

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

Mouth-brooding Fish

ALTHOUGH some fish give birth to live young, most lay eggs (spawn). In most cases, the eggs are simply allowed to float in the water, where they eventually hatch, and the young fish (called larvae) swim away. However some fish, such as cichlids, are **mouth-brooders**. This means that after the female has laid the eggs, and they have been fertilised, she picks them up with her mouth, and keeps them inside her mouth, maybe for several weeks, until they hatch. During this time, the female may eat little if any food.



A cichlid fish

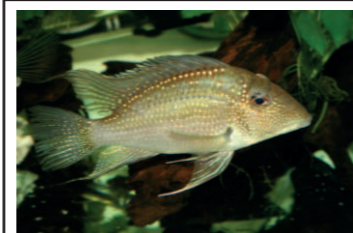


You can just see the larvae peeping out of this cichlid fish's mouth

After they hatch, the larvae swim out, but for at least a few days, they return to their mother's mouth for protection before they finally look after themselves.

It's hard to see how mouth-brooding could have come about through evolution. Of course, the fish do it by instinct, but how did this instinct start? Why would any fish begin to take her eggs, or her newly-hatched young, into her mouth, and how would she avoid swallowing them?

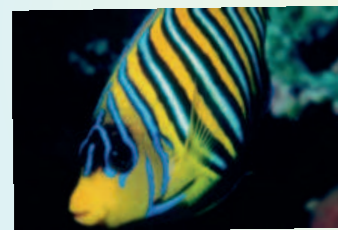
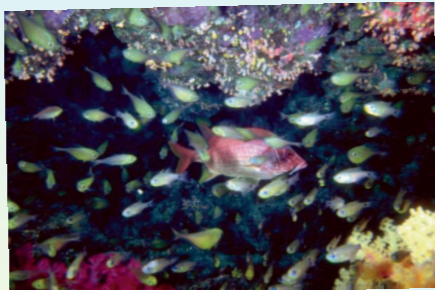
How did these fish learn that their eggs or young needed protecting in this way? It seems more logical to believe that they were created to do this by God in the beginning — and that they have been doing it ever since!



Some cichlids, like this one from South America, wait for their eggs to hatch, then take the larvae into their mouth for protection.

GOD LOVES VARIETY!

When God finished His work of creation, we read: "God looked at everything he had made, and it was very good." (*Genesis 1: 31*). God was pleased with what He had made, just as artists get pleasure from their work. There is a lot of beauty in our world, and this includes creatures that live in the sea, many of which are very colourful. God really loves variety! Many of the most colourful fish live in deep water, but they can also be seen in aquariums or sea life centres.



Evolution can't explain how all these fish came to be, but the Bible gives us the answer: "Speak to the earth, and it will teach you. Or let the fish of the sea tell you. Every one of these knows that the hand of the Lord has done this." (*Job 12: 8-9*). There is much beauty in the world, but there are also bad things which were not there in the beginning. God's good creation has been spoilt because humans turned away from Him in the beginning. All of us have a part in this, since we have all done wrong. But "God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son." (*John 3: 16*). Jesus died on the cross to bring us forgiveness. He rose again, and returned to heaven, but He will come to earth again, and the whole of creation will be restored to its original beauty. We can be part of that new creation by putting our faith in Jesus now.

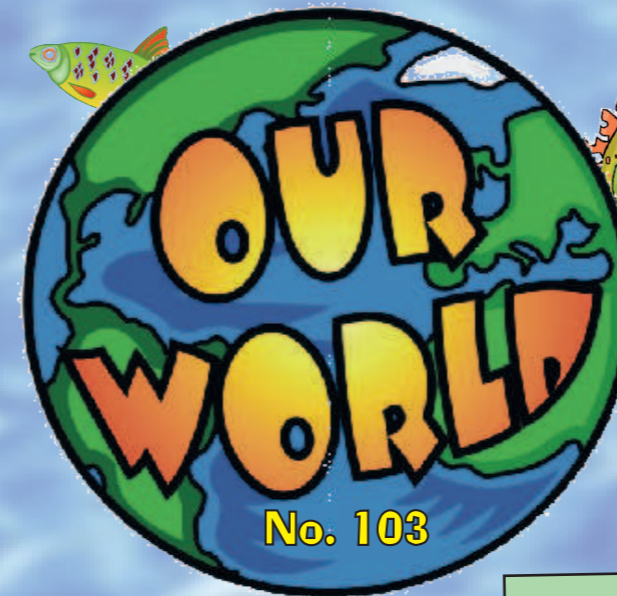
PUZZLE ANSWERS

- JUMBLED FISH**
 1. Trout, 2. Perch, 3. Herring, 4. Salmon, 5. Clownfish, 6. Stingray, 7. Halibut, 8. Stingray, 9. Shark, 10. Shark, 11. Extra seaweed, 12. Ceiling colour.
- SPOT THE DIFFERENCE**
 1. Shirt colour, 2. Lamp stem colour, 3. Fish changed direction, 4. Extra fish, 5. Hair colour, 6. Missing fish, 7. Container colour, 8. Stone moved, 9. Extra light, 10. Desk top colour, 11. Extra seaweed, 12. Ceiling colour.

