

Creation Truths

How MOTHS Eat Holes in Evolution!

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In a number of previous articles we have pointed out some of the major flaws in the *theory* of evolution. But let's be fair to evolutionists. Is it true that they actually have evidence that evolution is taking place RIGHT NOW? Is there indisputable *hard evidence* that we have been ignoring?

Isaac Asimov, one of the 20th Century's most famous science writers, stated that "some fools oppose evolution saying it has never been proven". He then describes a modern day PROOF of evolution in action — the story of the PEPPERED MOTH.

The *International Wildlife Encyclopaedia* states that the peppered moth "is the most striking evolutionary change *ever to have been witnessed* by man." Britain's *Daily Telegraph* newspaper described the peppered moth as "evolution's BEST EVIDENCE" (10 February 1999).

Most popular college and high-school books on biology give the peppered moth as irrefutable PROOF OF EVOLUTION. Not as a possible *indicator* — but as definite PROOF!

So, what about it? What is the true story of the peppered moth? Is it irrefutable evidence of evolution happening before our eyes? And are we "fools" for choosing to believe in *creation* by a great, intelligent Creator?

The Story

The basic story goes like this. The peppered moth (Latin name: *biston betularia*) comes in two varieties — a *light* form and a *dark* form. In England, up until the early 1800's, the light variety predominated. It rested on tree trunks which were covered in light-coloured lichen, and so was well camouflaged. However, the dark variety of the moth was

easily spotted by birds, and so fewer survived. As the Industrial Revolution progressed, increasing amounts of smoke and soot destroyed the light-coloured lichens, leaving the tree trunks much darker. In these changed circumstances, it was *the dark-coloured* moths who were better camouflaged. Gradually, the dark-coloured moths came to predominate, as birds were able to easily spot the light-coloured variety against the dark backgrounds, and gobble them up.

In the 1950's, Dr. H. B. Kettlewell carried out a number of classic experiments in England, which "proved" that this happened. Moths were carefully bred, released into the wild, and recaptured. Photographs were taken of birds preferentially eating the less well-camouflaged moths. The proportion of light to dark moths was carefully measured. Many biology textbooks describe these very convincing experiments, and show how clear-cut they are in *proving* evolution. Kettlewell said that if Darwin



Photograph of the dark variety of peppered moth — "evolution's BEST EVIDENCE" — which turns out in fact to be NO EVIDENCE!

had seen this, “He would have witnessed the consummation and confirmation of his life’s work.”

And so, say evolutionists, we see Darwin’s theory of *natural selection* demonstrated in front of our very eyes. We see *survival of the fittest*. Therefore, evolution is true!

Whoa, steady on there, Mr. Evolutionist! There are at least two major flaws in your conclusion — one *logical*, and one *factual*.

Logical Problem

Let’s assume for the moment that the information we are given is correct, and that birds did indeed reduce the population of light-coloured moths as the tree trunks got darker. So we moved from a high population of *light* moths to a high population of *dark* moths.

As far as evolution is concerned — SO WHAT?

At the *start* of this process, we had light AND dark moths. At the *end* of the process, we had light *and* dark moths! Just where exactly does *evolution* come into it?

Evolution alleges that, over long periods, and by random occurrences, one type of life form gradually changes into another. Amoebae gradually developed into fish ... reptiles evolved into birds ... apes into human beings.

But the peppered moths started as peppered moths, and *finished* as peppered moths! There is NO CHANGE! The moth is not changing into anything else. The light moths are not changing into dark moths, or vice-versa. Both varieties of moths have always existed, and *still do*. All that has changed is simply the proportion of each, depending on the type of habitat they live in. This has *nothing whatsoever* to do with evolution!

In fact, the most dramatic development could have

been the COMPLETE EXTINCTION of one of the varieties of moths. If *all* of the lighter moths had been devoured by the birds, only the dark form would have survived. So instead of evolution taking place — leading to the formation of a *new* species — the most likely outcome would have been the *disappearance* of an existing creature — a *reduction* in the variety of life forms!

Although popular textbooks wax eloquent about how the peppered moth “proves” evolution, it is in fact a complete irrelevance — a fact admitted by some evolutionists themselves. Harrison Matthews, a famous biologist who wrote the Introduction to *Charles Darwin’s Origin of Species (1971 edition)*, says, “The [peppered moth] experiments beautifully demonstrate natural selection — or survival of the fittest — in action, but they DO NOT SHOW EVOLUTION IN PROGRESS; for however the populations may alter in their content of light, intermediate or dark forms, all the moths REMAIN, from beginning to end, *Biston betularia*.”

