Chapter 15

Where are all the human fossils?

- Why are human fossils not found with trilobites, for example?
- If humans and dinosaurs lived at the same time, why aren't their fossils found together?
- How could the Flood produce the order in the fossil record?

THE Bible teaches (Genesis 1) that man was here from Day Six of the creation week—created the same day as land animals (which includes dinosaurs) and one day after the sea creatures and the birds.

Evolutionists claim that the order in the fossil record (e.g. trilobites deep down and humans near the top) is due to a succession of life forms on Earth, which occurred over many hundreds of millions of years. In this view, the rock strata represent huge periods of time.

On the other hand, creationists believe that most of the fossils were formed during the year-long global Flood recorded in Genesis Chapters 6–9 (see Chapter 10, *Was the Flood Global?*). Thus creationists believe that the order in the fossil record is due to the order of burial during the Flood, and the local catastrophes that followed. So, sceptics ask, why are human fossils not found with dinosaur fossils, for example?

Do the rock strata represent eons of time?

There is a wealth of evidence that the rock strata do not represent vast periods of time. For example, the huge Coconino sandstone formation in the Grand Canyon is about 100 m thick and extends to some 250,000 km^2 in area. The large-scale cross-bedding shows that it was all laid down in deep, fast-flowing water in a matter of days. Other rock layers in the Grand Canyon indicate that they were rapidly deposited also, and without substantial time-breaks between the laying down of each unit.[1] Indeed, the whole Grand Canyon sequence is bent at the Kaibab Upwarp, in some spots quite radically, and without cracking. This indicates that the strata, which supposedly represent some 300 million years of evolutionary time, were all still soft when the bending occurred.[1,2] This is consistent with the layers being deposited and bent quickly, during the Genesis Flood.

Photo by Andrew Snelling

There could have been no significant time between the deposition of these two geological formations, or there would have been erosion at the join between them (arrow). The join, or contact, is between the Coconino Sandstone (top) and the Hermit Shale (bottom), beside the Grandview Trail, Grand Canyon. The time gap is supposed to be 10 million years or more.

1. Austin, S.A., 1994. *Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe,* Institute for Creation Research, San Diego, CA.
2. Morris, J., 1994. *The Young Earth,* Creation-Life Publishers Inc., Colorado Springs, CO, USA.

Some other evidences for the non-existence of the eons of time and for the rapid deposition of the layers are:

- polystrate fossils—tree trunks, for example, running through strata supposedly representing many millions of years (these are common in coal) show that the strata must have been deposited in quick succession, otherwise the tops of the trunks would have rotted away;
- delicate surface features preserved on underlying rock units—such as ripple marks and footprints—indicate that there was no long time gap before the next unit was deposited;
- lack of fossilized soil layers in the rock strata, indicating no long time gaps;
- lack of erosion features in the rock layers or between the rock units (any significant time break would result in channels being formed in the exposed strata from the action of water or wind);
- limited extent of unconformities. Although unconformities (clear breaks in deposition) indicate time breaks, such unconformities are localized, with no break evident in rocks of the same strata elsewhere, thus indicating that any time break was localized and brief;
- clastic dykes and pipes—where a sand/water mixture has squeezed up through overlying layers. Although the underlying sand is supposed to be millions of years older than the overlying layers, it obviously did not have time to harden.
- and much else.[2,3]

Uluṟu (Ayers Rock), in central Australia, is also supposed to have formed slowly over hundreds of millions of years, but the structure of the rock shows that it must have formed very quickly and recently (see pp. 169–170).[4]

The existence of many 'living fossils' also challenges the supposed hundreds of millions of years of 'Earth history'. For example, starfish, jellyfish, brachiopods, clams and snails, which are known as fossils dated by evolutionists as 530 million years old, look like those living today. Dr Joachim Scheven, a German scientist, has a museum with over 500 examples of such 'living fossils'. Furthermore, some of these fossils are missing from intervening strata that supposedly represent many millions of years of evolutionary time, again indicating that there were no time gaps.