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Our World is published quarterly by the Creation Resources Trust (Reg. Charity No. 1016666). Editing, design and layout by Geoff Chapman. Unless otherwise stated, articles are written by the editor. There is no subscription charge, but donations towards costs are appreciated. For more information about this, and other resources, please contact CRT at P O Box 3237, Yeovil, BA22 7WD, UK. Phone: 01935 850569. Email: info@crt.org.uk Web site: www.crt.org.uk © 2011 CRT

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MORE OF THE SAME



Most fish, including the trout (above), lay eggs — called spawn — which hatch in the water. But some, like the Acadian Redfish (below) give birth to live young. However, all fish, whether they lay eggs or not, only produce more of their own kind, just as God said they would in the beginning.



Wikipedia photo by Stephen G. Johnson

Some strange fish

Some fish are very strange, even bizarre, and very different from each other. This makes it very difficult to believe they all evolved from the same ancestor. The **Hatchetfish** uses its fins as 'wings' and can glide above the water for a distance of 1½ metres (5 feet). The **Anglerfish** has its own "fishing-rod" that it uses to attract smaller fish, which it then swallows. The **Leafy Sea-dragon** looks just like the seaweed it lives among, and the **Lionfish** is covered in long, poisonous spines. Strange, but well designed!



Hatchetfish



Anglerfish



Leafy Sea-dragon



Lionfish

THE FISH OF THE SEA



There are thousands of different kinds of fish in the world's oceans, lakes and rivers. Many are beautiful, some are weird. Can evolution explain how they came to be?

A WONDERFUL VARIETY!

There are more than 25,000 different kinds of fish in the world's oceans, lakes and rivers. Some are tiny, some are large, some are plain, some are colourful. There is a wonderful variety. Where did all these different fish come from? The Bible tells us that when the world began, "God said, 'Let the water be filled with living things.. He created every living thing that lives in the sea. The sea is filled with these living things. Each one produces more of its own kind.'" (*Genesis 1: 20-21*).



Many people don't believe what the Bible says. Instead they believe that all living things, including all the different kinds of fish, arrived through millions of years of gradual evolution. What do the facts tell us? Is there any evidence that fish evolved from a non-fish ancestor, as evolutionists claim? In this issue we will take a look.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- Fossil Fish Facts
- Nature Notes: Seagulls
- Did fish evolve?
- Puzzle Corner
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- God loves variety!

Photos from Wikipedia Commons



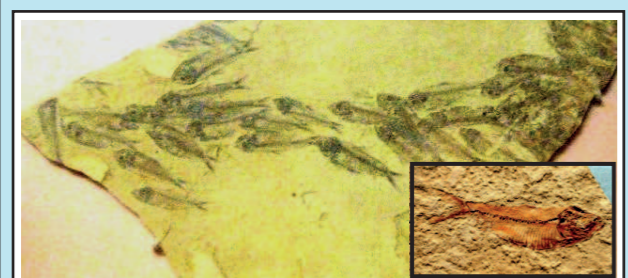
Wikipedia photo by Piotrus



Display of fossil fish in a German museum

FOSSIL FISH FACTS

Millions of fossil fish have been discovered in rocks around the world. One of the most famous "fish graveyards" is the Green River Formation in the United States. In that area alone there are millions of fossil fish, as well as many other animals and plants, buried in the rock layers. Other similar graveyards of fish have been found in other parts of the world, where whole shoals of fish were buried together in mud which later became rock. They are sometimes found packed into slabs of stone, like sardines in a can. In the Old Red Sandstone rocks in Scotland, 1000 fish fossils were found in one square meter of rock! Many of them are so well preserved that you can still see their soft parts, including eyes, skin and scales.



Slab of *Knightia* fish fossils (Wikipedia photo by Clair H.)
 Inset: *Knightia* fossil. (Wikipedia photo by Keith Edkins)

What do we learn from this? First of all, these fish did not die naturally, because when a fish dies it either floats to the surface and decays, or is eaten by some other animal. To become a fossil it would have to be buried quickly in mud. And for millions of fish to be buried together, and preserved so perfectly, it would require a huge catastrophe — something like the great flood of Noah's time. Also, the fossils show there has been no evolution (see next page).



Some fossil fish had armour, like this one. But there is no evidence that they evolved from anything else.



Left: These fossil sharks preserved in rock, are on display in the Natural History Museum in Schleusingen, Germany.

Modern sharks (right) are little different from those found as fossils. This means that sharks have always been sharks!



Wikipedia photo by Mittermach190

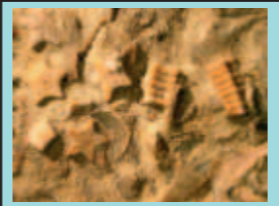
Did fish evolve? What from?

