

Dialogue

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For the first time in some years, CSAA is the proud sponsor of a Creation Camp. Unlike previous efforts, this one is aimed at the whole family with fun and learning opportunities for all. Salem Acres Bible Camp at Elnora is the location of these sessions scheduled to run from August 21 to August 26. The camp naturally offers not only accom-

Creation Family Camp
August 21-26, 2005

modation and meeting rooms but also opportunities for summer sports and recreation. But one can pursue these activities all over the place. Why come to Elnora? The location is ideally situated for scheduled outings to museums in Drumheller and Big Valley, for access to the Red Deer River (rafting) and for other planned activities out in nature. For elementary aged children in particular, Vance and Korelei Nelson have agreed to provide hands on sessions. Their traveling museum also will provide interest and insight for campers of all ages. Margaret Helder, and others, will provide informative presentations

on a variety of topics. Books and other resources will be available for sale.

Consult our website or send for a brochure for this week of fellowship, fun, and learning. The families and individuals who register early will secure their choice of accommodation. Everything is available from cabins to dorms, to serviced lots for recreation vehicles, and tenting sites. Share this news with your friends and relatives.

See you all in August

MARITIME DINOSAURS AND OTHER FUN FOSSILS

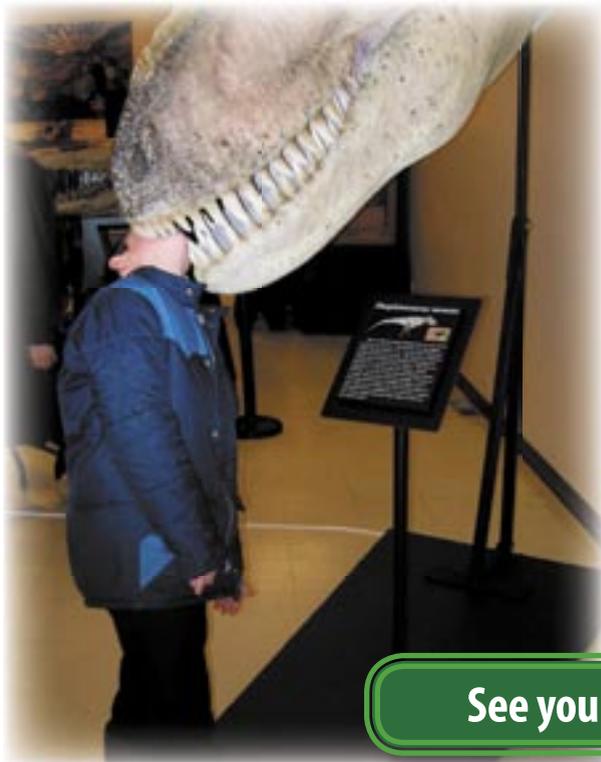
In Nova Scotia, as elsewhere in the Maritimes, we discover that fossils are an exciting part of the landscape. Not the least of our discoveries are the dinosaurs of Parrsboro. Dinosaurs?? We thought western Canada had exclusive claim to such Canadian artifacts. Not quite. West of Truro, along the north shore of the Minas



Basin, we find the touristy town of Parrsboro. The scenery is beautiful, with blueberry crops growing on local hummocky hills. Furthermore the beaches along this stretch of coast are famous for fossils, dinosaur fossils to be specific.

The dinosaurs here are not the same ones as in western Canada, but there are some trackways which resemble those of *Coelophysis*, a wonderfully agile predator (the bones of which have been found in large numbers in New Mexico). Other trackways in the Parrsboro area are identified as those of *Dilophosaurus*, another frisky

Continued on page 6



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CREATION DIARY

What a glorious occasion it was. On Tuesday, November 9th, I had the opportunity to hear Dr. Vij Sodera, a surgeon from the United Kingdom, speak on “Human Fossils: the myth of evolution from apes.”

As a medical doctor, Vij Sodera compared various skeletons that have been found, and concluded there is no evidence for evolution. The artifacts represent either apes or humans, but there are no missing links or transitional forms. Of special interest to me were two aspects of the discussion: one on skulls and the other on feet.