3. *Raging Waters,* video produced by Keziah Videos, 1998.
4. Snelling, A., 1998. Uluṟu and Kata Tjuṯa. *Creation* **20**(2):36–40.

Evidence that dinosaurs and humans co-existed

Much evidence suggests that people and dinosaurs lived together, not separated by 65 million years or more, as evolutionists believe:

- Many historical accounts of living animals, which were known as 'dragons', are good descriptions of what we call dinosaurs—such as *Triceratops, Stegosaurus, Tyrannosaurus* and *Ankylosaurus.* The video, *The Great Dinosaur Mystery* documents some of these.[5] The account in Job 40 of *behemoth* sounds like one of the big dinosaurs, such as *Apatosaurus* or *Brachiosaurus*.
- Unmineralized ('unfossilized') dinosaur bones.[6] How could these bones, some of which even have blood cells in them, be 65 million years or more old? It stretches the imagination to believe they are even many thousands of years old.
- Rocks bearing dinosaur fossils often contain very little plant material—e.g., in the Morrison formation in North America. This is another indication that the strata do not represent eras of life on Earth. If the strata represent an age of dinosaurs, what did they eat? A large *Apatosaurus* would need over three tonnes of vegetation per day, yet there is no indication of significant vegetation in many of these dinosaur-bearing strata. In other words, we see buried dinosaurs, not buried ecosystems or an 'Age of Dinosaurs'.

Out-of-sequence fossils

Many fossils and artefacts have been found 'out of place'.[7] That is, they are in strata that the evolutionist says represent a period of time when, for example, that organism did not live, or human artefacts could not have been made. There are plenty of examples; some published in respectable journals before the evolutionary paradigm became locked in. Such examples do not get published in modern standard evolutionary journals, possibly because it is inconceivable that such could exist in

5. Eden Films / Films for Christ. See also Chapter 19.
6. Wieland, C., 1999. Dinosaur bones: just how old are they really? *Creation* **21**(1):54–55), and references therein.
7. For example: Howe, G.F., Williams, E.L., Matzko, G.T. and Lammerts, W.E., 1988. Creation Research Society studies on Precambrian pollen, Part III: A pollen analysis of Hakatai Shale and other Grand Canyon rocks, *Creation Research Society Quarterly* **24**(4):173–182.

the evolutionary world-view. In another context, Nobel Prize winner Sir Fred Hoyle said,

> 'Science today is locked into paradigms. Every avenue is blocked by beliefs that are wrong, and if you try to get anything published by a journal today, you will run up against a paradigm, and the editors will turn it down.'[8]

Forbidden Archeology, by Cremo and Thompson, lists some out-of-place human artefacts.[9] They wrote the book from a westernized Hindu perspective to show that humans were present from antiquity, as required for the eons of multi-cycles of reincarnation of Hindu belief. (True Hindus are not concerned about such rationalizing, believing the physical world to be illusory.[10]) Cremo and Thompson are not worried about the millions of years, just whether humans were there. They are 'fellow-travellers' with creationists only in the sense that we also believe that people were here almost all along, except we do not accept the billions of years. Cremo and Thompson have done a thorough job, with the final work being 914 pages long.

Human fossils have been found, hundreds of them, but generally in deposits which most creationists would think were post-Flood (e.g. buried in caves during the post-Flood Ice Age—see Chapter 16). However, in at least one case, human bones have been found in 'older' strata.[11] Unfortunately, the lack of detailed documentation associated with their removal makes it impossible to say with certainty that they were not the result of subsequent intrusive burial, although nothing we know of suggests they were.

In regard to whether things found together necessarily lived and died together, paleontologists can inspect fossils for damage due to 'reworking' for clues that the organisms did not necessarily live or die together. However, the 'reworked' or 'stratigraphic leak' (where something 'young' is found in 'old' rock) explanation is almost invariably invoked for 'out-of-place' fossils.

