Insects! Some people give them a wide berth on principle. Nasty, creepy, crawly flying things! Even the magnificent giant moths elicit only screams from some people. But the insects under discussion are guaranteed to cause no such sensation. Initial disbelief, amazement, titillation and delight are the sensations to be expected from an encounter with these exotic “bugs”. Among the insects, at least 800,000 species have been described. One would expect plenty of variety in lifestyle and shape within a class this big. Indeed, this is the case.

continued on page 3
Flowers that Fly

Continued from page 1

Articles on insects are always well illustrated with exotic beetles, flies and butterflies. Among these, cicadas represent an insect family which is seldom discussed on the prairies. They are most unappealing to birds. Of course the birds are not interested in inflorescences made of adult insects, either. Nobody is going to disturb these insects, but they can hop anyway. The whole ideas of insect inflorescences gave Robert Ardrey, author of African Genesis (www.creationinfo.com), these insect specimens. As the function of the perfect gears in the hind legs of the insect native to tropical dry forests of Madagascar. The nymphs are covered in white waxy tendrils that curve above the young insect’s body. These waxy nymphs are most unappealing to birds. Of course the birds are not interested in inflorescences made of adult insects, either. Both the coral coloured adults and the nymphs pierce the bark of the Liana plant and suck out lots of sweet juices. Nobody is going to disturb these insects, but they can hop anyway.

A taxonomically similar planthopper insect of the genus *Hyalosominae* was the first planthopper species in which the function of the perfect gears in the hind legs of the nymphs was described in 2013 in the journal *Science*. As Michael Behe relates in his video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYgc5WcGyVg, these insects are not very good betas because the nymphs (young) can jump out quickly and so high that the birds are totally confused. These insects are not a good bet for a bird’s diet.

What a pleasure it is to learn more about wonderful design and the Creation!

Reference


Reprinted from Dialogue volume 23 #1 February 1990.
In desperation they elected to walk 65 miles. Each carried a 70 lb. pack as they circled the mountain and climbed to 13,000 ft (3500 m). Thousands of dollars worth of research equipment had to be left behind as they could not carry it. Guides unaccustomed to that part of the mountain and to research work, plus the hazards of the mountain nearly finished the team off. The extreme incline and unstable condition of the scree and talus were dangerous in themselves. The roaring of the glaciers was so loud that speaking was almost impossible. Fierce bears which are known for killing people, had to be given wide berth. Sudden extremes of temperature and sudden storms also can be fatal to those on the mountain. Braving all this, the American party managed two and one half days at their target destination in and above the Ahorra Gorge. They had planned for two and one half weeks.

Despite the problems, the expedition was not without some successes. Several caves were located, one of which contained inscriptions. One was in the Ahorra Gorge. Some exposed boulders bearing inscriptions were also located. It is the ancient character of the script which has excited Mr. Crawford and his fellow explorers.

Among the oldest known written records are cuneiform inscriptions on clay tablets. Early forms of this writing are dated by scholars to be older than 3000 B.C. Common to the early scripts (proto-Sumerian) and the later ones (Sumerian) is a complex system of mathematical calculations based on the number 60 (compared to our decimal system with base 10). No primitive people these, they could easily extract square roots and cube roots. We still use some elements of the Sumerian system: the 12-month year, the 24-hour day, the 60-minute hour and the 360-degree circle.

No one knows where these ancient literate people originated. The rocks on Mount Ararat may provide some evidence. A seemingly early form of proto-Sumerian script has been located on rock used as a building block in the ancient city of Ebla. Located in modern Syria, not far south of the Turkish border, Ebla was an important city about the time of Abraham (about 2200 B.C.). The rock with the proto-Sumerian inscription was apparently very old, having previously had another use. Some of the inscriptions found on Mount Ararat, including the Ahorra Gorge, are similar to the building block in Ebla. The script is in pictograph and is non-stratified, one of the earliest kinds of script.

Another team has found the remains of an ancient Sumerian town in southeastern Turkey which may coincide with the Sumerians on Mount Ararat. It is an interesting fact that in Sumerian the words for ‘country’ and for ‘mountain’ are identical. Scholars are certain that the Sumerians built the original artificial mountains known as ziggurats. The tower of Babel was a ziggurat. Remains of this latter tower were still extant round 600 B.C. at the height of Babylon’s glory.