First there was the skull of *Homo erectus* with the large bone at the eyebrow, which was considered to be ape-like. Dr. Sodera mentioned how excited he was when a fellow medical doctor showed a current x-ray of a very similar skull. It belonged to a normal looking, intelligent Caucasian male. Without the x-ray, one would not have known the shape of the skull beneath. The second skull was of a ‘Neanderthal’ specimen with its protruding occiput (back of the skull bone), commonly called a ‘bun’. This is typically suggested to show a lack of humanness. Apparently however, this is a common feature among Norwegians living in Alberta. They are all normal, intelligent Canadian citizens who would certainly object to any hint of their constituting the missing link!

As far as feet are concerned, I’ve always liked my feet. Besides being petite, they have taken me many places. They have helped me hike up many mountain trails, scramble across shale slopes and walk on narrow ledges, leaving me feeling sure footed as a mountain goat. They regularly take me through Edmonton’s river valley and in my teens, they helped me win ribbons for long distance running. I also love going barefoot, and I have found that my toes are useful for picking up pens and pencils. Apparently that is as close as I get to have ape-like feet. Actually, ape feet are more like hands than like human feet. Dr. Sodera declares that it would be easier for an ape to lose its big metatarsal (toe) than for it to change into a human toe. Ape feet can do none of the feats that human feet achieve, nor do they leave characteristic bipedal tracks such as the Laetoli fossil footprints in Tanzania. The other bones of the human skeleton are similarly uniquely human.

THE MORE THE MERRIER

One of the great strengths of the intelligent design community, is the large variety of people from diverse scientific disciplines, who contribute to the discussion. With many minds and original approaches, the arguments are honed, and honed again. Everybody wins. In similar fashion, the appearance of a new creation based book with original arguments gives us occasion not only to cheer – but also to pay attention to its contents.

This new book by Dr. Vij Sodera, is not just any book. It is a deluxe book. *One small Speck to Man: the evolution myth*, published in hardcover on glossy paper, is crammed with original full colour photographs, diagrams and paintings. But this is not an art book. The argument is the thing with which the author seeks to catch the reader's attention. Obviously, with 463 generously sized pages, there is plenty of discussion to claim our attention. We know however that some books are useful and some books are not so useful. What then is so special about this one? Who is the author anyway?

Dr. Vij Sodera is a medical doctor, a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, who has lived most of his life in the south of England. Although Sussex is stunningly beautiful, he has nevertheless traveled extensively, especially in East Africa, Canada and Iceland. These travels have contributed to his lifelong interest in origins. Over the years he has used his medical skills and interests in anatomy, physiology and biochemistry, to research evolutionary arguments in the fields of palaeontology and biology. His method is to discover what the data and issues are, and to analyze the situation in the light of principles which he has already derived from other related data.

In his quest for insights, the author leaves no stone unturned. His

topics include fossils, sedimentary rocks, mass extinctions, variation, DNA and proteins, molecular machines, the whale, the bird, the eye, human fossils, man's upright gait, human chromosomes, the human mind, and wrap up arguments. The author devotes a lengthy chapter to each of these topics. Among the principles which he develops and applies is the Chalicotherium Principle. *Chalicotherium* is the name applied to an extinct animal which had a skull much like a horse, but with a very different body. From this situation, Dr. Sodera declares that we cannot know the nature of a body if we possess only teeth or a skull, nor can we assume any kind of evolutionary relationship on the basis of similarity in teeth or skulls. In like fashion the author derives the Coelacanth Principle. This latter organism is a fish, thought to have been extinct about 70 million years, until living specimens were discovered almost seventy years ago. On this basis Dr. Sodera concludes that in the absence of any direct evidence to the contrary, any creatures could have lived at any time before or after the time of its earliest or latest known fossil. This argument does interesting things to the fossil record. And so it goes.

Dr. Sodera also develops the Disuse Principle, the Essential Sequence Principle, the Intermediate Principle and others including a statistical argument called What You Want You Won't Get or WYWYWG for short.

