

BIOLOGICAL ODDITIES THAT ARE UNACCOUNTABLE BY EVOLUTION

OSCAR L. BRAUER*

Evolution theorists strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. After noting some similarity of structure between two different families of animals, they immediately assume some ancestral relationship. They jump at some little factor such as "survival of the fittest" and neglect a thousand factors that are not explainable by this assumed process. To account for the hundreds and hundreds of unique things in the human body by anything like evolution is absurd in the extreme.¹ It is impossible to provide a plan, a driving force, or a direction to the evolution theory. Accordingly, this view is unable to account for certain highly designed systems in the animal world. Four well-designed adaptations in the animal world are examined. Creation evidence is seen in oilbird sonar, hare tracking, vulture tool use, and chuckwalla escape behaviors.

The Oilbird of Caripe²

There is a strange bird that lives in the deep dark caves of northern South America. Its scientific name is *Steatornis caripensis*. The natives call it Guáchart, Spanish for "One who cries and laments." This bird is commonly called the "Oilbird" because the natives rob the bird's nests and boil the squabs for their high oil content. The Indians use this oil for flavoring food.

The oilbird spends most of its life in total darkness. The young are hatched in total darkness and live there until they are grown. After they are grown and learn to fly in darkness without colliding with other birds and the walls of the cave, they emerge from the cave during night darkness to search for food, fruit of the tropical trees.

One mysterious thing about the oilbird is that it can travel around the dark cave with perfect ease and safety. It has very large wings for a hawk-sized bird. This enables it to fly slowly or stay placed in mid air like a helicopter. It keeps from colliding with the walls and with other oilbirds by a built in sonar-like device. It emits distinct evenly spaced clicks. Apparently the bird can judge distances by the return time of the echoes of the clicks.

How can the oilbird tell distance by the echoes of the clicks? He could not judge distance by any training. These echoes are measured in infinitesimally short times. Training could not possibly give it that ability. It can only be a gift from God. This ability certainly could not develop by evolutionary chance.

How do we know that this is the way the bird guides himself? Donald R. Griffin of Cornell University and William H. Phillips, Jr. of Caracas, Venezuela captured several oilbirds. These men allowed the birds to fly about in a dark enclosure and noted that they never collided with the walls. Then the men plugged the ears of the birds after which they collided with the walls every time. This fact gave rise to the title of the article in *The National Geographic Magazine*: "Birds that

'See' in the dark with their ears." It was further observed that when the oilbirds leave the cave in regular flight they terminate the clicking.

Dr. Ross and his two companions entered the large cave near Caripe, Venezuela. First they came into a large room which had very little light. They heard great noise but could not see any birds. They found that the first room opened into a larger room from which the noise originated. In this large circular room was total darkness. The men shouted and bedlam broke loose. One thing characterized these birds. That was noise.

How would an evolutionist explain this bird's adaptation to dark cave life? How could oilbirds evolve the sonar-like device? How could they develop their life pattern in total darkness?

Evolutionists think that any animal which develops a new or unusual characteristic does so by a very small step at a time over very long periods. The oilbirds are limited to a very few dark caves in northern South America. An evolutionist would expect them to have acquired an adaptation for dark caves by first going into a cave with dark shade, and then into a darker and darker caves until they adjusted to total darkness. An objection to this arrangement is that caves are not arranged in a series of darker and darker caves. In the places where birds are found there is usually only one or possibly only two connected caves.

Furthermore, there is no possibility of the oilbirds developing his sonar-like clicks by a succession of very small steps. The clicks had to be ready-made and of sufficient loudness and exactly evenly spaced. Then when we come to consider measurement of distance by the echoes of these clicks from near objects, we see the impossibility of the bird learning this ability by any possible training. Each young bird has to have the clicking mechanism when it is born as well as the ability to judge distance by timing the echoes. This ability to judge distance by timing the echoes is marvelous. Nothing short of God could possibly bring it about.

Young birds born in total darkness and never having seen anything must live their youthful

*Oscar L. Brauer, Ph.D., is professor emeritus in chemistry, San Jose State University.

lives; learn the voices of their parents; learn to fly and maneuver. Finally they must emerge from the cave into outer darkness; turn off the clicks and search for food. Having found it and recognized it, they must then find their way back to the cave, turn on the clicks, and find their homes. It is quite logical and simple to assume that God created this bird as he wanted it and gave it the ability to live successfully in its strange environment.

Dr. Rose makes this statement in his article, "There is only one species, and it occupies a genus and family all its own in the order Caprimulgiformes." This seems to violate several points in the evolutionary classification. It would appear that the oilbird is a species with many missing links back of it. This involves a missing link at the genus, family, and then order level.

The Arctic Hare

The arctic hare has a truly amazing strategy of escape. Lindell Page³ was following the hare (*Lepus arcticus*) up a hill on snow shoes when he came to what looked like the end of the animal's tracks. He turned around and found the tracks of the hare doubling back on his trail.

When the hunter got back about one fourth mile the extra back tracks stopped. Then looking around, Page, the hunter, found that the hare had jumped 12 feet to one side and continued up the hill. This procedure Mr. Page said is common to the Arctic Hare.

