related or not so closely related, upon the basis of homologous organs are found to be based upon *subjective* considerations, and not upon *experimental* means alone.

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