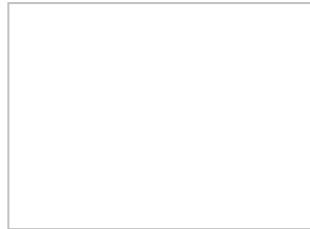


The Latest Coelacanth Fossil And Evolutionist Errors

On 1 August, 2007, the msnbc.com web site carried a report titled "Fin fossil gives clue to evolution of limbs". This referred to a new 400-million-year-old coelacanth fossil and contained evolutionist claims regarding it. Researchers from the University of Chicago in the USA who examined the fossil identified a number of features absent from present-day coelacanths, on the basis of which they claimed that it was a mistake to refer to the fish as a "living fossil."



However, for evolutionists to look at a fish's fins and suggest that the human arm evolved from such an organ is to adopt a totally imaginary and biased attitude. It is propaganda engaged in to keep the idea of the supposed evolution of the coelacanth, for years depicted as an intermediate form, and the theory of evolution itself alive. Moreover, this latest finding does not alter the fact that the coelacanth is a living fossil.

A response to the evolutionist claims on the subject is provided below, and we also show why the "fin-arm-leg" myth is dogma persisted in despite all the scientific evidence.

The classification of fish and the coelacanth

Fish are divided into main categories – with and without jaws. Jawed fish are further subdivided into bony fish (Osteichthyes) and cartilaginous fish (Chondrichthyes). Bony fish are further subdivided into two groups on the basis of their fin structure – flesh-finned (Crossopterygii) and ray-finned (Actinopterygii). Coelacanth is the name given to a class of fish with hollow vertebrae extending from the backbone towards the fins. Coelacanths are members of the bony and ray-finned classifications. They are large fish, up to 1.0 metres in length, weighing up to 98 kilos and covered in thick scales reminiscent of body armour. The first fossils are to be found in strata dating back to the Devonian Period (360-408 million years).

Up until 1938 the coelacanth was known only from fossils and was thought to have become extinct 70 million years ago. Because of the bony structures in its fins, many evolutionist biologists hypothesised that it used the two pairs of bony fins on its body to walk along the sea floor and that it was an intermediate form between marine and terrestrial animals.

In 1938, however, a living coelacanth (*Latimera chalumnae*) was caught in the open sea near the Republic of South Africa. New specimens (*Malania anjouanae*) were caught off the Comorra islands to the east of Africa in 1952. Scientists performed comprehensive examinations of both the coelacanth's anatomy and of the way it moved in its natural habitat. Anatomical investigation showed that coelacanths had remained unchanged for 400 million years, while observations carried out under water around the Comorra islands in 1987 revealed that:

"...the flexible fins had no function similar to legs in four-legged land vertebrates. They actually enabled the animal to swim in all directions, including upside-down and backwards."

The latest Coelacanth fossil

The coelacanth fossil described in the msnbc.com report is very old and consists of a small fragment. The latest coelacanth specimen, found in the state of Wyoming in the USA and named *Shoshonia arctopteryx*, is 10 cm long and comes from the fish's fins, shown in red in the illustration. Researchers state that the bones inside the fin are arranged more asymmetrically than in coelacanths alive today, and that there are

more bones in the front of the main stem of the fin than in the back. The researchers report that this structure is more commonly observed in modern-day ray-finned fish and terrestrial vertebrates, and then go on to make various evolutionary errors.

a) The error of thinking that the Coelacanth is not a living fossil

The scientists object, on the basis of anatomical differences between the latest coelacanth fossil and specimens alive today, to the term "living fossil," claiming that it is erroneous.



The fact is, however, that Matt Friedman, the author of the objection in question, is making a grave error. The fact that coelacanths are living fossils is not a myth propagated among human beings, but a generally accepted concept in the "scientific" literature and one based on sound data. University web sites, for instance, refer to the coelacanth as a living fossil:

1. "Living fossil : the story of the coelacanth", [Smithsonian Institution](#)
2. "Living Fossil Fish In Indonesian Waters", [University of Florida](#)
3. "Historical Geology and Society: Living Fossils and Extinction", [The University of Tennessee at Martin](#)
4. "Significance of Coelacanth", [University of Scranton](#)
5. "Coelacanth: The Fish out of Time", [University of Wisconsin](#)

Any objection to the fact that coelacanths, of which more than 40 living specimens have been found to date, the latest being caught in Indonesia in May 2007, are still alive today and have a history dating back millions of years will just make Darwinists look ridiculous. It is also a scientifically proven and indisputable fact that specimens alive today are no different to coelacanths that lived 350-400 million years ago. Darwinists' aims in making this objection are basically to restore this creature, which they for years portrayed as an intermediate form, to its former status. The fact is, however, that the coelacanth is now described in the literature as a "living fossil that refutes evolution."

