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**1** The woodpecker's tongue had five bones; thin and flexible with tiny joints.

**2** They exit through the right nostril where their sheath is attached.

**3** The bones circle behind the head and neck.

**4** They come back into the hollow between the two halves of the beak.

One evolutionist avoids the problems on his website saying: "No new structures are required, merely an extended period of growth to lengthen an existing structure." He neglects to mention that natural selection would have selected against the mutations that sent the lengthening tongue behind the head where it would have been useless. This is a real problem for evolution. As Darwin wrote: "If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down."

## The evolutionist strikes back

Some evolutionists realized that every generation of woodpeckers that had a useless tongue ending under the skin behind the head would have starved to death, so they introduced another theory. When I first heard about it by email, it seemed so impossible that I was sure that I had not understood, and kept on asking until it was absolutely clear. The writer really did claim:

• The woodpecker’s tongue evolved from that of a normal bird rooted back in its throat and extending straight out through the beak.

• Then, not the point end of the tongue, but the root end uprooted itself from its normal attachment in the back of the throat, gradually rerooting itself step by tiny step as it first moved forward to the back of the opening of the bill which it then passed through, step by step taking root ever farther around the back of the head.

Believers in the “root first” evolution speculate that each little movement was favored by natural selection because in going around the back of the head, the tongues length increased, and the longer the tongue, the farther it could stretch out into the grubs’ passageways in the tree trunks.

In this case, the mutations which moved the root around the head, would have to have been coordinated with those which increased the length of the tongue. If the tongue moved farther back faster than it grew longer, less and less of the tongue would have extended out through the end of the beak. The fact that coordinated mutations would have been necessary makes this story unlikely.

However, when I had gotten used to it, I could see how it might sound OK to an evolutionist who had so much faith in the theory of evolution that he truly believes that all living things evolved from earlier beings by natural selection acting on random mutations. If a tongue did extend farther and farther out of the beak, it really could reach farther into the grub’s burrow, and the more grubs it could catch, the more offspring it could bring to maturity.

Then it hit me! This theory neglects to mention that for the first inch or so the tongues root had to move in the opposite direction! Evolutionists state that the woodpecker’s tongue started out rooted back in the throat, just like other birds because they claim that it evolved from some ordinary bird. The only way the tongue’s root could get to where it could exit from the side of the beak was to move foreword from its

spot in the back of the throat. For the first inch or so It would have to have moved foreword, not backward! Since, in the scenario they have made up, moving the tongues root backward would have increased the woodpecker's probability of being chosen by natural selection then moving it forward would have decreased its chance of being selected.

If, on the other hand, moving forward put more of the tongue out of the beak and increased its chance of survival, then moving backward would have decreased its chance of survival. The argument that the woodpecker's tongue became what it is today because the place where it was rooted migrated around the back of the head is self contradictory and logically unsound.

It gets worse. After working its way around the neck, according to this theory the root jammed itself back into the bill through the nostril.

Why would it do that? If lengthening the tongue increased the bird's chance of survival, woodpeckers with tongues which continued to lengthen by moving under the skin down to the bird's tummy, tail, or foot, would have been chosen by natural selection. The birds whose tongue evolution stopped half way and jammed the root back into the bill through the nostril would have been eliminated.

Both evolutionary scenarios, point first, and root first lead to absurdities that would have been eliminated by natural selection. The woodpecker's tongue is a complex organ that could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications. Darwin was right. His theory absolutely breaks down.

Woodpecker 1

Darwin 0

**Other Systems**

**The woodpecker's bill** works like a specialized chisel, capable of slicing right into a tree. By hammering on a steel chisel, men can cut into trees like the woodpecker does with his bill. However, as we chisel, our steel blade becomes dull. After we chisel a certain number of holes, we must sharpen our chisels. Otherwise they get more and more dull until they are unusable. God made woodpecker beaks self sharpening. If the secret of making self sharpening chisels were such a simple thing that a stupid woodpecker could stumble onto it by accident through random mutations, it would seem that some blacksmith or metallurgical scientist should also have stumbled onto it or would have figured it out. Instead, even as I speak, a carpenter somewhere is sharpening his chisel.