FISH are vertebrates — animals which have backbones, and their skeletons on the inside of their bodies. Evolutionists believe that fish evolved from invertebrates — creatures without a skeleton, and some of which have their hard parts on the **outside**. How could this have happened? There are lots of fossils of invertebrates, and many of them are like those still living in the ocean, but none which link them with fish. The fossils of true fish are found in some of the oldest rocks.



You can clearly see that this transparent fish has its skeleton inside its body. The problem for evolutionists is explaining how fish could have evolved from ancestors which no backbone or skeleton.
 Photo by Dmitrijs Mihejevs: Dreamstime

There have been many ideas about which creatures fish might have evolved from, including creatures like those on the right. Evolutionists can't agree which one it was, because there is no fossil evidence to link any of them with fish. And these suggested ancestors of fish are like living animals, so they haven't evolved at all! For a worm, or wormlike creature to turn into a fish it would somehow have to evolve a skeleton. It would also need to evolve fins and a tail, complete with bones and muscles to move them, so that it could swim. The different kinds of fish appear suddenly as fossils, with no evidence that they all had a single fish ancestor. No wonder evolutionists call the origin of fish "a problem" and "a mystery." However, it is no mystery to those who believe that God created the different kinds of fish in the beginning!



Around 100 million fossils of invertebrates (example on left) have been discovered, and about half a million fish fossils, (example on the right). But not a single fossil that links them together!



Wikipedia photo by Didier Descouens



Above: Drawing of the oldest fish, based on a fossil found in the same rocks as the creatures fish are supposed to have evolved from. It had a tail, fins, and a backbone.
 Below: Evolutionists believe that fish evolved from an invertebrate like one of these — but they can't agree which one.



Pictures from Wikipedia Commons

NATURE NOTES by the editor

If you visit the seaside and watch the seagulls flying overhead, and often landing on the water, have you ever wondered how they can drink the salty sea water? A gull can drink about 9 litres (2 gallons) every day. A human would collapse from dehydration after drinking even one-tenth of this amount. So how do gulls do it?



Their secret lies in a pair of glands in the head. Each one is made of thousands of tiny tubes arranged like the bristles on a bottle brush. The "handle" of the brush is a central tube that connects to the nostrils. Fine blood vessels remove the salt from the blood and allow it to trickle out through the gull's nostrils, where it drips from the tip of the beak. Each drop is five times as salty as the gull's blood.



Human engineers have designed large desalination plants (left) to remove salt from seawater so that people can drink it safely. Next time you see gulls flying around, remember that God gave them their own "desalination plant" so that they could drink seawater without being harmed. And this had to work from perfectly the beginning!



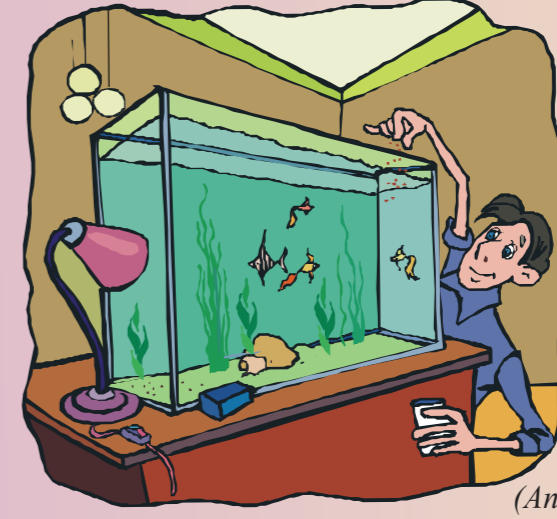
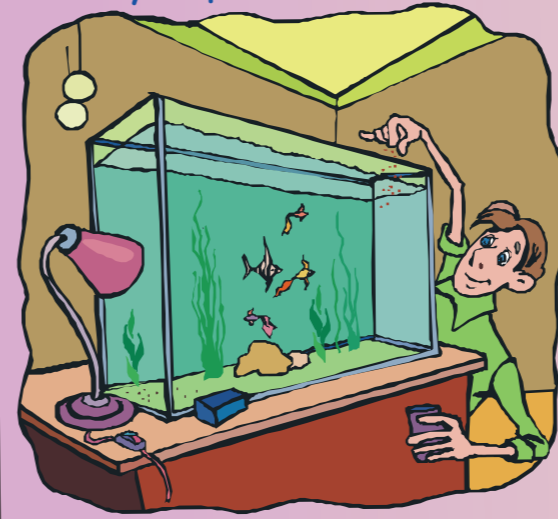
Desalination plant in Barcelona, Spain.

—Geoff Chapman

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PUZZLE CORNER

Can you spot 12 differences between the first and second pictures?



JUMBLED FISH:
 Can you unjumble the names of these fish?
 1. UROTT
 2. CHERP
 3. GRINHER
 4. LOMNAS
 5. SLOWCHIFN
 6. STAYRING
 7. THABULI
 8. GRUSETON

(Answers on the next page)

