

NICK GUY & THE AMAZING DESIGN AFFAIR

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THEME: One look at even just one animal on planet earth leads us to one conclusion: It takes more faith to believe that all that makes up our universe was caused by random chance than to believe that there exists an amazing Designer who created all things.

In *Nick Guy & the Amazing Design Affair*, Nick Guy is set on the trail of a lost rare woodpecker. Along the way, he discovers some incredible things about this lost bird that convinces him that the woodpecker (in fact every animal on the earth) has to have had a Creator who intricately designed it with everything it needs to function and live.

COMPOUND TRAITS: The Woodpecker possesses a number of specially-designed traits that dependant upon each other for any one of them to be useful. Traits found in no other bird.

Evolutionists would have us believe that these variations are the result of random mutations that occurred over a period of millions, perhaps billions of years. The biggest problem with this explanation is that these mutations would all be useless, and in some cases dangerous, to the bird if they occurred independent of each other. They would all need to have occurred at precisely the same time to be of any value.

THE WOODPECKER'S BEAK: The Woodpecker's beak, by necessity, is very different from the beak of any other bird. It must be especially strong to peck into a tree. That action places a great deal of stress on it. Yet the woodpecker pecks and pecks but the beak never breaks. If any other bird tried to do this, their beak would shatter.

This creates a problem for Evolutionists, because a strong beak isn't the only thing a woodpecker needs to be able to peck into a tree.

THE WOODPECKER'S HEAD: The Woodpecker has specially placed cartilage in its head structure that it needs to absorb the shock of pecking into a tree. This prevents the woodpecker from damaging its head and ending up with a big headache after a full day of tree pounding.

This feature creates a problem for the Evolutionist because it begs the question: Why would a bird evolve with a strong beak which enables it to peck into a tree without the cartilage necessary to absorb the shock to prevent damage to its head? This type of bird would become extinct quickly.

Or what use would that cartilage in the head be for a bird that doesn't need it. The one feature is useless without the other. There would be no reason for this modification to

be passed down because it would be totally useless.

THE WOODPECKER'S EYES: Each time a woodpecker strikes a tree with its beak it closes its eyes. When the peck is complete, it opens its eyes again, focuses, aims its beak, and closes its eyes once more as it hits the tree again. The force of the impact of the bird's head against the tree is so powerful that if the bird did not close its eyes it would pop its eyeballs out.

THE WOODPECKER'S TAIL FEATHERS & FEET: The woodpecker also has uniquely-designed tail feathers. They are relatively stiff but also elastic and help brace and support the woodpecker as it pecks into a tree. It uses both its tail feathers and feet to form a tripod as it clings to the tree.

The feet are designed to enable it to move up, down, and around, vertical tree trunks. Its feet have two toes in front and two toes in back. Most other birds have three toes in front and one in back. This unique toe pattern, along with stiff yet elastic tail feathers, allows a woodpecker to grasp a tree firmly and balance itself vertically.

When the woodpecker strikes the tree to make a hole, the tail feathers bend and spread, supporting it against the surface of the tree. The feet and tail form an effective tripod to stabilize the blows as it pecks into the tree.

THE WOODPECKER'S TONGUE: The woodpecker also has an amazing tongue? The woodpeckers peck into trees to get at the insects that live there. Their tongues are armed with backward-pointing barbs at the tip which enable it to hook the insects.

Their tongue is also covered with a sticky glue. What's incredible is that this glue-like substance on the woodpecker's tongue sticks to even the most stubborn of insects, yet not to the woodpecker's beak.

Then there's the length of the woodpecker's tongue. Most birds have tongues that are equal in length to their beaks. But the woodpecker's tongue is several times longer than its beak.

Unlike most other animals, the tongue of some woodpeckers does not come from its throat up into its mouth. The European Green woodpecker's tongue, for example, goes down the throat, out the back of the neck, around the back of the skull beneath the skin, and over the top between the eyes, ending just below the eye socket.

Some woodpeckers have tongues that exit the skull between the eyes and enters the beak through one of the nostrils

HUMMINGBIRD SUMMARY: So if evolution is true, which of these traits came first? In the evolutionary theory, chance mutations that suit an organism better to its environment are preserved by the process of natural selection. But natural selection wouldn't act until the favored traits arise by mutation.

Separately, none of these traits would provide any advantage unless the other parts needed for the function came about at the same time. If they came separately, why would any single mutation be preserved and passed down?

The woodpecker is a marvel of compound traits. Traits that are interdependent. They depend on one another to have any functional value. Not one of them would be of any value without the others.

Creation instructs us that the woodpecker was created with all of these traits in tact from the beginning with a God-ordained intent and purpose.

INFORMATION ON BIRDS IN GENERAL: There are a number of traits and characteristics of birds as a whole that are different from the rest of the animal kingdom, and, when considered logically, present real problems for the Evolutionist.

