FUNCTION DISCOVERED IN ‘USELESS’ EAR MUSCLES

The three muscles that connect our outer ear ‘shell’ to the scalp and skull have long been claimed to be vestigial—useless leftovers of evolution. It was thought that pointless wiggling aside, our ancestors ceased using them for any useful purpose ‘millions of years ago’.

But a study in *Frontiers in Neuroscience* “found that these muscles do serve a function: they are activated when we are trying to listen to competing sounds.” It found that “these muscles are engaged not merely as a reflex but likely as part of an effort mechanism when we try to pay attention.”

Interestingly, one of these paired muscles reacts to “changes in direction”, another to the “difficulty level” of the task.

The researchers say more work is needed to confirm the results. This seems clear evidence of the purposeful pursuit of improved hearing in certain situations. But the degree to which this actually does improve it has not yet been assessed.

Sankaran, V., Scientists discover use for muscles long thought to have no purpose in humans, *The Independent*, msn.com, 2 Feb 2025.

PEACOCKS SHOOTING LASERS FROM THEIR ‘EYES’?

For centuries, peacocks’ iridescent feathers have dazzled observers. Their shimmering colours come from *nanostructures*—stacks of layers as thin as wavelengths of light. They reflect and interfere with light to produce vivid blues and greens. But a 2025 scientific study discovered that the eyespots on the tail feathers hold an even deeper secret.

Researchers applied a fluorescent dye to peacock tail feathers and illuminated them with green laser light, at a wavelength of 532 billionths of a metre = 532 nanometers (nm). They discovered that the eyespots contain nanostructures with previously unknown optical properties. These structures bounce light waves back and forth, neatly aligning specific wavelengths. The result: emission of low-intensity laser light. Two distinct colours emerged: strong yellow-orange at 583 nm, and weaker green-yellow at 574 nm.

As to how these laser-emitting nanostructures evolved, evolutionists can only guess. It seems that this newly revealed secret of the peacock’s tail is driving another nail into evolution’s coffin—with laser-like precision.

Fiorito, A. III *et al*., Spectral fingerprint of laser emission from rhodamine 6g infused male Indian Peafowl tail feathers, *Scientific Reports* **15:**20938, 1 Jul 2025.

McRae, M., Mind-blowing discovery: peacocks have lasers in their tails, sciencealert.com, 1 Aug 2025.


Artistic impression with Copilot AI

WEIRD ORANGE CAVE CROCODILES

Creatures were endowed with an amazing capacity to adapt to different environments. This is mostly based on built-in genetic flexibility. Isolated from their fellows, degenerative mutations (genetic accidents) can isolate them reproductively as well, so they may even become new species—often much more rapidly than evolutionists expect (creation.com/speedy).

The dwarf crocodiles *Osteolaemus tetraspis* have long been known from West and Central Africa, where they live in forests. One unusual group of these, first studied in 2010, lives inside a cave system instead. They may well be in the process of becoming a separate species.

Their lifestyle is very different; they “live in complete darkness, feast on bats [and cave crickets] and swim in liquid guano (aka bat poop).”

In striking contrast to their forest cousins, the cave crocs are a distinct orange colour. However, this is thought to be a direct effect of long-term immersion in guano, not some inherited change.

Osborne, H., Orange dwarf cave crocodiles: The crocs that crawled into a cave, ate bats, and started mutating into a new species, livescience.com, 4 Jan 2025.

LOSS OF SCALES IN CHINESE CAVE FISH

Microbe-to-man evolution would require countless *gains* of new structures or functions. So, there should be heaps of examples happening today. Yet the examples evolutionists cite seem to be mostly *losses* (creation.com/ns-not-creative).

A favourite is creatures living in totally dark caves, often fish, losing eyes. It's easy to see how in a pitch-dark cave, natural selection (NS) would favour a mutation causing defective eye development. Useless, delicate eyes bumping into the rocky wall would risk injury and infection.

Cave fish can also lose their scales, which require precious resources to build and maintain in that resource-poor environment. Caves have less predators; if scales are less needed for protection, NS might favour their loss.

The golden-line fish, *Sinocyclocheilus*, a genus found only in and around caves in China, lives in varying degrees of illumination. Some species have eyes, some have greatly reduced 'microeyes', others are totally eyeless. Some of the eyeless species have also lost scales.

Adding to the 'mix', the recently discovered *Sinocyclocheilus xingrenensis* has large, functioning eyes—but no scales. It lives in parts of the cave system periodically exposed to light. This is again touted as 'evolution in action'.

