

Think Believe

Discover Creation...Worship the Creator

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Ladder Climbers

By Mark Sonmor

Imagine with me if you will... waking up from a deep sleep, you find yourself sitting on the floor of a small, dark room. At a table in front of you, a dim light illuminates the faces of a group playing cards. Beyond, barely visible through the window, several lights can be seen slowly ascending and descending like fireflies on a cold evening.

As you stand to your feet, one of the card players turns to you and relates that you've arrived in a huge building in which an enormous painting is housed. The "fireflies" you see are actually flashlights held by "ladder climbers" studying the masterpiece hung on the far wall. "Some say," he explains, "that if you understand the meaning of the painting, you can come to know the Painter." Looking askance at his cards, he relates, "I tried climbing the ladders, but decided it was better to hang out in here. After all, if I'm not good enough for the Painter, I don't need him."

Realizing you also hold a flashlight, you decide to go past the group and out the door. In the shadows, forms begin to take shape. Suddenly, a man steps toward you dressed in a lab coat. "Isn't it wonderful?" he declares,

"All this is a miracle of chance and accident produced over eons and eons of time!" Peering around his shoulder, a woman exclaims, "We are all part of a painting within a painting! We are the Painter and the Painter is us!" As more gather, you decide to climb the first ladder – at least to escape the commotion.

On the way, you grab the museum's official tour guide and stuff it in your pocket. Once up the ladder, you realize why you might need it. The images of angels, snakes, fig leaves, and sacrificial sheep are all very confusing. Making your way back down the ladder and through the crowd, you find a quiet corner where you can read. The tour guide's explanation begins to make some sense and gives you a general idea of what this painting is about. After mulling the pamphlet over several times, however, you're still left with some nagging questions. Is the explanation really that simple? Is there more to the story? Could they be missing something?

Alone in the dark, you're faced with a dilemma.

Do you climb back up the ladders to find out for yourself or go back and play


cards? After all, you wonder, "Can I really discover the truth on my own? I'm not an expert. Can I really get to know the Painter?"

Studying the painting is a lot of work – especially with one little flashlight!"

When it comes to understanding the Bible and reconciling it with science and the world around us, many of us find ourselves in a similar predicament. Who do we trust? Can we really make sense of what we see and ultimately have a relationship with the Creator?

As we start the new year, we encourage you to start climbing ladders! Whether it's reading through the entire Bible for the first time or tackling a thorny question about God, scripture, or Creation. We encourage you to be curious, ask questions, and pursue understanding.

Climbing ladders can require perseverance but the rewards are worth it. Whether it's digging into the Bible's original languages, researching radiometric dating, or simply constructing a model of Noah's ark out of popsicle sticks, the understanding gained will no longer be second-hand or hearsay. You will own it and gain a confidence not found through short cuts. This is one more reason why AOI offers resources – to aid you in your climb.

Rather than climbing ladders to win trivia contests or impress other ladder climbers, we climb to know the Painter. We climb to understand His character, enjoy a relationship with Him, and to better share that with others. May God bless you as you climb your ladders in 2020. 



Desert Bighorn Sheep *by Dave Nutting*

Because of their drab, unassuming appearance and reclusive nature, bighorn sheep can go through their entire existence virtually unnoticed and unappreciated by humans – sometimes in close proximity to population centers.

However, these quiet desert dwellers are actually amazing climbing machines/battering rams that would have been great assets in medieval battles. While their horns are formidable, their split hooves aid in balance and their hoof bottoms are equipped with rough pads to give them good clinging ability. This is very important for an animal that is commonly found jumping from one narrow cliff ledge to another.

How do they cope with the hot, dry desert? The Fish and Wildlife Service says, “Unlike most mammals, desert bighorn sheep have the ability to lose up to 30% of their body weight in water (more than a camel) and still survive.”¹ In the winter, a male may go weeks or months without

water. Yet, even in the heat of summer, bighorns can go 3 – 7 days without drinking. They sustain their moisture from food alone. When they finally rehydrate they can guzzle up to 2 gallons of water in minutes.