The general acceptance that the coelacanth is a living fossil is based on numerous, well-preserved fossil collections. The fossil examined by Friedman in this research consists of one, single fin. The general opinion resulting from repeated investigations by palaeontologists of large numbers of fins will clearly not be altered by Friedman's exaggerated interpretation made on the basis of a single fin.

b) The myth that tetrapod limbs evolved from coelacanth fins

The msnbc.com article states that in terms of its fin anatomy, *Shoshonia arctopteryx* bears a closer resemblance to tetrapods (four-legged terrestrial vertebrates) and even human beings, than it does to modern-day coelacanths. The start of the article suggests that the fossil sheds light on the evolution of the arms and legs. The fact is though that the idea that the arms and legs of human beings and terrestrial vertebrates evolved from fish fins is nothing more than a Darwinian myth.

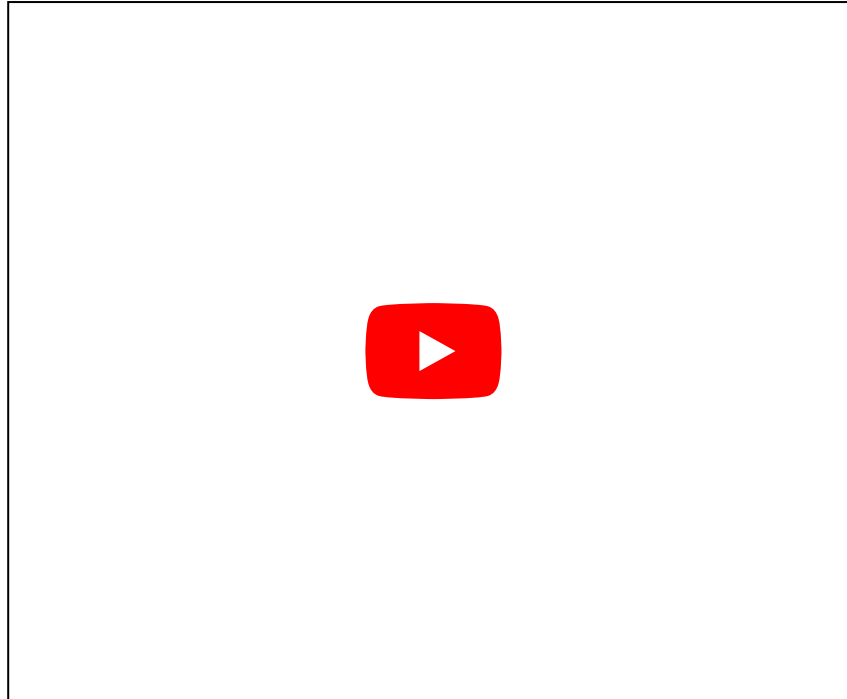
There is a fundamental difference between fishes' fin bones and the legs of terrestrial life forms: the bones in fish are not attached to the backbone. Since they are unattached to the backbone they are unable to bear weight. No matter how much a fish may crawl or wriggle, no changes that might attach its fins to its skeleton or make the kind of lock and key additions so that the bones there become compatible with one another will ever take place. That is because the structure of a fish's fins is coded in its DNA, and the DNA will not alter in the light of the fish's needs and actions, and it is impossible for it to do so. Therefore, the claim that fins gradually turned into feet is based on no scientific observations and is only proposed in order to meet the requirements of the theory of evolution.

In addition, there are enormous differences between the natural habitat of fishes, areas of salt and fresh water, and that of tetrapods, dry land. These great differences between the two also imply enormous differences in terms of physiological systems regarding such functions as movement, respiration, reproduction, seeing and hearing and protection against water. A fish assumed to have made the transition from water to land would also have to acquire the systems belonging to terrestrial creatures very quickly if it were to survive on dry land. Its gills would have to turn into lungs, the kidney, an exceedingly complex organ, which fish do not possess, would have to evolve by chance, and there would have to be radical changes in the structure of its skin and its hearing and sight systems. Yet such a scenario is completely impossible. There is no fossil evidence to document such a transition. As the evolutionist and palaeontologist Barbara J. Stahl writes in her book *Vertebrate History: Problems in Evolution*,

...none of the known fishes is thought to be directly ancestral to the earliest land vertebrates. Most of them lived after the first amphibians appeared, and those that came before show no evidence of developing the stout limbs and ribs that characterized the primitive tetrapods (ancient amphibians)."

Conclusion

As we have seen, the fact that the coelacanth is a living fossil is generally agreed by palaeontologists, and the comments regarding this latest fossil finding, made with the aim of doing away that agreement, will very definitely not do away with the scientific truth in question. Applying the fin to the claim of a transition from water to dry land is an approach that stems from Darwinist prejudice is based on absolutely no scientific evidence, an example of classic evolutionist methods of conjecture. Our advice to msnbc.com is that it give up its unconditional support for claim so far removed from reality, based entirely on evolutionists' imaginations and prejudices.



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<https://www.harunyahya.info/en/articles/the-latest-coelacanth-fossil-and-evolutionist-errors>