We can infer NS, certainly. But such *losses* of functioning structures (via mutational degeneration) can't legitimately be used to demonstrate a process that supposedly turned fish into philosophers.

Pester, P., Golden scaleless cave fish discovered in China shows evolution in action, livescience.com, 7 March 2025.

GIANT SPIDERWEB SURPRISE

In a dark part of a cave on the Greek-Albanian border, more than 110,000 spiders from two distinct species are living together on a huge jointly constructed web.

Covering 106 m² (1,140 ft²), this is the largest web ever described—"a patchwork of thousands of individual, funnel-shaped webs". About 60% of the web's residents are *Tegenaria domestica*, and 40% *Prinerigone vagans*, from different families. Both are common as *solitary* spider species. They don't normally live in colonies, let alone in a dual-species cooperative.

The colossal spider megacity stretches along one wall of a narrow, low passage close to the entrance of Sulfur Cave. A subterranean stream in the cave releases large amounts of hydrogen sulfide (H_2S or 'rotten egg gas'). Special bacteria that don't need either oxygen or light get their energy from breaking down H_2S. These bacteria form a thick slimy biofilm on the cave's rocks and walls. It provides abundant food for non-biting midges (small flies) that spend their larval stage in the water. The spiders, apex predators in the cave, built their giant web right in the path of where the adult midges emerge in huge swarms.

The abundance of food is probably why natural selection has worked *against* gene combinations that favour solitary, competitive living.

Sidenote: While the abundant H_2S in this cave is likely of volcanic origin, H_2S can also arise from decaying organic matter. There would have been massive amounts of this towards the end of the Flood. H_2S is readily oxidized into sulfuric acid (H_2SO_4), which even some mainstream researchers now think excavated many caves much more rapidly than thought. Creationists have suggested this rapid cave formation commenced very late in the Flood and continued for some time after (creation.com/speleothems-1).

Pare, S., World's biggest spiderweb discovered inside 'Sulfur Cave' with 111,000 arachnids living in pitch black, livescience.com, 5 Nov 2025.

HUMANS HELPED MARSUPIAL SPREAD

Biogeography seeks to explain the distribution of animals and plants, both today and during the Ice Age. Conventional scientists expected plate tectonics would solve the numerous riddles, but it didn't. Instead, they now suggest that puny, natural-vegetation rafts transported animals, sometimes great distances across oceans. This includes marsupials to Australia and New Guinea.

In the creation model, the world-wide Flood would have created numerous log/vegetation rafts. Being much larger, these were much more capable of such long-distance animal transport (p. 36 this issue).

Secular researchers now suggest that, in some instances, *humans* likely transported marsupials from New Guinea to where they are now found on islands to the west and east.

Interestingly, creationist scientists such as John Woodmorappe proposed decades ago that humans facilitated marsupial migration; see also ref. 27 in creation.com/cab17.

Gaffney, D. *et al*., Culturing island biomes: marsupial translocation and bone tool production around New Guinea during the Pleistocene-Holocene, *J. Archaeological Science* **179**(106241):1–11, 2025.

CHERNOBYL'S BLUE DOGS NOT WHAT THEY SEEMED

Artistic impression | Generated with ChatGPT

The 1986 Soviet-era reactor meltdown at the Chernobyl power plant (now properly Chornobyl) was the world's worst nuclear reactor disaster.

No humans live inside the 30 km (19 mi) exclusion zone, which is still contaminated by mutation- and cancer-causing radiation. However, thousands of animals do, including now-feral dogs.

Studying these animals has given rise to some interesting observations. E.g., wolves that may resist cancer (Focus **46**(3), 2024). And some frogs have become black, a great example of natural selection wrongly touted as 'evolution' (creation.com/frogs-chernobyl).

Recently three of the zone's stray dogs were seen to have a distinctly blue colour in their coats. Excited researchers thought it might be some evolutionary innovation.

However, the reality dashed such hopes. The dogs had apparently tipped over a portable toilet and rolled in its contents, including both feces and sanitizing chemicals. These generally include a deep blue azo dye. 😊

Thompson, B., The 'blue dogs' of Chornobyl reveal a stranger, richer world than imagined, newatlas.com, 27 Nov 2025.

SOLAR SYSTEM TRAVELLING FASTER THAN PREDICTIONS ALLOW

Scientists from Bielefeld University, Germany, have found that the solar system is travelling through space 3.7 times faster than standard cosmology predicts. Published in *Physical Review Letters*, this discovery was made using precise measurements combined with a new statistical method to analyze signals from distant radio galaxies. Radio waves penetrate space further than visible light, because their longer wavelengths mean less scattering by dust. Similar results were found by analyzing data from quasars.

