

# Discovery Channel " "The Ultimate Guide" "

The segment of "The Ultimate Guide" documentaries entitled 'Birds of Prey', deals with flesh-eating birds such as eagles, owls and vultures. The documentary shows that vultures have a highly developed sense of smell that enables them to detect the smell of a carcass from a distance of several kilometers; eagles have eyes that allow them to see a small mouse from a kilometer away and owls have a special arrangement of the feathers in their wings that lets them fly without being noticed. But, surprisingly, towards the end of the program, Discovery Channel starts to tell the same old story about how these complex physiological structures and the even more complex systems that enable them to fly are the result of evolution.

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"The evolution of birds is still one of the most hotly debated scientific issues. It appears that the ancestors of birds were reptiles 200 million years ago. When they went into the trees, they developed a scaly layer that would become a primitive wing. These wings helped them to come down from the trees more easily. 50 million years later, archaeopteryx came on the scene. It still had teeth and hard bones like a reptile but, unlike other creatures, it had feathers. Like scales, feathers are made of keratin but they are lighter and more flexible. Archaeopteryx could fly. Within the next 25 million years, it developed a greater flying ability and every surplus gram of weight was lost. It even lost its teeth to make it lighter. Its bones had a texture like a beehive which gave them strength. About 50 million years ago, the number of mammals increased and birds appeared that could hunt them-birds of prey were born."

The scenario of the evolution of birds, presented by Discovery Channel as scientific fact, is really totally speculative and has no scientific basis. These speculations are extended within the context of two theories: the cursorial (or "running") theory suggests that birds progressed to the air from the land and the arboreal theory that says that birds developed wings by jumping from tree to tree and from trees to the ground. But there is no intermediate fossil to support this scenario. Evolutionists accept the evolution of birds as a dogma and only propose far-fetched ideas as to which scenario is the most likely way they developed. John Ostrom admits that each hypothesis is based only on speculation: "No fossil evidence exists of any pro-avis. It is a purely hypothetical pre-bird, but one that must have existed." (John Ostrom, "Bird Flight: How Did it Begin?" *American Scientist*, Jan-Feb 1979, vol. 67, p. 47)

Discovery Channel ignores the fact that claims about the evolution of birds are highly speculative and far-fetched and presents the scenario of the evolution of birds to its viewers as scientific fact. At this point, the idea that archaeopteryx proves that birds evolved is untenable because archaeopteryx could already fly and perch in trees. (For the invalidity of claims about the evolution of Archaeopteryx, see Harun Yahya's "**Darwinism Refuted**", Goodword, 2003)

In short, Discovery Channel's account is totally speculative. It invents imaginary ancestors and far-fetched processes of evolution for the birds that are the subject of its documentary.

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