BIRD FEATHERS: Bird's feathers present a very interesting and intricate design. Feathers consist of barbs, called hooks, that extend from a main shaft. These barbs are armed with smaller hooks called barbules, which in turn have even smaller hooks called barbacelles. Because of this intricate array of hooks, the bird is able to interlock its feathers which enables it to fly.

Many Evolutionists believe that birds evolved from reptiles, with scales slowly evolving into feathers over time, and limbs evolving into wings. But that seems to go against the evolutionist idea that mutations would be passed down as they proved beneficial to a species. Limbs evolving into wings would probably be useless or at least awkward for climbing or grasping which would be a disadvantage to an animal. And, in the early stages, these evolving limbs would not be useful for flying, so they serve no advantageous purpose. So why would a useless and potentially life-endangering mutation be passed along?

BIRD MIGRATION: Half of all bird species in the Northern Hemisphere migrate south for the winter. Colder weather, prevalent in the North during the winter months, makes this necessary. Many birds need a place of where the weather is warm and where food is abundant, with an optimal environment for raising their young.

But how do birds know when and where to migrate? Amazingly, that is inborn. It's not something they are taught. Scientists are unable to explain it. It would appear that the instinct for birds to migrate is God-given.

EXAMPLE OF MIGRATION - THE BRISTLE-THIGHED CURLEW: The Bristle-thighed Curlew is an amazing study in migration. The parent birds will migrate from the marshes of the Alaskan Peninsula for the tropics when their chicks are just five weeks old. The chicks gorge themselves on berries and insects. When their bodies become strong enough for the flight, they head into the sky. As with most migratory birds, these young curlews are on their own, without a guide. They navigate the vast Pacific Ocean and land on the sandy beaches of islands in Fiji, Tonga and French

Polynesia, a 5,000 mile journey, where they join their parents. Also, since curlews cannot land in the water, this flight is non-stop.

EXAMPLE OF MIGRATION - THE SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER: The Short-tailed Shearwater must also navigate on their first flight without the assistance of experienced guides. Breeding in burrows on islands off southeastern Australia, the parents suddenly desert the chicks at the end of summer. The young birds follow later, finding their way over vast unfamiliar oceans to the other side of the world. Heading north around the western Pacific Ocean past Japan and Siberia, then east around Alaska, and then south down the western United States.

The ability of both of these young birds to navigate, untaught and unled, to the opposite hemisphere is astounding.

BIRD MIGRATION- ORIENTATION AND NAVIGATION: Migratory birds need two things to be able to fly to their destination with such precision: orientation: which is knowing direction, and navigation: which is knowing when to change direction. One without the other is useless. How they do this has puzzled scientists for years.

For orientation, a bird has a sort of built-in compass. And for navigation a built-in map. They do use things like the sun, the stars, and geographical landmarks to navigate. Researchers have found that there is no one simple unified theory of how birds navigate.

Some Evolutionists have suggested that the practice of migration evolved over time as ice-age glaciers retreated and birds began to push north, a little farther each year. And then returned in winter to a traditional non-breeding ground. That may sound reasonable, but it doesn't account for how the Godwit ended up in New Zealand. Or how the Bristle-thighed Curlew found a tiny cluster of coral islands in the Pacific Ocean. Nor does it account for how these migratory paths became imprinted in the genes so that young birds, without guidance or experience, can follow them.

This all seems to point to a Creator who designed each bird species with the inherent knowledge and ability to migrate every year. Beginning and ending at the same place on the earth. And with some species this is accomplished with no guide. Fascinating.

BIRD BONES: Birds are supported by bones that are filled with numerous air filled cavities with internal supports. No other animal has bones like this. One might think this would make their bones weak, but it doesn't. This design makes them lighter, and this lack of weight allows them to fly.

The upper and lower jaw elongates to form a bird's bill.

The neck vertebrae allows for free movement of the head. This is important for birds, because birds don't have arms. Also, the vertebrae move freely. This allows the tail

feathers to be moved very precisely.

The bird's ribs and sternum are fused together, creating a rigid structure. The sternum is fused to the keel. The bird's wing muscles are attached to the keel, and this provides an anchor, giving the bird the leverage required for him to fly.

Then there is the enlarged and fused clavicles forming the wish bone. This is also a connection point for flight muscles.

All of these characteristics are unique to birds, and all are necessary for them to fly. If all of this seems like an amazing design, that's because it is. To believe that God created birds at the beginning with all of these features is more probable than to attribute them to mere random chance.

RESOURCES: A solid resource for material on this subject, I would recommend Answers in Genesis (www.answersingenesis.org). Also, Phillip E. Johnson has written two books that are especially helpful and insightful: *Darwin on Trial*, and *Reason in the Balance*.