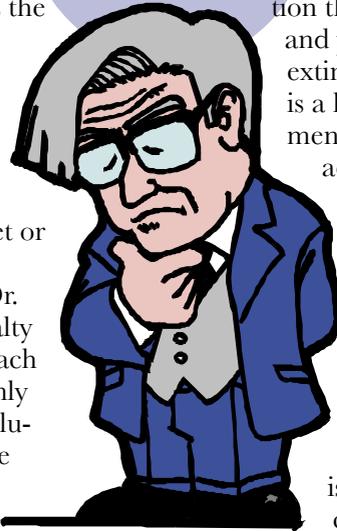
It is apparent that Dr. Sodera applies his specialty to develop a fresh approach to evolution. He looks only at the data, and his conclusions deal only with these matters. For example, on the topic of the fossil record, he concludes: "We have already seen that in favourable conditions fossils can be formed in less than a year; that the fossil record is a composite artifact; that all types of creatures (both living and extinct) could have lived contemporaneously

in pre-historic times; that there is little evidence for any trend showing that, over time, any organisms have acquired an increase in complexity; and that the constancy of form shown by many creatures is evidence against creatures having lived for millions of years." (p. 51)

Published in 2003, this book provides a detailed and up-to-date discussion on supposed evidence for evolution. In keeping with his original approach, Dr. Sodera sometimes interprets artifacts differently from other specialists. For example, he suggests that *Archaeopteryx* was a feathered dinosaur. You will have to read the book to see where that interpretation takes him! The book includes an index, but no bibliography. All quotes are documented, however many are from encyclopedias of fossils, or other recent books on suitable topics. I would have preferred to see more citations from the current scientific literature but no book is perfect. I particularly liked his discussion of biochemistry and also of the eye, because good creation based discussions with illustrations are hard to find. You know what they say about pictures and a thousand words.

This is an expensive book. Nevertheless as a detailed critique of evolution theory (especially anatomy and physiology of living and extinct animals), this book is a highly attractive investment. It is recommended for advanced high school and college level readers who are able to handle sophisticated prose. Also church and school libraries would do well to obtain a copy as reference for students with assignments on these issues. The author is unknown in creationist circles, but variety, as they say, is the spice of life.

Vij Sodera. 2003. *One small Speck to Man: the evolution myth*. Vij Sodera Productions. U.K. 462 pages. Hardcover with full colour illustrations. \$75.00.



Recently American biologists tried to have a colleague fired from his job: a dual appointment to the National Institute of Health and the Smithsonian Institution. These mainstream scientists were extremely annoyed, on philosophical grounds, with Dr. Richard Sternberg. The latter, in his capacity as editor of a small biological journal published by the Smithsonian, had allowed an article advocating intelligent design into print. Many mainstream scientists had previously pointed to the fact that no article favourable to intelligent design, had ever been published in a refereed scientific journal. Thus, these people declared, intelligent design did not qualify as science. But now such an article had appeared. A howl of protest rose in response.

Modern science is indeed on the horns of a dilemma: which is more important – facts or philosophy? Of course scientists could be on the side of both facts and philosophy, but only if they choose correctly. Otherwise their philosophy will take them to a position contrary to the evidence. Most establishment scientists maintain that nature consists of nothing more nor less than matter and energy. Such an expectation might apply, of course, to everyday processes where cause and effect involving matter and energy, are routinely observed. As far as origins are concerned however, this idea obviously breaks down. At some point there will be no natural cause. In contrast to the majority of scientists, some specialists admit that in certain situations, some ‘know how’ beyond the scope of matter and energy is the only reasonable explanation for what we see in nature.