Studies on the proto-Sumerian script are still in fancy and progress in translation will certainly be interesting. Nevertheless these indications of Sumerian origins on Ararat, Mr. Crawford believes, go a long way to establishing the historicity of Noah. In testimony to Mount Ararat’s past, the very stones cry out!

[The Rev. Edward Crawford, pastor of Edmonton’s Bible Presbyterian Church, came to Alberta from the United States (after completing theological training in Northern Ireland). His American contacts were helpful in his interesting John Morris in going to Turkey once again, this time to research ancient script markings on the mountain. Archbishop Ussher and others have placed the birth of Noah at about 2900 B.C., so the dating of this script would locate it as close to the time of Noah. The information in this article was communicated by the Rev. Crawford to Margaret Helder. We also heard his exciting presentation on the 1983 adventures which he gave in his church one evening in early 1984.]

The occasion when Ed Crawford heard John Morris in Edmonton in 1976, was sponsored by Creation Science Association of Alberta and took place in the Jubilee Auditorium on the campus of University of Alberta.}

References
Reprinted from Dialogue volume 11 #2 May 1984
Sometimes it takes a youngster to come up with an interesting question. The occasion was a lecture on dinosaurs, presented in Edmonton’s Provincial Museum on December 11, 1989. Following the lecture addendum by Dr. Philip Currie of the Royal Tyrrell Museum, an excited group of boy scouts was asking most of the questions. “Is it fun to look for fossils?” “How many dinosaurs has Dr. Currie found?” “What is the biggest fossil found in Alberta?” ... Dr. Currie patiently fielded all the queries. Then one young boy asked “Did dinosaurs swim?” As Dr. Currie answered the question, it became evident that this was really an interesting topic.

Dr. Currie remarked that little is actually known about dinosaur habits. There are some tantalizing hints however concerning ankylosaurs or armoured dinosaurs. “These remarkable animals were built something like tanks. Their hides were decorated and weighed down by row upon row of bony knobs and spikes. In Alberta, the vast majority of articulated ankylosaur skeletons are found upside down. They lie on their back with feet projecting upward. Most experts, Dr. Currie included, suspect that these animals foolishly ventured into water over their heads. Unfortunately, as their bodies were too heavy, these animals tipped over, sank and drowned.”

One wonders if the ankylosaurs voluntarily entered deep water, or if a flash flood overtook the creatures. Evidence of similar sad events are widely dispersed. In an interview with an Edmonton Journal staff writer [January 23, 1989], palaeontologist Dr. Dale Russell reported finding an armoured dinosaur, called a stegosaurus, upside down in Japan’s Gobi Desert. Also Dr. Robert Bakker in his 1986 book The Dinosaur Heresies [William Morrow and Company, Inc. New York] discussed several occurrences of armour-plated nodosaurs (ankylosaurs) found upside down in marine sediments. He asks the rhetorical question whether these dinosaurs foolishly went swimming or whether their carcasses were merely washed out to sea. He concludes: “The problem of oceangoing nodosaurs is especially perplexing because the tons of a carcass, upturned at the bottom of the Benton Sea, is not an isolated instance. Nodosaur carcasses lying on their backs cropped up in marine beds in Kansas in 1909 and several times since in similar sedimentary circumstances.” (p. 40)

**Update**

The above article demonstrates the relevance of a dinosaur fossil discovery in Ft. McMurray in 2011.

Some of the most famous armoured dinosaurs are the stegosaurs. Every young person knows about Stegosaurus and how funny they looked! The ankylosaurs are also armoured dinosaurs. Their four legs are much shorter than those of the stegosaurs. These animals were covered in heavy bony plates so that they seem built like tanks. They were big too, averaging about 6-8 m (20-26 ft) long. One book on The Great Dinosaurs by Alberta’s dinosaur expert Philip Currie and Zdenek Spinar says about the ankylosaurs: “Because of the great weight of their armour, they would have had great difficulty in swimming because they would have a tendency to roll over onto their backs and sink.” (1994 p. 126) This statement applies not only to the ankylosaur armoured dinosaurs but also to the nodosaur armoured dinosaurs which were a bit smaller than the ankylosaurs.

Good fossil remains of armoured dinosaurs are rare, so it was an exciting day when a new nodosaur fossil was discovered near Fort McMurray, Alberta in 2011 in the Suncor Millenium oil sands mine. More amazing however was the condition of the dinosaur remains. There was a fully three-dimensional body with the exterior skin, armour, and spikes preserved as they would have been in life. Even more amazing, its stomach contents were preserved. It seems that this animal preferred ferns. Have you ever heard of such an amazing fossil? No? Neither had anyone else!!