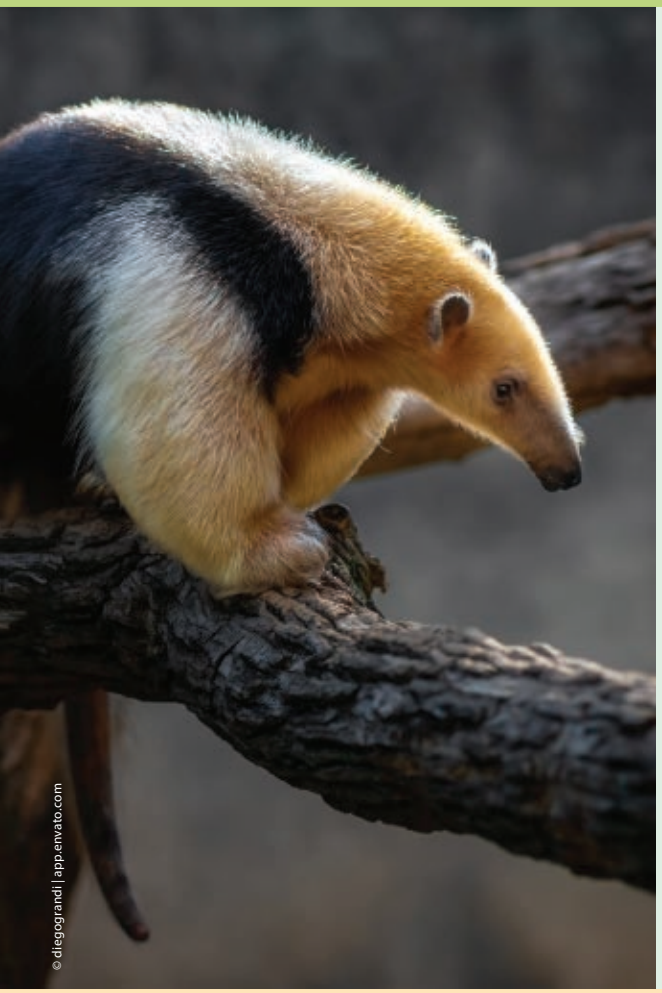
One of the paper's co-authors suggested that "we need to question fundamental assumptions about the large-scale structure of the universe."

An alternative explanation given is that the distribution of radio galaxies is less uniform than cosmologists believe. Indeed, there is increasing evidence that the universe is not as smooth on the large scale as expected.

As scientists discover more about the universe, major challenges to standard big bang cosmology are emerging.

Bielefeld University, Our Solar System is racing through space 3× faster than we thought, sciencedaily.com, 22 Nov 2025.

DID ANTEATERS REALLY EVOLVE A DOZEN TIMES INDEPENDENTLY?



Species that are specialized for eating ants (and/or termites) are called myrmecophages (from Greek for 'ant' and 'eat'). Various ant/termite eaters supposedly evolved from mammal ancestors 12 times, independently, in the last 66 million years (Ma), resulting in 20 myrmecophage species today.

Ant and termite colonies allegedly go back 145 Ma. So why did it take some 80 Ma for the first anteaters to evolve, followed by a further 11 such transformations?

The evolutionary answer to this is that back in the day, ants and termites made up only 1% of insects on Earth—according to "fossil impression and amber deposits in the Cretaceous". But since the Miocene, supposedly some 23 Ma ago, they account for 35% of all insects. So this rapid increase of ants and termites paved the way for myrmecophages to evolve (something like, 'If you can't beat them, eat them').

These tiny insects provide little energy individually, so myrmecophages must eat large quantities (thousands) to meet their daily energy needs. However, ants are social insects, with many of them concentrated in one area, requiring less energy to hunt. Also, ant-eating mammals have lower than average body temperatures, which reduces their energy needs. And they have other special features, like "long sticky tongues, specialised claws and stomachs, and reduced or missing teeth".

Evolution depends on random genetic accidents that happen to come along, filtered by whatever a creature happens to be confronted with in its environment. It's hard enough to conceive of an anteater evolving all these traits once. But coming up with the goods 12 separate times?

Jenkins, J., Mammals have evolved into ant eaters 12 times since the dinosaur age, study finds, phys.org, 16 Jul 2025.