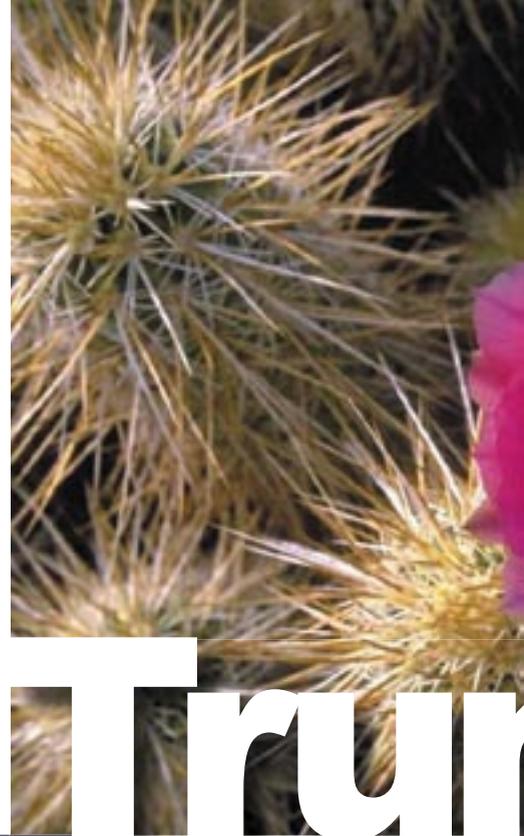
Most mainstream scientists recoil

in horror at the idea that there is testimony to the work of a supernatural creator, or “intelligent designer” to be seen in nature. As Bruce Alberts, President of the National Academy of Sciences wrote in a letter to the *New York Times*: “In evolution, as in all areas of science, our knowledge is incomplete. But the entire success of the scientific enterprise has depended on an insistence that these gaps be filled by natural explanations, logically derived from confirmable evidence. Because ‘intelligent design’ theories are based on supernatural explanations, they can have nothing to do with science.” (*Opinion*- Feb.12, 2005). Dr.



Alberts and like thinkers do not mind admitting that they have no explanation for a given phenomenon. What they do object to, is the conclusion that certain phenomena can never be explained naturalistically.

Life is a phenomenon scientists have long contemplated but nobody really understands what makes a cell alive. With each new discovery of yet more exquisite machines and controls inside the cell, groups of scientists assume opposite explanations for it all, depending upon their definition of science. If science involves only



Truth

matter and energy, then spontaneous events must be adequate to explain how life arose, many declare.

One prominent advocate of such a view is Christian de Duve. His recent article in *Nature* (February 10, 2005) illustrates this position.

Dr. de Duve begins by declaring that naturalistic science is on the right track in describing the origin of life as a process which is “strictly accidental and unintentional.” No mind nor intelligence was needed. All that was required, he declares, were small molecules which could reproduce themselves (quite a trick). Once that was achieved, he insists, Darwinian selection would become operative (selecting for what?), and the rest would follow “obligatorily” or in other words out of necessity. He does not say how.

Dr. de Duve’s article is long on optimistic pronouncements but lacks specifics. He lards his discussion with



mp Card

admissions of uncertainty which would be OK except that is all he provides. The words “must have” are connected to “been reached”, or “occurred”, or “been invented” or “been sufficiently individualized” or “been supplied” or “been prefigured”. The terms “invented” and “prefigured” (advanced planning) sound as if some sort of intelligence was involved, but it is not Dr. de Duve’s intention to convey such a thought. Also we find the expressions “much more likely”, “widely believed”, “could have happened” and “presumably” etc. etc.

The dubious nature of de Duve’s position is illustrated by his support for a natural appearance of DNA, the universal genetic code. He first admits that recent studies have established that this code is more than a million times more efficient than other possible codes. The choice of such a vastly superior system, he declares, “would represent a particu-

larly impressive case of optimizing selection.” We might reply, impressive indeed, how about impossible? Dr. de Duve then concludes “The conditions that would have allowed this kind of experimentation raise challenging questions.” He has just admitted that he does not know how it could evolve, but he is willing anyway to believe that it did.

Another article (Trevors and Abel. 2004. Chance and necessity do not explain the origin of life. *Cell Biol. International* 28: 729-739),



dramatically contradicts all Dr. de Duve’s points. The authors declare that “conceptual” input was required simultaneously at three levels in the cell, for life to be possible. Firstly, information had to be recorded in the DNA. Secondly, a system was required to translate the meaningful language in DNA into another meaningful language mandating the assembly of long chains of amino acids capable of folding into useful proteins. Thirdly, the proteins were useful only when they had a designated role in a functioning metabolic system. Without all this there could be no selection for useful variations such as Dr. de Duve envisages. Natural selection only works on a complete

living cell, it cannot produce the living cell.