Scientists from the Royal Tyrrell Museum were very surprised to discover that this newly discovered specimen was a land dwelling dinosaur and not a sea dwelling reptile like a plesiosaur. No land animal had ever previously been discovered in the oil-sands. Many people wondered how this heavy, long animal (18 ft) ended upside down in sediments typical of the ocean.

As with many other armoured dinosaur fossils, it seems that this creature was over taken by rushing waters that tipped him over and carried him far away. Eventually the animal sank to the bottom of the water into soft sediments which perfectly protected its three-dimensional shape. Soon buried by other sediments, the whole thing hardened into a most unusual perfectly preserved fossil. This creature Bovasaurus mitchelli is a dramatic testimony to the power of unique flood waters to sweep away and bury heavy dinosaurs. Truly Alberta is a wonderful place to reflect on the impact of a unique worldwide flood.

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**A Reflection**

It has been suggested by some people that Christians reacted poorly to the threat posed by Darwin’s book *The Origin of Species*. Such criticisms miss the point. Influential English society had already abandoned an orthodox Christian faith and they were more than ready for Darwin’s ideas. The situation was similar in the United States. There were no arguments which could have changed these hearers’ minds. They heard what they wanted to hear and ignored what they did not like.

Naturally the first to speak out were prominent clerics. One of the most famous defenders of the faith was Samuel Wilberforce (1805-1873) Bishop of Oxford and son of the famous William Wilberforce who campaigned so long for the emancipation of the slaves in the British Empire. The Wilberforce family was known for their devout faith. Thus in a review of Darwin’s book, Bishop Wilberforce wrote: “Man’s derived supremacy over the earth; man’s power of articulate speech; man’s gift of reason; man’s free will and responsibility; man’s fall and man’s redemption; the incarnation of the Eternal Son; the indwelling of the Eternal Spirit all are equally and utterly irreconcilable with the degrading notion of the brute origin of man who was created in the image of God, and redeemed by the Eternal Son assuming to himself His nature.” What the bishop was saying, was that if mankind descended from apes, then Christ’s human body was similarly descended from apes. This was certainly heresy in the bishop’s mind.

It is however the evangelicals who are considered by most observers to have led the fight against evolution. This however is not exactly the case. There were mixed opinions, as in most denominations. Prominent evangelical theologian Bernard Ramm (1916-1992) for example, was a bitter opponent of the creationists whom he called hyperorthodox. In his 1954 book *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Eerdmans), he declared that the hyperorthodox are inept but unfortunately still around (p. 27). Of these people he further declared that their pronouncements “lacked the measured control of cultured men.” (p. 27) He further insisted that “Sad has been the history of the evil that good Christian men have done in regard to science.” (“p. 27”) And he therefore declared that the hyperorthodox position is “impossible of credible defense.” (p. 28)

Having thus disposed of the Biblical literalists, Bernard Ramm then undertook to reinterpret Scripture. The original creation was not as good as we might suppose: “God did not say that creation was perfect, but that it was good. In Scripture it is heaven which stands for perfection. The earth is the scene of man’s probationary existence, and it is good but not heavenly perfect.” (p. 93) It is not surprising therefore that Dr. Ramm believed that “there was death, disease and bloodshed in Nature long before man sinned.” (p. 334) It is evident that such people as Dr. Ramm believed what they wanted, whatever Scripture declared.

This situation continues today. The objective of prominent organizations like BioLogos is to convince Christians that God used evolution to bring about His Creation. Christians however are to critically evaluate what they hear, just like the people of Berea in Acts 17. The choices are what Scripture tells us or what prominent theistic evolutionist supporters such as Dr. Timothy Keller and Dr. Francis Collins declare. Both of these men have been connected at one time or another with BioLogos. There are many more such individuals too. The issue has not disappeared whatever theistic evolutionists past and present may hope.
**The Work of His Hands**
Col. Jeffrey Williams
The author describes his six-month tour of duty in the International Space Station in 2006. We learn the story of Expedition 13 from his perspective as flight engineer. The pictures which he took from the ISS give us a front row seat on the view below. Enjoy his interesting text and numerous pictures of specific locations on Earth. In this context, Col Williams declares that space itself demonstrates the greatness and power of God.

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