Vida, T., Calamari, Z., and Barden, P., Post K-Pg rise in ant and termite prevalence underlies convergent dietary specialization in mammals, *Evolution* **79**(10):2315–2324, 2025.

LONG-DISTANCE LIZARD SAILORS

Other than in a handful of Pacific islands, notably Fiji, iguanas are found only in the Americas. So the big question has been—with all that ocean to cross, how did they get to Fiji?

The same question arises for creationists in explaining this and similar issues in how animals spread to their various locations today after the global Flood.

According to a March 2025 paper in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences,* researchers have reached a definite conclusion about how this happened (within their evolutionary framework).

They say that a batch of the lizards must have travelled across 8,000 km (5,000 mi) of open ocean on rafts of floating logs and other vegetation, torn off in storms. There simply is no other option open to them from the data.

When such a proposal was first made by creationists, it was greeted with skeptical derision. Yet the likely conditions after the Flood (see p. 36) would make such an amazing-seeming feat very feasible, if not likely. For evolutionists, the probability of such journeys, given the skimpy 'natural rafts' we see after storms today, is extremely low. Yet they are forced to accept similar oceanic odysseys to explain a good number of animal distributions. So they resort to the standard line that such "incredibly rare chance events" are made far more likely "as long as millions of years of time are available."

Buehler, J., The mystery of how iguanas crossed the Pacific Ocean may be solved, sciencenews.org, 17 Mar 2025.

BENNU ASTEROID: RNA WORLD SUPPORT?

Scientists studying samples from the small asteroid Bennu have reported finding some of the "building blocks of life". These include amino acids (used in proteins) and nucleobases (used in DNA and RNA). However, the 'blocks' were incapable of building anything. They were far too dilute (parts per million), grossly contaminated, and racemic, i.e., 50-50 left- and right-handed, rather than the ~100% left-handed in living creatures. (See *Creation* **47**(3):11, 2025; creation.com/chirality.)

A newer paper has now reported detecting the sugar ribose used in RNA. The authors suggest that this supports the RNA World: the idea that life began with self-replicating RNA.

But their data doesn't match their optimism. All the sugars combined were only about 1% as much as the amino acids, which were scarce enough. In fact, the amounts were so small and swamped by contaminants that they couldn't even measure handedness. For RNA, having 100% one-handed sugars is even more important than for proteins. Just one wrong-handed sugar will throw its base-pairing off, so it can no longer transmit or replicate information.

Furthermore, ribose wasn't even the commonest sugar. It was swamped by other sugars plus other molecules. The researchers even point out its instability. This makes it even less likely as a foundation for RNA.

Also, deoxyribose, the sugar in DNA, was not detected. While RNA is about 100× less stable than DNA, which is really saying a lot, deoxyribose is 100× more reactive than ribose, so it rapidly reacts with and is destroyed by other compounds. RNA's instability is a huge problem for RNA World ideas, while instability of deoxyribose is a serious issue for the naturalistic origin of DNA-based life.

Furukawa, Y. *et al.*, Bio-essential sugars in samples from asteroid Bennu, *Nature Geoscience*, 2 Dec 2025.


NASA

NEANDERTHAL NOSE BONE BELIEF OVERTURNED


CC BY 4.0 | Paul Hermans | wikipedia.org

The idea that many features of Neanderthals 'evolved' to enable living in frigid, icy climates has long persisted. E.g., short stocky build and shorter arms to reduce heat loss. Yet many Neanderthals lived and thrived in much milder, even warm-temperate, regions such as Middle-Eastern lowlands.

Their large nasal cavities and openings were hypothesized to be associated with specialized, complex internal structures to better warm and humidify incoming air.

This has been hard to test, since the delicate internal nasal bones are not generally preserved. However, Italy's 'Altamura man' Neanderthal skeleton, preserved in cave limestone, is an exception. Using delicate endoscopic video techniques without removing the skeleton from the cave, researchers were able to digitally construct 3D models of the entire set of nose bones and cavities. The result? These "were neither unique nor substantially different from those of modern humans".

Kilgrove, K., 'Perfectly preserved' Neanderthal skull bones suggest their noses didn't evolve to warm air, livescience.com, 18 Nov 2025.

WebWatch

Type the words in **bold** into the search box on: CREATION.com

- **Wollemi** pine ('dinosaur tree')
- **Two Forms** of Natural Selection
- Old Man of **Hoy**
- **Can Christians** believe in evolution?
- **Thorns** outside **Eden?**
- CMI's **Scripture-First** Approach
- Dominion **Mandate 2.0**