Trevors and Abel emphasize that “No combination of the four known forces of physics can account for such conceptual relationships” (p. 732). Furthermore more research will not improve the situation: “No natural mechanism of nature reducible to law can explain the high information content of genomes. This is a mathematical truism, not a matter subject to overturning by future empirical data.” (p. 734). Their article speaks

of “conceptual information” rather than “intelligent design” but the idea obviously is much the same. It may be that their publishing in a European journal saved them from a lot of adverse reaction. Europeans seem generally more tolerant of minority views in science.

The hysterical response of American biologists to an intelligent design article seems quite shock-

ing. Where is the hope for reasoned discussion and consideration of the evidence? Opponents to Dr. Stephen Meyer’s article generally ignore the contents. That is irrelevant to them when a non-negotiable issue like the nature of science is at issue. They are dealing not with a matter of fact, but a matter of definition. Philosophy is used to trump the evidence. After all, only in an environment where one point of view only is allowed, can weak arguments such as in the de Duve paper, seem at all convincing. Nevertheless, in spite of majority pronouncements and biased definitions, the amazing complexity of the living cell points us to the Designer.

Maritime Dinosaurs and other Fun Fossils



Continued from Page 1

Predator which has been characterized as the “terror of the early Jurassic”. Bones have also been found of some prosauropod dinosaurs, perhaps plant eaters. The sediments which entomb these fossils include lava flows and crossbedded sand deposits. Volcanic eruptions would obviously be dangerous for dinosaurs. Moreover sand waves, producing crossbedded deposits, are laid down by extremely deep and fast moving water currents. It certainly sounds like a great flood! Was this really 200 million years ago as the experts suppose?

Only about 30 km north of Parrsboro, on the south shore of the Bay of Fundy sits Joggins, another must see location. This community turns out to be tiny, with few services, but there is a gift shop which doubles as a small museum, and the beach and cliff itself are easily accessible. Since the mid 19th century, the cliff along the beach at Joggins, has been famous for its preserved trunks of club moss trees. Said to be 100 million years older than the Parrsboro fossils, these extinct and exotic looking plants perhaps grew, in life, to a height of 35 metres. Relatives of

these trees survive today, but they are easily missed, since they are seldom more than 25 centimetres tall. Also in the cliffs there are large stems of horsetail plants. While smaller specimens are common today, the extinct plants had diameters of about 8 cm and heights of 5-10 m.

Dramatic fragments of club moss trunks up to 5 m tall, as well as pieces of horsetail stem (*Calamites*), are often found in growth position in the cliff. Since these stems occur at many levels in the cliff, geologists generally conclude that one forest after another grew on the site. Each was buried, one above the other, by flooding from a nearby river. According to this view, the whole cliff might have required several millions of years to accumulate.

There are some serious problems with this interpretation however. The tree trunks, for example, consist only of a thin rim of bark. In life, the interior of the trunk was occupied by soft tissue which quickly rotted away. With so flimsy a structure, the segments of trunk were obviously buried over their entire length, otherwise they would quickly have been knocked over, or have rotted away. Imagine the size of

the flood capable of carrying enough sediment to bury 5 m tall trunks at one time! With lengths of trunk overlapping in the cliff, the scale of that flood, needed to bury them all at one time, becomes more dramatic still. We need deep fast moving water to carry so much sediment. Such a flood would cover a huge area. (Also see *Dialogue* 1992 vol. 19 #3 on our web site).

