

Why the common myth that evolution/long-ages is “the only scientific option” for thinkers?

One reason is peer pressure—believing in evolution because so many other people believe it, a self-sustaining cycle of social reinforcement. Another is never being shown how the same evidence can be interpreted within a framework that takes the Bible seriously as revealed history—the Word of the living God who made all things. That same Bible also teaches that since Adam’s fall into sin, people are by nature biased against God. The Bible also teaches that the creation was originally “very good”, and that death, disease and suffering are ultimately due to Adam’s sin, in which we all continue. Belief in evolution (“everything made itself”) is the ultimate way to suppress the truth that all of us know deep down—that nothing as complex as this universe could ever have come into being without intelligence and planning.

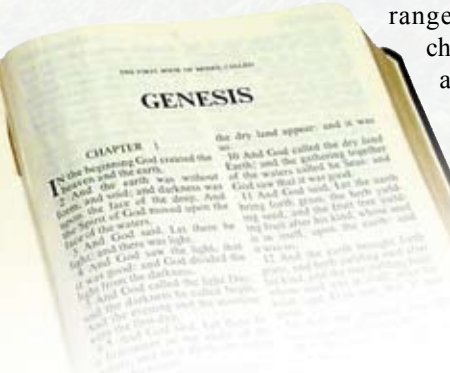
Deciding on whether creation or evolution makes more sense is one of the most crucial issues there could possibly be, because it affects your purpose and destiny. You owe it to yourself to *really* check out the evidence from a creation viewpoint, not just to hear it all “pre-digested” through the common “lenses” of our age.

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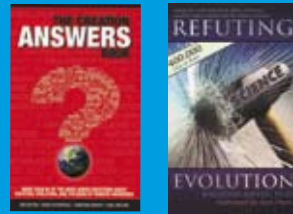


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Surtsey Surprises

YOUNG ISLAND

already looks
“millions of years old”



Surtsey Surprises

**Young Island already looks
'millions of years old'.**

David Catchpoole, Ph.D.

After the island of Surtsey was born of a huge undersea volcanic eruption off Iceland in 1963,¹ geologists were astonished at what they found. Four years later, one wrote: "On Surtsey, only a few months sufficed for a landscape to be created which was so varied and mature that it was almost beyond belief."²

There were wide sandy beaches, gravel banks, impressive cliffs, soft undulating land, faultscarps, gullies and channels and "boulders worn by the surf, some of which were almost round, on an abrasion platform cut into the cliff."² And all of this despite the island's "extreme youth"³



Rapid Geology

The geologists' surprise is understandable, given the popular belief that Surtsey's "varied and mature" features ought to have needed long periods of time—millions of years—to form. But such ideas are a relatively modern phenomenon, a legacy of uniformitarian (long-age) theories gaining popular acceptance in the decades just before Darwin.⁴ Prior to that, great scientists understood the earth was young (around 6,000 years old) and had been dramatically re-shaped by upheavals associated with the global Flood of Noah's day (around 4,500 years ago).

Understanding the power of rushing water, and accepting that Genesis 7:11's "fountains of the deep" breaking open (with the implied associated volcanic activity) was a real event, gives one a whole different starting point when viewing the world's geography, topography and geology.

However, in contrast, anyone with a millions-of-years starting point will be "astonished" when viewing Surtsey. A January 2006 *New Scientist* article says: "The island has excited geographers, who marvel that canyons, gullies and other land features that typically take tens of thousands or millions of years to form were created in less than a decade."⁵

Fast biology, too

Biologists, too, have been surprised. "From the first, the speed, ingenuity and sheer unpredictability of nature's colonisation of Surtsey wrong-footed them." For example, it was not the expected lichens and mosses which were the "early invaders", but flowering plants.

Researchers clambering ashore in springtime of 1965 "were greeted on the high-tide line by the green shoots and pretty white flower of a sea rocket, its roots sunk into the ash and in full bloom." Lyme grass, sea sandwort, cotton grass and ferns soon followed. It was not until 1967 that mosses arrived, "and lichens only limped aboard in 1970".

Why would anyone have expected mosses and lichens to be the first colonizers? Is it because the evolutionary history of our planet proposes mosses and lichens as the first greenery to colonize the earth as it cooled from its alleged molten beginning? But the Bible says that all plant kinds were created together, on Day 3 of Creation Week (and that the earth's surface was watery, not molten, at first).

In contrast, on Surtsey the evolutionary paradigm lacked any predictive value: "There was no complex evolutionary adaptation to the surroundings nor even a replication of ecosystems on neighbouring islands. What came, came."⁵

And come it did, to the great surprise of evolutionary

biologists. Despite the lessons they should have learned from the rapid recolonization of denuded Mt St Helens (USA) following its eruption in 1980,⁶ they again greatly underestimated the innate resilience of the creation.

At Surtsey, insects were the first to arrive. The first people to set foot on Surtsey in early 1964 were "welcomed" by a fly on the shore. Other aerial arrivals included spiders "ballooning" through the atmosphere on silken threads. Other insects came by sea, riding on tussocks of grass or floating wood.

Birds began producing chicks on Surtsey in 1970, just three years after the lava stopped flowing, and contributing to Surtsey's "greening". Snow buntings brought the seeds of bog rosemary from Britain in their gizzards. Combined with bird excreta, seeds grow rapidly—there is now a "bright green oasis" spreading from a permanent colony of hundreds of lesser black-backed gulls. Geese now graze the island's vegetation, too.

The cycle continues; the plants support insects which attract birds that bring more plants. Recent arrivals include willow bushes and puffins. According to the Icelandic Institute of Natural History, "We now have a fully functioning ecosystem on Surtsey."

The lessons of Surtsey

Sceptics try to counter Christianity by claiming that the Bible's account of history can't be true, e.g. by arguing that the earth's geological features needed millions of years, and that biological recovery from the Flood would be impossible within the short biblical timeframe.

But Surtsey demonstrates that it is the sceptics who are wrong. It also gives a fascinating insight into how we got the (post-Flood) distribution of plants and animals we see in the world today. "What came, came." If only the sceptics could learn the lessons of Surtsey while there's still time. For Surtsey is eroding so rapidly—about a hectare (2.5 acres) a year—that it's estimated it could be gone within a century or so. And such fast erosion is much more consistent with a young world, too.⁷

References and notes

1. Molten lava continued to flow from the crater for several years.
2. <creation.com/surtsey>.
3. Thorarinsson, S., Surtsey: island born of fire, *National Geographic* 127(5):712–726, 1965.
4. In fact, uniformitarianism paved the way for Darwin, because evolution not just assumed, but needed, long periods of time. See Mortenson, T., *The great turning point: the Church's catastrophic mistake on geology—before Darwin*, Master Books, Arizona, USA, 2004.
5. Pearce, F., The fire-eater's island, *New Scientist* 189(2536):48–49, 18 January 2006.
6. <creation.com/recovery>.
7. See Walker, T., Vanishing coastlines, *Creation* 29(2):19–21, 2007.