We wonder how the animal learned this strategy. A creationist would say that God gave this animal such power and knowledge. How would an evolutionist account for it? According to the usual way, an evolutionist would account for any unusual characteristic in an animal, he would expect that the animal had gradually made small advances over a long time.

In the case of the Arctic Hare, the evolutionist would suggest that after the first thousand years the animal would double back 100 feet and then jump two feet to one side. Then after the next thousand years he would double back 200 feet and jump four feet to one side. Then after the third thousand years he would double back 300 feet and jump six feet to one side. This would continue at the same rate until he had doubled back 1320 feet and jumped 12 feet to one side as at present.

Explaining the strategy of the Arctic Hare by such a development is ridiculous. Evolutionists rarely apply their methods to the development in a living animal such as the hare. They are concerned rather with how the hare supposedly evolved from some less complex ancestor. In this respect the time-element is in millions of years instead of thousands.

Since we cannot visualize the situation in this case we cannot see the humor in it. Perhaps if we could see the whole number of factors involved and the lack of logic in the supposed steps it would seem far more humorous than in the case of the behavior of Arctic Hare alone.

The Tool-using Bird, the Egyptian Vulture⁴

A gibbon is a long armed ape. His bone structure is more like that of a man than any other animal. When fossils of the gibbon occur in the strata it is hard for anthropologists to be sure that it is not the fossil of a man. Immediately the men digging for fossils begin to look around for tools. If they find arrow points, stone axes, or flint skinning knives they are quite sure they have found a fossil man. Let us see if it is correct to assume that animals do not use tools.

The thrush has been observed to throw snails on a rock to crack them. In this case the bird is not said to be using a tool. The object is not classed by scientists as tools unless it has been picked up or otherwise manipulated by the animal. It must be used as an extension of the hand, trunk, paw, or mouth.

Today, however, there is a case where a bird uses a rock as a tool. In the Serehgeti National Park in northern Tanzania the Egyptian Vulture, *Neophron percnopterus*, has been photographed throwing rocks to break ostrich eggs so the bird could eat them. The eggs were so large and so strong that the bird could not break the shell by pecking at it, even though the Egyptian Vulture is about the size of a raven.

Observers had a favorable chance to see and photograph the vultures eating eggs. A grass fire had scared the ostriches away and left about 20 eggs on the ground. The vultures "took over" and broke open all the eggs. Other scavenger birds could not learn how to open eggs from the Egyptian Vultures but fought for the eggs these birds had opened.

The Egyptian Vulture picked up a stone in its beak, raised its head as high as possible and threw the stone at the ostrich egg on the ground before him. Two birds took turns throwing stones at the egg.

Sometimes they missed, but in time one of them made a direct hit hard enough to crack the shell of the egg. Then they were able to break into the egg and eat it. These vultures sometimes had to search for suitable rocks to throw at the egg. They ranged as far as 50 yards to hunt for suitable rocks and flew back with them to throw at an egg.

The authors had gone into Africa for *The National Geographic Magazine* to study chimpanzees. They observed that these animals used sticks as tools to dig termites and ants out of their

nests. Another chimpanzee in Liberia had been observed using a rock to pound open a palm kernel.

There have been many other instances of animals using tools. Thus we conclude that using tools is not exclusively an accomplishment of man.

It is highly improbable that these Egyptian Vultures learned using tools by evolution. According to the family trees of the evolutionists these birds had common ancestors with many other birds which do not use tools. No doubt God in his wisdom saw the necessity of these birds having this ability to help preserve the balance of nature.

Birds in general cannot learn the rock throwing ability from the Egyptian Vultures but had to wait for the vultures to break open the eggs and then they would fight for some of the booty.

The Chuckwalla⁵

The chuckwalla lizard has some peculiarities that make it more suitable for surviving the rigors of desert life than most desert animals. We would assume that God gave him all these characteristics, taught him to use them, and put him directly on the desert.

The evolutionist would say that he existed first in a non-desert environment, then moved into the desert, and finally evolved all of his adaptations to desert conditions. This doesn't seem logical since the chuckwalla would have perished while these new adaptations were forming.

Let us note some of the chuckwalla's unique characteristics and abilities. We would wonder why other desert animals did not evolve some of its peculiarities while they were evolving (if they evolved at all).

A casual glance at a chuckwalla reveals a pot-bellied lizard up to 16 inches in length with a creased, wrinkled, baggy hide which looks as if it were several sizes too large. All these odd features have meaning when we study the life patterns.

The oversize baggy skin is important for defense. At the approach of an enemy the lizard hurriedly crawls into a crack in the bedrock. Once in the crack in the rock the animal turns its scales outward, grips the rock with its toenails, and pumps up lung cavities to 300% of normal size, or half the size of the animal's body. This jams him so tightly in his crack that his enemies cannot get him out.

Once the author, his son, and another boy vacationed in the Mojave Desert. The boys chased a chuckwalla into a rock crevice. Then they tried in every way to get the lizard out, but all their methods were failures. Although the lizard was in plain sight, and appeared easy to move, God had planned for the animal's protec-

tion by this unique means. If animals adapted through evolution, a natural question is, why didn't some other animal evolve this same defense?