Other artifacts preserved in the Joggins sediments include the articulated skeleton of a large amphibian called *Dendrerpton* (found preserved in grey siltstone). Some of these extinct carnivores grew to 1 m long. Can you imagine a frog or salamander that large? The latter are amphibians too, but of course much smaller. Skeletons preserved with bones in life position, like this *Dendrerpton*, require rapid burial to prevent decay and disintegration. Perhaps the creature drowned and was buried at the same time. Also there are trackways of a gigantic sow-bug like arthropod called *Arthropleura*. This creature apparently grew to 2 m long and 25 cm in diameter. Imagine so large a millipede-like creature moving toward you along the forest floor. I would either scream or faint! Its appetite must have been colossal even if it was eating only decaying vegetation. Also the remains of gigantic dragonflies are preserved (wingspan to 70 cm). Apparently all these creatures were engulfed by muddy water since there are frequent dark layers of sediment containing fish scales, fish bone fragments, and tiny crustaceans above and below the traces of the larger animals.

Joggins is obviously famous for more than the gigantic fossilized trees. Trackways there include horseshoe crab tracks, the gigantic arthropod tracks already mentioned, and reptile footprints ranging in size from 1 cm to 15 cm long. But how did footprints come to be made at a time of catastrophic flooding? It may be that the vegetation, stripped from the land by torrential flooding, initially was able

to float in rafts, with terrestrial animals along for the ride. As the plants became waterlogged and sank in vertical position (experiments show that some plants do this), the animals may have been forced into the water. Some of them may have scrambled over the bottom before they were swept away by further loads of sediment. This would explain

why there is no evidence of forest floor debris (the forest did not grow there) and why there is such a variety of fossil artifacts.

But there is more to see. Lastly we proceed to the Northumberland Strait Coast. Near Tatamagouche, we find the tiny hamlet of Brule. During the summer of 1994, two brothers noticed fossils of tree stumps protruding from the rocky shore. Further inspection revealed the remains of leaves and fallen trunks as well. The plant material turned out to be an extinct conifer called *Walchia* (similar to trees that are common in Australia to this day). Interestingly, although scientists interpret this as the remains of a forest preserved in growth position, there is no sign of any plant material which grew on the forest floor. Perhaps these trees did not grow here after all.

As at Joggins, these sediments also contain footprints. Hundreds of tracks have been observed which are characteristic of large amphibians and of mammal-like reptiles such as *Varanops* and *Dimetrodon* (one of the famous sail-backs). Also, as at Joggins, there were huge dragonfly wings and aquatic crustaceans. Unlike Joggins however, the surface of almost every layer of sediment is deeply cracked. Geologists interpret this as evidence

that these layers dried soon after they were deposited. This however is not necessarily so. Such shrinkage cracks are also known to develop in wet sediments under pressure from other layers above.

At any rate, most layers at Brule feature these cracks. Even more interesting is the fact that the footprints, in layer af-

ter layer, all proceed in the same direction.

There was obviously some feature in the environment which encouraged these animals to proceed in the same direction. It may have been prevailing water currents. Perhaps these animals, having fallen off a vegetation raft, turned to face the oncoming torrents of water. It sounds like a very big flood! Was it really 290 million years ago?

The whole Maritime region encourages us to reflect on past catastrophes. The apparent size of these floods suggests that none was a local event. It may be that all were involved in one and

the same terrible flood. Who would imagine that holiday beaches could provide such food for thought?