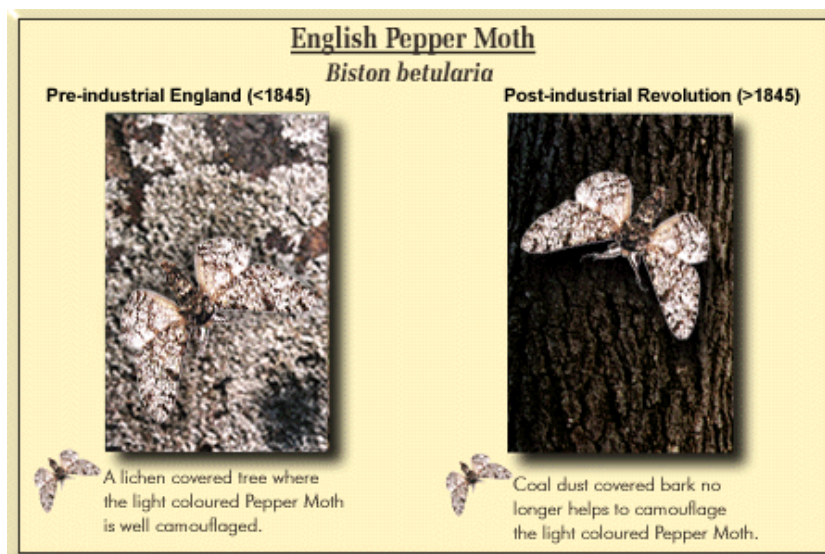
The best that can be said for the story of the peppered moth is that — IF TRUE — it would show an example of *natural selection* — how habitat and predators can affect the chance of survival of an EXISTING creature. However, this has NOTHING TO DO WITH EVOLUTION! Nothing new is created. There are no new developments. The peppered moths remain — ALWAYS — peppered moths!

So the logical flaw in the evolutionists’ story is that it has *nothing to do* with evolution! But there is also a factual problem!

Factual Problem

Much to the dismay of evolutionists, there is an even greater problem with *the story* of the peppered moth. It turns out that it is, in fact, just that — A STORY! It didn’t happen. It doesn’t happen.

We’re told that birds could spot



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poorly camouflaged moths resting on tree trunks, and eat them up. But ... peppered moths *don't even rest on tree trunks during the day!* They're not there for the birds to find! Any peppered moths that were trapped by scientists always flew into the traps *at night* (and there aren't many birds flying around *at night* looking for moths!).

But don't the textbooks show us pictures of moths resting on tree trunks? Yes. Unfortunately, it seems that these are *dead moths*, which have been *glued* to the tree trunks! University of Massachusetts biologist Theodore Sargent admits that textbooks and films have featured "a lot of fraudulent photographs."

But surely photographs were taken of birds actually spotting *and eating* poorly camouflaged moths? Well ... yes ... but it turns out that the moths being eaten by birds were laboratory-bred specimens, *placed on* the tree trunks by Kettlewell. They were so listless that he once had to warm them up on his car bonnet (hood) to get any action out of them!

So, in fact, there is NO EVIDENCE that the colour of the moths is connected in any way to the pollution of their habitat. And there is NO EVIDENCE that *birds* play any part in whether light or dark varieties predominate! Other scientists have been unable to replicate the work of Dr. Kettlewell.

At the present time, scientists have to admit they DO NOT KNOW why the population of light and dark moths varies.

A full understanding of the *factual deficiencies* of the peppered moth "story" has only come to light in recent years.

Professor Jerry Coyne, writing in *Nature* magazine in 1998, stated, "From time to time, evolutionists re-examine a classic experimental study and find, to their horror, that it is flawed or downright wrong." He continues, "My own reaction [to finding out the real facts of the peppered moth experiments] resembles the dismay attending my discovery, at the age of six, that it was my father and not Santa who brought the presents on Christmas Eve!"

The *Sunday Telegraph* (14 March 1999) quotes Professor Coyne as saying that Dr. Kettlewell's experiments are essentially useless: "There is a lot of wishful thinking and design flaws in them and they wouldn't get published today."

The popular textbooks claim that the peppered moth is the "best evidence" of evolution in progress. In reality, IF it were true, it would only show *natural selection*, NOT evolution. But, in any event, it wasn't true ANYWAY!

So where does that leave us? Are we "fools" to oppose evolution as Isaac Asimov said? Does the peppered moth uphold evolution — or leave it still FULL OF HOLES?

As we examine THE EVIDENCE, we see *perfectly formed* moths, surviving in all sorts of different habitats, and leaving scientists scratching their heads as to how they do it. The evidence of *perfect design* — and a PERFECT DESIGNER — is there for all to see IF "they have eyes to see."

As Romans 1:19-20 says, "Because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are *clearly seen*, being understood by THE THINGS THAT ARE MADE, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they (including evolutionists) are without excuse ..."

As the patriarch Job might have said, "[Evolution] decays like a rotten thing, like a garment that is *moth-eaten*," Job 13:28.

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