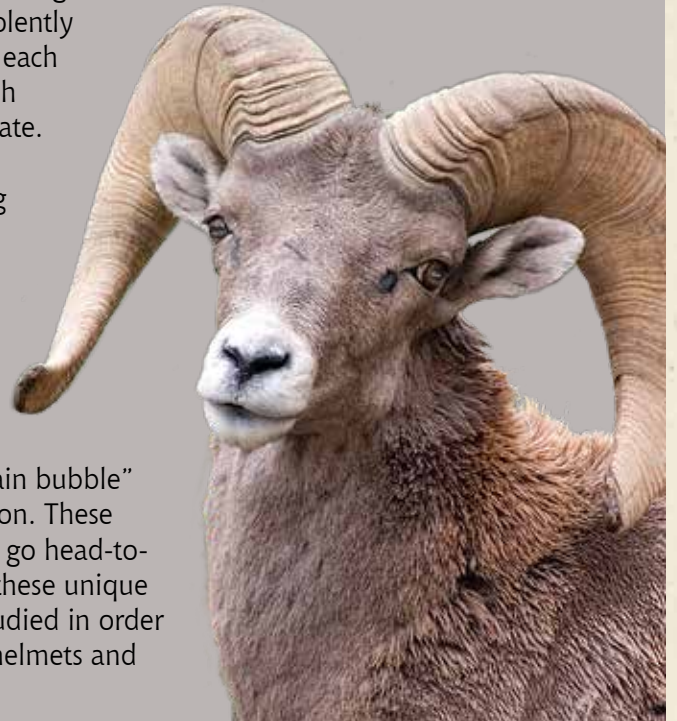
The Ram’s horns are made from keratin – a material like that found in your fingernails. These horns can weigh 25-30 pounds – more than 10% of their body weight! Competing rams use these weapons to violently bash their heads against each other in order to establish dominance and win a mate.

When this happens, you might be wondering why rams don’t knock themselves out or get concussions? It “just so happens” that specially designed, shock-absorbing skulls with unfused plates and a special “brain bubble” provide needed protection. These structures allow them to go head-to-head for hours. In fact, these unique capabilities are being studied in order to make better athletic helmets and

auto safety features. If we need to copy God’s design, we should marvel at His original engineering.

Depending on your location, we hope you can see these magnificent desert bighorns, but don’t get too close! It would not be a good animal to butt heads with! **AOI**

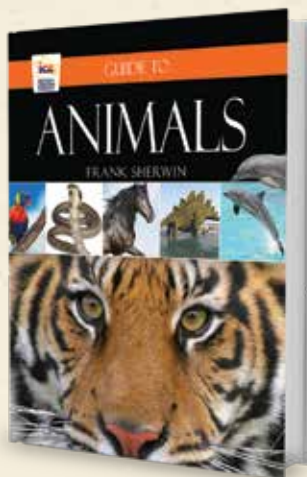
¹https://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/DesertBigHorn_2013_508.pdf



Your Guide to Animals (by Frank Sherwin)

Reviewed by Dave Nutting

Help your children avoid being taken captive by evolutionary philosophy! This amazing, well-illustrated 8.5 x 11, full-color, Creation book will be a welcome help! Find out how fish breathe, birds fly, why some animals migrate, and why others hibernate. Also, find out what happened to the dinosaurs and other extinct animals.



ICR says: “Whether they fly, swim, slither, gallop, or swing through trees, discover how the Lord created each animal to be unique and engineered for its own habitat. This book covers a number of animals, from sharks and jellyfish to dragonflies and bees. Learn about creatures that have some very unique features – camouflage,

bioluminescence, and echolocation among them. Discover creatures that live in some of the most extreme environments in the world. All of these creatures and more are a testament to God’s glory.” Get it today from AOI and help us spread the message of creation to children and adults. Hardback, 117 pages. **\$17 plus \$4 S/H. AOI**



Seed Dispersal Methods – Evidence of Creation

by Steve B Austin

Evolutionists claim that “adaptation” is an evolutionary process that helps an organism make the most of its habitat. They use seed dispersal as an example.

However, when we really examine this claim, does it make sense? Do plants have the intelligence that allows them to mentally decide to develop a new method of dispersing their seeds? This would require huge amounts of new genetic information, foreknowledge, and planning. Where would a plant obtain such information?

I believe the four distinct methods whereby plants disperse their seeds (wind, water, animals, and explosive means) show the creative ingenuity of our Creator God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Wind dispersal is employed by orchids, grasses, many trees, and of course, dandelions. How many of us have blown on the seed-head of a dandelion and observed how rapidly the seeds are carried away? Orchids contain such light seeds (a mere 0.004 of a gram) that even a slight breeze can spread its seeds.

Water dispersal is observed in the floating seeds of the water lily. These seeds float for a while, and then drop to the bottom of the pond to take root and grow a new plant. Palm trees produce coconuts which are large seeds known as “drupes.” These have been known to drift for great distances – to far away islands or even a different continent.

Animal dispersion involves several individual methods. Seeds can be eaten, pass through the digestive tract, and be deposited in a distant location. Other seeds attach to an animal’s coat or fur. A yellow-flowered plant known as “buffalo-bur” was notoriously found in buffalo wallows in pioneer days. Some sources indicate it may have traveled from Mexico on the hides of buffalo. As the animals rolled in the dust, the seeds would be dispersed and take root. Because buffalo traveled great distances in their migrations, this plant spread far and wide. One particular place it is found is in Kansas, where it has been designated as a noxious weed. This is because it can become stuck in sheep’s wool making it unusable.