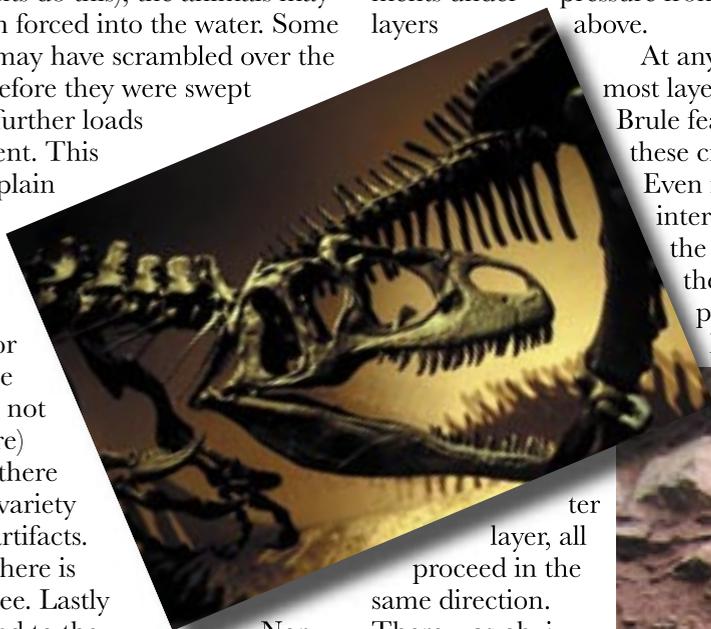
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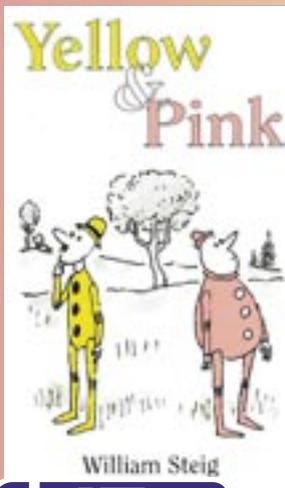
Harry Thurston. 1994. *Dawning of the Dinosaurs: the story of Canada's oldest dinosaurs*. Nimbus Publishing & the Nova Scotia Museum. Halifax. 91 pages.

- <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/fgm/lab/lab.html>

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(under geology: At Joggins : Look What the Sea Uncovered)





Yellow & Pink

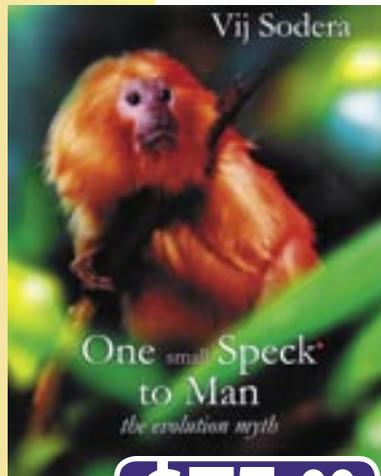
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Vij Soderá

One small Speck to Man
the evolution myth

One small Speck to Man: the evolution myth

Vij Soderá

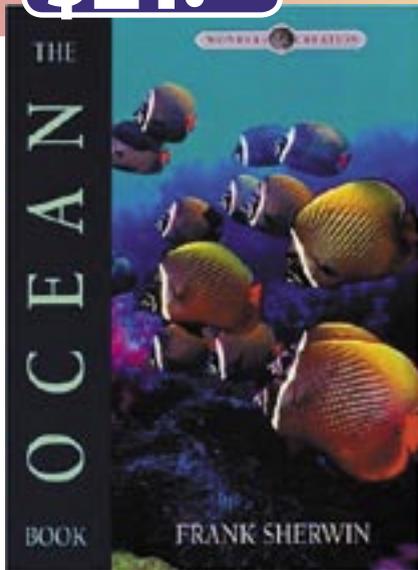
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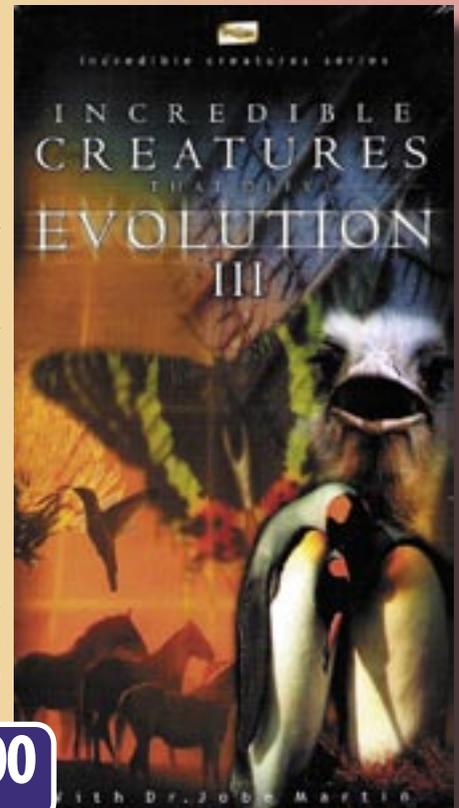
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