

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

The Hoatzin

THE Hoatzin is a strange-looking bird, 60 cm (2 feet) long, which lives in the rain-forests of South America. The feathers on its head makes it look as though it has a spiky hairstyle.

Hoatzins are unusual in other ways, too. When they first hatch out, young hoatzins have claws on their wings. What are they for? Sometimes, before the young birds have learned to fly, some animal may attack them in the nest. If this happens, the young hoatzins jump out of the nest into the river below. They are very good swimmers, so they quickly swim to the bank, and climb back up to their nest, using their wing claws to help them hold on to the twigs and branches. When they learn to fly, they lose their wing claws, since they no longer need them.



Young hoatzin with wing claws (Drawing by Brian Newton)

Some people call hoatzins "primitive", because they believe birds evolved from reptiles. They say the hoatzin is like a fossil bird called *archaeopteryx*, which also had wing claws, and was once thought to be a "missing link" between reptiles and birds. We now know that this creature was a real bird, and not even the



A pair of hoatzins in the rain-forest

oldest bird. It was simply a bird with claws on its wings — like the modern hoatzin. Maybe it used its claws to help it climb, like young hoatzins do today.

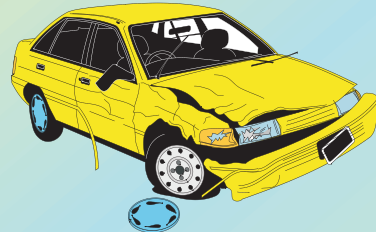
The fossils show that birds have always been birds, and there is no evidence that hoatzins "evolved" their wing claws. They are very useful to the young birds, but they lose them when they no longer need them. Although hoatzins are weird-looking birds, the evidence shows that they have been well designed by God, their Creator.

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A WORLD WHERE NOTHING WILL WEAR OUT OR DIE!

Maybe when you grow up you will buy a brand new car. You would feel very proud of it, and spend time cleaning and polishing it. But however well you looked after it, one day it would wear out, like everything else, and end up in a scrapyard. It's all because of that law which makes everything run down. That's why the idea that all life came from a "simple" beginning just can't be true. Things get worse, not better, as time passes. So we believe in creation by a big **God**, not a 'big bang'!

Even our bodies wear out, grow old and die. But our bodies are like a tent, which we only use for a short time. If we put



A brand new car will one day end up in a scrapyard

our faith in Jesus, who died and rose again, our real self will go on living in heaven. 'We know that our body — the tent we live in here on earth — will be destroyed. But when that happens, God will have a house for us to live in.... It will be a home in heaven that will last for ever.' (2 Corinthians 5: 1). God won't allow the universe to continue until it dies. His Son, Jesus will return to earth some day, to take those who love Him to heaven. Then God will create a brand-new world, where nothing will ever wear out or die again. We can live for ever with God, just as he intended us to. Make sure you will be part of it by putting your faith in Jesus now!



Our bodies will wear out and grow old

From page two:

The builder's "great idea" won't work because explosions never make things more orderly. They just make a mess!

PUZZLE CORNER ANSWERS

(Psalm 33: 9)
"He spoke and it happened. He commanded and it appeared."
TEXT:
Sea-shell missing. 3. Sand colour changed. 2. Spot the difference: 1. Starfish moved. 2. Starfish moved. 3. Sand colour changed. 4. Coral colour changed. 5. One fish moved to top. 6. Two fish changed colour. 7. Main coral branches colour changed. 8. Missing seahorse. 9. Sea-weed colour changed. 10. One fish changed direction.

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IN THE BEGINNING..... A BIG BANG? OR A BIG GOD?

Did our amazing world and universe come from a gigantic explosion billions of years ago? That's what many people believe, but is it true, and is it possible?

Could nothing explode and turn into everything?

People who believe the universe began with a "big bang", rather than a Creator, have a real problem. If there was *nothing* there in the beginning, they have to believe that there was an explosion of — *nothing!* But if they believe there was *something* there in the beginning, they have to explain where that came from. Either way, they have to believe in the impossible.

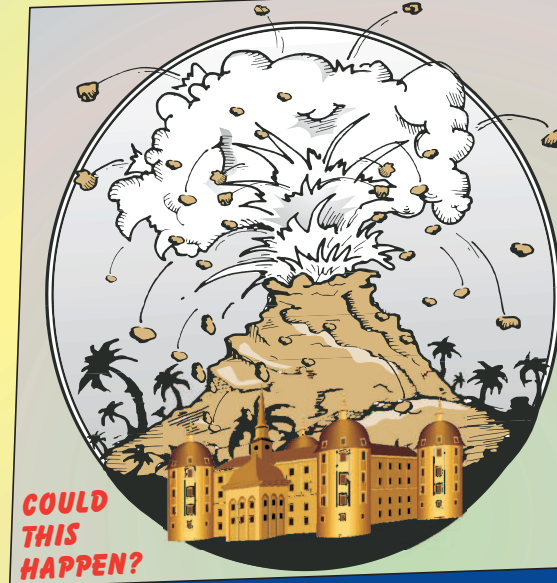


The 'big bang' theory says that a huge explosion produced hydrogen gas, which then turned into stars and galaxies. After many millions of years some planets formed around one of these stars — we call it the sun — and on one planet, earth, life somehow began, and 'evolved' into all the many different forms of life that live on earth today, including people. (see our inside pages to find out why this just could not happen)

WHAT EXPLOSIONS CAN'T DO

Volcanoes are exploding mountains. When they explode, they usually throw thousands of tonnes of rock into the sky as well as lots of dust, and hot, liquid rock, called lava. Do you believe these chunks of rock could arrange themselves into the shape of buildings, with the dust and lava filling the spaces like cement? Of course not. We all know that the rocks and dust would just be scattered around. You would need a builder to make them into a building.

It is even harder to believe that our world and universe came from a "big bang" explosion, because those who tell us it happened that way believe there was nothing there to start with — they believe that *everything* that exists came from an explosion of *nothing!* We think it is easier to believe in a big **God** than a 'big bang'!



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
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