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8. Horgan, J., 1995. Profile: Fred Hoyle. *Scientific American* **272**(3):24–25.
9. Cremo, M.A. and Thompson, R.L., 1993, *Forbidden Archeology.* Bhaktivedanta Institute, San Diego, CA, pp. 797–814.
10. One reason why science flourished only in Bible-believing nations.
11. Two human skeletons in a copper mine in Moab, Utah, in the (Cretaceous) Dakota Sandstone, which is supposed to be 'dinosaur age'. C.L. Burdick, 1973, Discovery of human skeletons in Cretaceous formation (Moab, Utah). *Creation Research Society Quarterly* **10**(2):109–10.

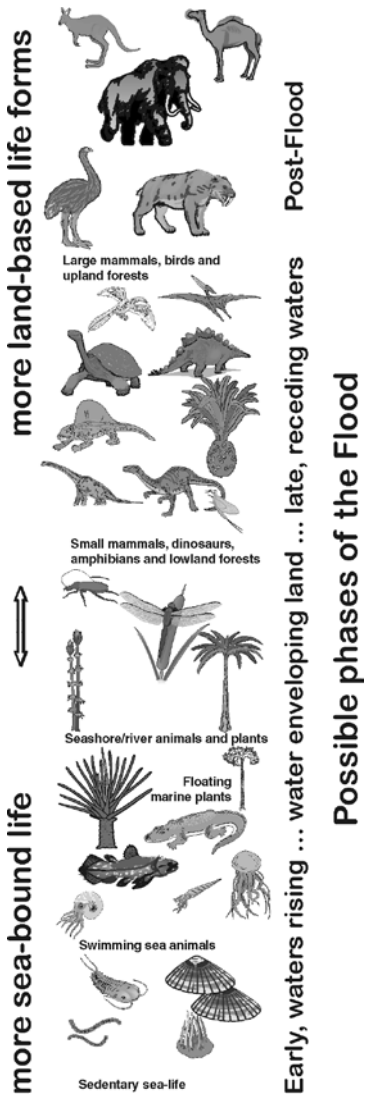
What about the general pattern?

Although the rock strata do not represent a series of epochs of Earth history, as is widely believed, they still follow a general pattern. For example, relatively immobile and bottom-dwelling sea creatures tend to be found in the lower strata that contain complex organisms, and the mobile land vertebrates tend to be found in the top layers. Consider the following factors:

Vertebrate fossils are exceedingly rare compared with invertebrate (without a backbone) sea creatures. The vast proportion of the fossil record is invertebrate sea creatures, and plant material in the form of coal and oil. Vertebrate fossils are relatively rare and human fossils are even rarer.[2]

If there were, say, 10 million people at the time of the Flood[12] and all their bodies were preserved and uniformly distributed throughout the 700 million cubic kilometres of fossil-bearing sedimentary rock layers, only one would be found in every 70 cubic kilometres of rock. Thus you would be unlikely to find even one human fossil.

A global Flood beginning with the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep would tend to bury bottom-dwelling sea creatures first—many of these are immobile, or



There is order in the fossils, which would be expected from a global Flood.

12. Woodmorappe, J., 1983. A diluviological treatise on the stratigraphic separation of fossils. *Creation Research Society Quarterly* **20**(3):133–185.

relatively so. They are also abundant and generally robust (for example, shellfish).[13] As the waters rose to envelop the land, land creatures would be buried last.[14] Also, water plants would tend to be buried before land-based swamp plants, which in turn would be buried before upland plants.

On the other hand, land animals, such as mammals and birds, being mobile (especially birds), could escape to higher ground and be the last to succumb. People would cling to rafts, logs etc. until the very end and then tend to bloat and float and be scavenged by fish, with the bones breaking down rather quickly, rather than being preserved. This would make human fossils from the Flood exceedingly rare.