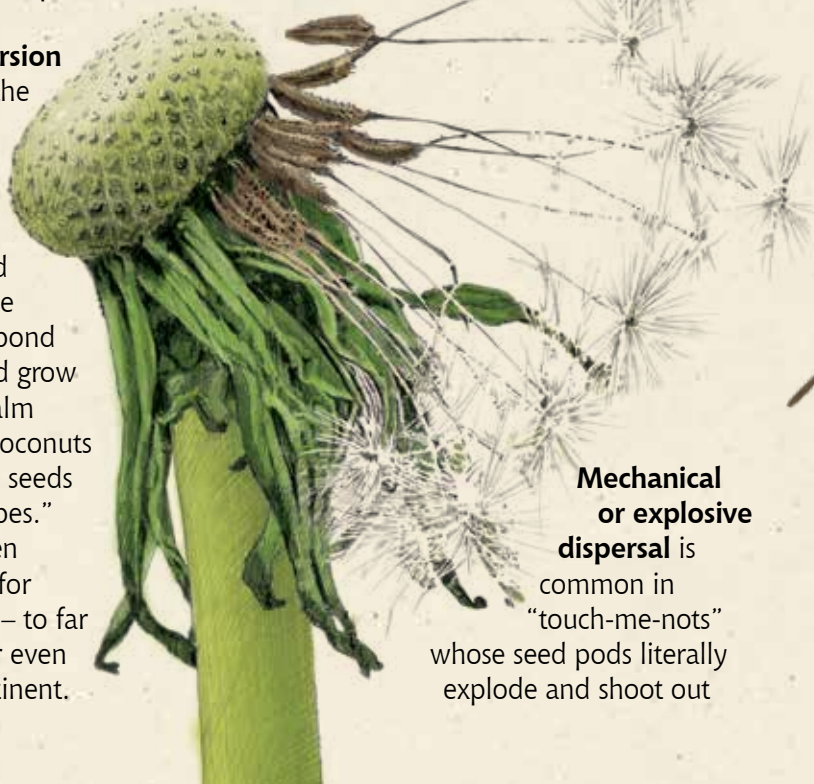
When hiking through meadows, especially in late summer or autumn, it is common to end up with “stickers” in your socks! These, no doubt, come from mustards or various other species, which stick to your clothing by means of minute “hooks.”

their seeds several feet. Dwarf mistletoe, which is known to infest various species of trees, also disperse seeds explosively. These seeds are so sticky that if they reach a nearby tree, they will take root and grow. They tend to weaken the host over the years and eventually kill it.

Another unique example of explosive seed dispersal is known as the “Dynamite Tree,” “Sandbox Tree,” or “Possomwood” (*hura crepitans*). This member of the Spurge family is native to the Amazon rain forest but even grows in some parts of North America. The tree’s seed pods resemble little pumpkins. When these hardened seed capsules are ripe, they explode firing their seeds at a whopping 150 miles an hour. Fortunately, the sound of the explosion gives a warning. Something like that can really hurt (ouch!).

The next time you read how plants “evolved” to adapt to a new habitat, remember that plants do not have intelligence. They are designed that way by God Himself. **AOI**

[Editor’s Note: An evolutionist might say these features show adaptation or evolution at work. However, to enhance a trait, there needs to be an expression (genetic information) for that trait that is already present in the gene pool. Hence, adaptation is NOT evolution since there is no new genetic information. Evolution needs to explain the origin of the plant or tree in the first place let alone the amazing genetic complexity of this article’s examples.]



Mechanical or explosive dispersal is common in “touch-me-nots” whose seed pods literally explode and shoot out

Director's Column by Dave Nutting



Many children walk away from their Christian faith before they reach high school. Because of the internet and “friends”


steering kids into atheist websites, entertainment, and media, even young children (8-10 years) are being caused to stumble. This year, besides continuing our on-going Creation outreach ministry, we at AOI, wish to expand our ministry to children and students. Lanny is planning to enhance our website for children. We are also looking for people who can help recruit and train older students and adults to lead additional Creation Vacation Bible Schools, kid's camp programs, and school programs, where kids are gathered, AOI wants to be there.

AOI also wants to recruit YOU to help in this endeavor in your

area. Perhaps you can lead a kid's club in your home or at your church with creation materials such as our Discover Creation Children's Adventure kit. (Call AOI at 970-523-9943 for information on that.)

Do you know of children's pastors gatherings or conferences at which an AOI speaker could share? Let us know.

Since so many children are interested in all types of animals, you might simply purchase the book mentioned on page 2. This could fortify children around you so that they are not taken captive by the philosophy of evolution after all, evolution is not really science; it is philosophy posing as science.)

We do hope you become actively involved in this battle for the hearts and minds of children near you! 

Become an AOI ministry partner! Donations are needed and greatly appreciated.

Yellowstone Tour

Aug. 28-Sep. 21 or Sep. 4-8
Creation seminar & bus tour of Yellowstone. Great for the entire family! Call AOI for info.

Twin Peaks, Camp

June 21-26
Creation family camp on CO's Grand Mesa. Great Value! Great Fun! Sign up now!

Camp Witness, NE

May 22-25
Creation family program + activities (Fri. PM – Mon. lunch.) Very affordable! See web.

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