## Grub locating system

If a man were trying to catch grubs like a woodpecker, no matter how sharp he kept his chisel, he would not know which direction to go to connect with the tunnels which have grubs. Until the woodpecker had obtained the complex mechanism for locating and hitting a tiny grub inside a tiny tunnel inside a big tree, neither its self sharpening beak, nor its specialized tongue would have been of much value. Neither would the bug location mechanism have been useful without the self sharpening beak and a tongue long enough to reach the grub. In fact, neither the long tongue nor the location mechanism would have been of any use if the tongue were not equipped to stick to or into the grub to bring it back out of the hole. If any one of these systems had evolved much before the others, it would not have been useful, and would have been eliminated by natural selection.

## Shock absorbing system

If all of the above systems were to come into place in an ordinary bird, the impact with the tree would kill it; something like you driving a steel chisel into a tree with the end of your nose. A smart bird that survived the first blow, would have quit trying. The woodpecker, however, not only

comes equipped with a strong self sharpening beak, a grub detector and a long tongue, but also a marvelous shock absorbing system that protects its head from damage. The first woodpecker to evolve the equipment for drilling holes in trees would have quit pounding or died young if the shock absorbers were not already in place.

## Tail feathers and toes

In addition, compared to other birds: "The tail feathers (especially the central one or two pairs) are stronger in woodpeckers, resisting the wear caused by their use in propping up the bird's body as it hammers with the bill. The toe structure and associated arrangement of tendons and leg muscles work together to form a functional complex of features enabling the woodpecker to climb tree trunks and to maintain its position while pecking the tree". (*Encyclopedia Britannica CD 98*, "Birds: Major Bird Orders: Piciformes," Form and Function).

## Irreducible complexity

What good would the stiff tail feathers, the specialized toe structure, the grub detector and the grub puller have been even with the wrap around tongue and the shock absorber if after drilling a few holes the beak had gotten dull and wouldn't cut any more? When a number of systems must be in place at the same time for a thing to work, it is called "irreducible complexity," and it is evidence of intelligent design. In this case, the number of systems that were of little or no use without the others is too great to have been accidental. The woodpecker shows obvious evidence of having been designed on purpose.

## Conclusion

According to evolutionary theory, any system without a function will eventually be eliminated by natural selection. If one of the woodpecker's systems evolved much before the other systems that had work with it in order to function, it

would have been eliminated. The fact that all are present, functioning, and coordinated indicates that these various systems were designed and created on purpose to work together.

Since the evidence indicates that woodpeckers were created and not developed by random mutations, why should mutations be considered the universal builders of every part of every living being as most evolutionists insist? It is fine to believe that things were caused by mutations when good evidence leads to that conclusion. For example, there is a great deal of evidence that mutations changing the order of the amino acids in proteins really do make functioning proteins into thousands of genetic diseases, but why jump to the conclusion that if mutations cause diabetes, they must also have formed the pancreas, the liver, the fish, the monkey and us? When the evidence indicates intelligent design it should not be thrown out to honor evolutionary doctrine. If we see someone knocking down a building with a crane equipped with a wrecking ball, we don't assume that all of the world's buildings were constructed by cranes with wrecking balls, so why should we assume that the mutations we see wrecking things must also have built them?

Unfortunately, many have such a strong faith in evolution that they give examples like:

• Fish loose their eyesight after many generations in dark caves. Then they conclude that mutations caused the eyes to degenerate, so they were what made eyes in the first place.

• Mutations have caused fruit flies to loose their wings, therefore the wings of fruit flies, bats, and birds were developed by mutations, as were all other organs. Evidence that mutations really do cause genetic diseases is misinterpreted to convince students that mutations made students and woodpeckers.

Dr. Sunderland, the owner of the skull in the picture, wrote, "The woodpecker's skull has been more effective in

convincing scientists of the inadequacies of the evolution theory than perhaps any book in the author's library. Other birds have hyoid bones also, but it would seem obvious that some sort of miracle would be needed to get them rooted in the right nostril. One prominent evolutionist on the staff of a prestigious scientific magazine confided after examining it, 'There are certain anatomical features which just cannot be explained by gradual mutations over millions of years. Just between you and me, I have to get God into the act too sometimes.'"

Another scientist, while examining the woodpecker's tongue bones under a microscope commented, "It is very easy to tell the difference between man-made and God-made objects. The more you magnify man-made objects, the cruder they look, but the more you magnify God-made objects, the more precise and intricate they appear." (Luther D. Sunderland, Creation Research Society Quarterly, vol. 12, March 1976, p. 183)