

MIDLAND DAILY NEWS

Wednesday reader's view: Evidence abounds for evolution

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By the Midland Daily News

To the editor:

In his recent letter, Ken Schafley provided an incomplete quote of Darwin, leaving the impression that Darwin himself concluded that the eye could not have evolved by natural selection. However, if Schafley had provided Darwin's entire quotation in context, it would be evident that Darwin already saw the answer to this supposed dilemma. Darwin noted how in the animal kingdom there is a gradation in eyes from simple cells that merely distinguish light from dark to highly specialized organs with cornea, lens and retina. Darwin's full quotation made the point that even superficially absurd cases can be resolved through the power of natural selection. Since Darwin's time, there have been numerous scientific publications outlining the steps in the transition from simple to complex eyes. Go to webvision.med.utah.edu and click on Part XIV for a list of 276 scientific articles on the evolution of the eye. There is no dilemma — it's been solved for decades. Citing this partial quote of Darwin is a deceptive tactic commonly employed by creationists and is now repeated by Schafley.

W. Vanderkooi requests scientific data to support evolution. Has he not looked? Science and Nature are prestigious and internationally acclaimed scientific journals. A high percentage of their issues contains articles with such data, and these journals publish weekly! Try this tiny sampling of scientific articles I happen to have available to me at the moment. For brevity I omit the authors' names and provide only the journal, volume and pages, and title of article. Hundreds of similar articles can be found in recent issues of dozens of scientific journals.

In Science: "Archaen molecular fossils and the early rise of eukaryotes" 285:1033-1036; "A new molecular window on early life" 285:1025-1026; "Ancient continent opens window on the early earth" 286:2254-2256; "Early animal evolution: Emerging views from comparative biology and geology" 284:2129-2137.

In Nature: "Three-dimensional preservation of algae and animal embryos in a Neoproterozoic phosphorite" 391:553-558; "On the origin of species by sympatric speciation" 400:354-357; "Interactions among quantitative traits in the course of sympatric speciation" 400:351-354; "The genome sequence of *Rickettsia prowazekii* and the origin of mitochondria" 396:133-140; "Evidence for life on Earth before 3800 million years ago" 384:55-59.

W. Vanderkooi also makes the false claim that there are no transitional fossils. There are hundreds if not thousands of such fossils. Google "Evolution: Education and Outreach", Volume

2, Number 2 for over a dozen articles with documentation for transitional fossils. These include land mammals to whales, fish to four-legged animals, reptiles to mammals, reptiles to birds, and others. These summary articles link to hundreds more scientific research papers published in dozens of reputable scientific journals.

There are frequent attacks on the teaching of evolution in our schools — Kansas is especially notorious. The lack of knowledge about evolution regularly displayed in MDN letters illustrates how successful creationists have been in suppressing education. Creationists want to silence the deafening tidal wave of facts supporting evolution and inject creationism into our science classrooms. But where is a single scientific article supporting creation? There is not one. If there is any scientific evidence for creation, then publish it in a science journal. Also provide evidence that every single one of the tens (hundreds?) of thousands of articles supporting evolution is a fraud. Provide evidence that every single one of the hundreds of transitional fossils documented in the scientific literature is a hoax. Until then, keep creationism in philosophy and religion classes and evolution in science class. Christians around the world (google “Clergy Letter Project”) acknowledge the compatibility of evolution and religion, so let us not allow extremists to weaken our educational system.

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