Further, the more mobile, intelligent animals would tend to survive the Flood longest and be buried last, so their remains would be vulnerable to erosion by the receding floodwaters at the end of the Flood and in the aftermath of the Flood. Hence their remains would tend to be destroyed. The intelligence factor could partly account for the apparent separation of dinosaurs and mammals such as cattle, for example.[15]

Another factor is the sorting action of water. A coal seam at Yallourn in Victoria, Australia, has a 0.5 m thick layer of 50% pollen. The only way such a layer of pollen could be obtained is through the sorting action of water in a massive watery catastrophe that gathered the plant material from a large area and deposited it in a basin in the Yallourn area.

'Cope's Rule' describes the tendency of fossils (e.g. shellfish) to get bigger as you trace them upward through the geological strata. But why should evolution make things generally bigger? Indeed, living forms of fossils tend to be smaller than their fossil ancestors. A better explanation may be the sorting action of water.[16]

See geologist Woodmorappe's paper for an in-depth treatment of the fossil record of cephalopods (such as octopuses and squid) and how it concurs with Creation and the Flood.[17]

These are some factors that could account for the patterns seen in the fossil record, including the general absence of human fossils in Flood

13. However, the preservation of impressions of soft creatures such as jellyfish also occurs, and this testifies to the rapidity of burial.
14. The Bible suggests the Flood began in the 'great deep' (the sea). See p. 161.
15. Most creationists would regard large mammal fossil deposits, such as in the John Day County of Oregon, USA, as post-Flood.
16. Although bigger rocks tend to be sorted to the bottom, larger shellfish, for example, are overall less dense than smaller ones and could be deposited after smaller ones in a sorting situation.
17. Woodmorappe, J., 1978, The cephalopods in the creation and the universal Deluge. *Creation Research Society Quarterly* **15**(2):94–112.

deposits. Most of the fossil record does not represent a history of life on Earth, but the order of burial during the Flood. We would expect a pattern with a global Flood, but not an entirely consistent pattern, and this is what we find in the geological strata.

There are problems in reconstructing any historical event, but especially one that has no modern analogue. And such is the Flood.[18] So we have problems imagining the precise sequence of events by which the Flood eroded and deposited material, creating fossils. It may well be that some enterprising creationist scientists will come up with a model of the Flood that will fully account for the fossil and rock sequences.

Of interest in this regard is the TAB (**T**ectonically **A**ssociated **B**iological) provinces model of Woodmorappe.[12] Dr Tasman Walker has suggested a model of the Flood that also seems to explain much of the data.[19] The catastrophic plate tectonics model of Drs Austin, Baumgardner and colleagues also looks interesting in explaining much of the fossil distribution (see Chapter 11). Other models are being developed which may also be helpful in explaining the evidence.[20]

One can be confident that the evolutionary view of Earth history is wrong and the record in the rocks and fossils, including the distribution of human fossils, makes much more sense in the light of the Bible's account of Creation, the Fall and the Flood.

When God pronounced judgment on the world, He said, *'I will destroy [blot out] man whom I have created from the face of the earth'* (Gen. 6:7). Perhaps the lack of pre-Flood human fossils is part of the fulfilment of this judgment?

18. Secular geologists wrongly assume that all Earth's history was shaped by the same processes we see happening ***today***—this is the doctrine of *uniformitarianism,* which has directed geology for the last 200 years. As there is no global flood happening today, such thinking prevents most of today's geologists from seeing any evidence for the Flood—they try to explain the evidence seen in the present by the processes seen operating only in the present. The Bible has a prophecy, in 2 Peter 3:3–7, regarding this wrong approach to geology that denies miraculous creation and the Deluge.
19. Walker, T., 1994. A biblical geologic model. *Proc. Third ICC,* pp. 581–92.
20. Oard, Michael, personal communication.