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'LIVING FOSSILS'

by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

"Here is an interesting article in the newspaper about a discovery of a new 'living fossil' ", Mr. Jones told his family.

"I don't get it, Dad! A 'living fossil'?" asked his daughter Mary. "You taught us that a fossil is something that was once alive, or something left by something once alive, like an impression or track, that has turned to rock. So a fossil is not alive!"

"You are right, Mary. A 'living fossil' is a plant, insect, or animal which is alive and well today and which looks just like its fossil relative," explained Mr. Jones. "Evolutionary scientists almost always assume or guess that these fossilized plants or creatures died millions and millions of years ago."

Mr. Jones continued, "Sometimes a fossil is discovered first and believed to be extinct ..."

"What is 'end stink'?" Billy interrupted.

Mr. Jones chuckled and answered, "Not 'end stink', Billy. The word is extinct (ek'stingkt) and it means that a kind of creature or plant is, or was thought to be, no longer living. As I was saying, sometimes a fossil is discovered first and believed to be extinct, but is later found living. One creature that evolutionary scientists

thought lived about 300 million years ago and went extinct 70 million years ago was the coelacanth (see-lu,kanth) fish. But in December of 1938, a fishing boat netted a living coelacanth off the eastern coast of South Africa. The living coelacanth looked just like its fossil!"

"Other times," Mr. Jones went on, "the fossils are found after the living creature or plant is found. The horseshoe crab is an example of that. Do you remember the dead horseshoe crabs we found on the beach last year?"

"I certainly do," laughed Mrs. Jones. "Billy wanted to put them in the trunk of the car and bring them home! I can only imagine the 'trunk stink' that would have made!" The whole family laughed at that.

"Fossils of horseshoe crabs that evolutionary scientists claim are 450 million years old have been found that look just like the horseshoe crabs we found on the beach," continued Mr. Jones. "So they call a horseshoe crab a 'living fossil'."

Mr. Jones went to his bookshelf and found a book. "Here is a list of more so-called 'living fossils' that have been found: Wollemi pine trees, ginkgo trees, tuataras (lizard-like animals found only on several islands off the coast of New Zealand), crocodiles, alligators, sharks, starfish, vampire squids, lungfish, shrimp, chambered nautiloids, crinoids, brachiopods, clams, corals, sponges, worms, dragonflies, the



HORSESHOE CRAB

'Gladiator' insect, cockroaches, salamanders, and hundreds of other animals and plants."

"Wow! That's a lot of critters, Dad!"

"Yes it is, Billy."

"If evolution is true, Dad, shouldn't the animals have changed a lot over millions and millions of years?" Mary asked.

"Yes they should have, Mary. Yet 'living fossils' actually show very little to no change. Instead of showing evolution or change, I think 'living fossils' point to the biblical account of creation. If these plants and creatures were created to be fruitful and multiply after their kind, as the Bible says, then we would expect them to look the same as their fossilized relatives. The biblical account of the global Flood of Noah's day, about 4500 years ago, would have had the perfect conditions to make the fossils we find today. Well-preserved fossils show rapid burial, just what we would expect of the worldwide flood of the Bible."

"So, Mom," giggled Billy, "do you think Dad is a 'living fossil'?"

"Well he just might be," Mrs. Jones laughed. "Fossilized bones of humans have been found that look very much like our bones today, so your father probably does look like his ancestors ... maybe clear back to Adam and Eve!

Now, let's have our evening prayer time so we can get you younger generation of 'living fossils' off to bed!"



