

Now it has been discovered⁵ that Darwin's finches can interbreed and produce fertile offspring if given the opportunity, so they are really one species and provide no evidence for the evolution of new species, and never have. This historic first and foundational evidence for Darwin's theory of evolution turns out to be false.

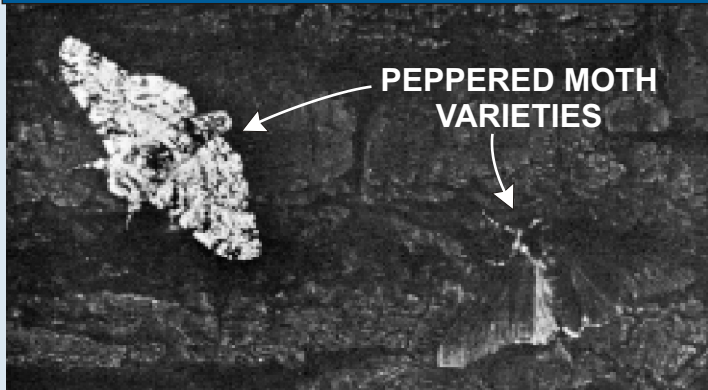
In 2002 a thirty year study of two species of Galapagos finches on the island of Daphne Major was published: cactus finches with large beaks and ground finches with small beaks. Average beak size in both finches changed after drought or rain altered availability of seeds. If there were fewer small seeds, birds with the smallest beaks died out and larger beaked birds survived, so the next generation tended to have larger beaks, and vice versa. A good example of "survival of the fittest" but not evolution. Furthermore, the two 'species' could still interbreed and produce fertile offspring and hybrids had intermediate size beaks.⁶

Researchers have identified two chemicals, CaM and Bmp4, that control beak size and shape in developing finches. Variations in the amount of these chemicals could account for all variations seen in Galapagos finch beaks⁷. The Galapagos finches are therefore really one kind, capable of coping with some variation in their environment without evolving.

Do animals adapt and evolve?

They certainly adapt, but they don't evolve. Adaptation is the built-in ability of living creatures to cope with changes in their environment. As such, it can only produce a limited change that is already built into a creature's genes. Should the change in the environment exceed the animal's inherent ability to cope the creature will become extinct. Neither can such inherent ability produce new types of living creatures. Darwin's finches have produced only finches, which differ from each another only as much as the African Zulus differ from the Nordic races of man. Finches have in essence "produced their own kind," which is the basic evidence a creationist would look for as proof that the Genesis account of creation is factual, since it states repeatedly that all living organisms were created to "produce their own kind"⁸.

DOES NATURAL SELECTION PRODUCE EVOLUTION?



In 1955 Dr Kettlewell, Oxford, UK, introduced "industrial melanism" of the English Peppered Moth *Biston betularia* as evidence for evolution by Natural Selection. His story was

simple. Prior to 1850 while England was fairly clean and pollution free, the light form of the peppered moth dominated the English countryside.

Following industrialisation, smoke caused trees to become dirty, and the lichens on them to die. The number of light moths began to decrease, and dark versions of the peppered moth began to increase. Change in government attitudes in the 1950's resulted in a clean up of the environment. As trees got cleaner, the number of light moths increased and dark moths decreased.

Kettlewell's explanation was that birds feeding on moths could see light moths on dark trees more easily and dark moths were better camouflaged as trees got dirtier. Hence birds began to eat the light moths in increasing numbers, leaving dark ones to increase in numbers and percentage of moth population. Since 1955, Dr Kettlewell's story has appeared in almost every biology textbook as evidence for evolution. It is a story so logical few people bothered to check it. However, since 1998, Kettlewell's story has come in for some severe professional criticism. The book '*Melanism: Evolution in Action*', by Majerus, reviewed by Jerry A. Coyne in *Nature* (Vol. 396, p.35), lists the following problems with Kettlewell's story:

- The moth does not rest on tree trunks! Exactly two moths have been seen on tree trunks in more than 40 years. Kettlewell actually placed two dead moths on the tree trunk to take his famous photograph.
- The shift in percentage of light and dark moths in the population did occur but took place well before new lichens grew on polluted trees. A parallel shift in moth population occurred in US industrial areas but there was no change in lichens.
- Kettlewell's results have not been replicated in later studies.

If we critically analyse this and ask "what has evolved?" the data tells us there were dark and light forms of the moth before 1850, and dark and light forms of the moth after 1950. Obviously the moth has not evolved even though the frequency of light and dark genes have changed. Secondly, the change in numbers of dark versus light may represent some form of natural selection but not how Dr Kettlewell suggested.

DO MUTATIONS IMPROVE LIVING THINGS?

Sickle cell anaemia is a genetic disease that causes red blood cells to lose their normal donut shape and become distorted into a crescent shape. Those with a severe case of the disease die young, but it was noticed in Africa that people with a mild form of this disease not only lived into adulthood but seemed to have increased resistance to the malaria parasite. Because of this, the mutant gene that causes the sickle cells has been claimed to be a good mutation.

Sickle Cells and Malaria

The reason for the increased resistance is that malaria is caused by parasites invading and living in red blood cells.