The chuckwalla can run very fast and jump several feet from rock to rock. E. L. Boynton⁵ has said that the lizard evolved this ability over a few thousand years by being chased by coyotes, hawks, and wild cats. This method of gaining the ability to escape looks superficially plausible. But upon close analysis, it would be difficult to explain through evolution how the chuckwalla learned to expand its lungs 300% to jam itself into a crack in the bedrock.

The chuckwalla lives in an environment where there is no water except a rare shower perhaps once a year. Thus water is a very limiting life factor. And dependency upon obtaining water from its food, the chuckwalla is limited to an active life in late spring and early summer, rarely more than four or five months. The chuckwalla emerges from winter hibernation about March 20 when the desert plants begin to revive. At this time the animal is a voracious eater of almost any juicy plant or plant part. He puts on flesh rapidly and his long blunt tail and his skinny legs fill out.

Under all the saggy, baggy skin along the sides from belly to head are accessory lymph spaces normally half full of water—which, after a rain or at the end of the growing season, are full of water.

By August desert plants stop growing and the chuckwalla goes into "dry weather" dormancy, tucked deep in a bedrock crevice. This dry weather dormancy often extends into a winter, cold weather dormancy which can continue into the next March. All through this hibernation the lizard lives on its food reserves.

With regard to food, the chuckwalla has to have a peculiar elimination system. Since the plants eaten all grow on alkali soil, they contain an abundance of sodium and potassium salts. When consuming these plants, during the growing season, enough salt is ingested to kill an ordinary animal of the same size, but the chuckwalla survives.

God has placed in his nasal passages two bean-shaped glands connected to ducts which run forward to a pool inside the nostril. Here the salts are expelled by sneezing.

Since the chuckwalla is most active in early summer hot weather, it must survive very hot weather—to 102°F. If the temperature gets too hot, an excellent panting ability is utilized.

Another amazing feature of the chuckwalla should be mentioned. This lizard is a late riser in the morning, and needs to warm up in the sunlight. At first he is dark in color which favors absorbing sunlight. As he gets thawed out and

needs less warmth his color becomes lighter to a more reflecting and less absorbing condition,

Any one of these four designed systems (oil-bird, arctic hare, Egyptian vulture, and chuckwalla) ought to demonstrate the gross inadequacies of the evolution theory. Taken together they form a bastion of evidence favoring creation design and negating evolutionary theories.

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defense systems of the human body, *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, December, pp. 152-154.

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IS NATURE CRUEL?

WILLIAM J. TINKLE*

Much more could be written in the vein of the remarkable harmony in nature, which could have been constructed only by Divine Intelligence. Yet we must admit that it is easier to hold this attitude when skies are fair and the bee is on the clover than when a big, burly wolf pounces upon a rabbit which is exhausted from running in the snow and no longer can dodge.

Alfred Tennyson, the Victorian English poet, was brought up in a Christian home and desired to believe what the Bible states about God. But during his lifetime came the attempt to turn Christian philosophy upside down in the name of biology. Desiring to believe the facts of nature and still keep his Christian faith, the poet was pulled this way and that, as the following lines reveal:

And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes, . . .
Who trusted God was love indeed,
And love Creation's final law,—
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravin, shrieked against his creed,—
Who loved, who suffered countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just,
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or sealed within the iron hills?¹

Many persons have shared this conflict which tore the emotions of the poet for a long time, and we would gain nothing by ignoring this problem. The dinner of one animal results in the end of the trail for another, which seemed as worthy to live as the predator. Then as our thinker pursues his cogitations he comes to the

problem of accident, pain, and loss and he despairs of reconciling them with the love of God.

The food habits of man and animals kill some plants and cause weakening of many plants which are not killed. Much of our food consists of the seeds of plants, and grazing animals devour large portions of the pasture, hopefully without destroying it. When we eat fruits, however, the result is different unless we consume the seeds. (The word *fruit* is used here in the botanical sense, meaning the developed ovary; the vessel which normally contains seeds.)

Fruits are formed with no profit to the plant unless it be as a bait to cause the scattering of the contained seeds. The fruit eater does not harm the plant which sustains him, nor does he steal from its offspring as does the person who consumes milk, butter, and cheese.

Thoughts on the Original Plan

Every biology student knows that plants are the ultimate source of food for all animals, even the carnivorous animals, for they prey upon the animals which eat plants. Could it be that the original plan was for all animals to eat fruit alone?

Foxes and bears eat some fruit but if they ate no meat we wonder if they would secure enough protein. A lion, along with other carnivores, does not have a large stomach like that of a cow, therefore it would be hard for it to get enough nourishment from low calorie foods such as leaves. Yet a lion's stomach is comparable in size to that of a man, and many a person has lived without meat.

It would be hard to delineate how every kind of animal at present could live without causing the death of anything. Some thoughtful scholars, however, are saying that this was the original plan.²

*William J. Tinkle, Ph.D., is professor emeritus of biology Anderson College in Indiana. He lives in Eaton, Indiana.