

‘Oldest’ fossil shrimp?

Shaun Doyle

Researchers have recently found what has been dubbed the oldest known fossil shrimp. Found in Upper Devonian shale in Oklahoma, the specimen of *Aciculopoda mapesi* was exceptionally preserved: “the muscles ... have been preserved completely enough that discrete muscle bands are discernable.”¹ The news reports commented that “The fossil is a very important step in unraveling the evolution of decapods.”² However, one looks in vain in either the popular reports² or the original research¹ to find justification for this statement.

Extension of fossil ranges

Does the claimed age of the fossil tell us something new about the evolution of decapods? The more we investigate the fossil record, the larger fossil ranges tend to get.³ *Aciculopoda* adds to this trend by extending the known fossil range of shrimps and prawns from the early Triassic (‘dated’ by uniformitarians to 245 Ma) to late Devonian (360 Ma), completely skipping the Carboniferous and Permian geologic ‘ages’. This is a 115-million-year extension in fossil range on the basis of *one fossil!* This is one more, particularly extreme, example of a progressive randomization of the fossil record.

The classification of strata in the geologic column depends on index fossils, which are supposed to only occur over short spans in the rocks, and thus enable researchers to globally correlate strata. However, if fossils as a rule continually have their stratigraphic ranges extended, how reliable can the geologic column concept be since it relies on index fossils?⁴

Evolutionary stasis

Not only does *Aciculopoda* resemble ‘younger’ fossil shrimp, it closely resembles *modern* shrimp (figure 1). So shrimp are not only older than was thought, but they’ve stayed the same much longer. Shrimps are thus examples of ‘living fossils’—living organisms have not changed substantially since their first appearance in the fossil record. Evolutionists explain this by invoking ‘evolutionary stasis’, which is a contradiction in terms that mean ‘change that stays the same’. As such, ‘evolutionary stasis’ is a meaningless concept; you can convey the meaning properly by simply calling it *stasis*. However, evolutionists often feel the need to add ‘evolutionary’ to make sure the public gets the impression that stasis, like every other conceivable pattern in the fossils, can be ‘explained’ with an evolutionary story. And since evolution can apparently explain anything, it ultimately explains nothing.⁵ ‘Evolutionary stasis’ is nothing more than a meaningless nod to a meaningless concept to accommodate an evolution-contrary pattern in the fossils. A lack of change in an organism, over supposed long periods of time, does not speak well of evolution.

Fine preservation evidence for rapid burial

Lead researcher Rodney Feldmann pointed out that the exceptional preservation of the muscles (figure 2) in the fossil points to rapid burial:

“When the animal died, it came to rest on the seafloor. The muscles then were preserved by a combination of acidic waters and a low oxygen content as the animal was buried rapidly.”²

In order to preserve the muscles, they had to be permineralized quickly:

“Under conditions of low pH and anoxia, it has been estimated that phosphatization of the soft tissue will occur within a few weeks.”¹

Rapid burial and permineralization is completely consistent with a Flood setting.

Evolutionary spin on the fossils

Nevertheless, the news story proclaims: “The fossil is a very important step in unraveling the evolution of decapods.”² This is mere spin—the fossil tells us nothing about how shrimp or decapods evolved because it’s little different from modern shrimp. Decapods were already ‘dated’ as far back as the Devonian, just not shrimp. So this fossil has neither changed the age range of decapods, nor told us anything about the supposed changes the ancestral decapod went through to become a shrimp. Shrimp are simply older than originally thought.

Fossils can readily be used to tell evolutionary stories, but they’re not much help for evolution. Paleontology by itself can’t conclusively demonstrate whether creation or evolution is true. Historical interpretation of the fossil record, like long-age dating, is notoriously subjective. Fossil patterns can’t give a history; that is imposed

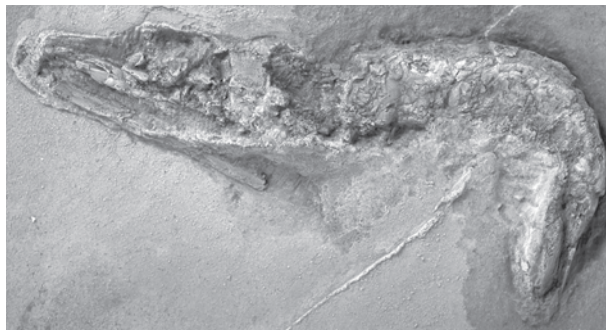


Figure 1. Supposedly oldest known fossil shrimp *Aciculopoda mapesi*.



Figure 2. Fossilized muscle of *Aciculopoda mapesi*.

Photographs from examiner.com

on the evidence.⁶ However, we can say that these fossils are consistent with rapid burial during the biblical Flood.

References

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2. Oldest fossil shrimp preserved with muscles, *PhysOrg.com*, 9 November 2010, www.physorg.com/news/2010-11-oldest-fossil-shrimp-muscles.html, accessed 15 November 2010).
3. Woodmorappe, J., The fossil record: becoming more random all the time, *J. Creation (CENTJ)* **14**(1):110–116, 2000.
4. Oard, M.J., How well do paleontologists know fossil distributions? *J. Creation (CENTJ)* **14**(1):7–8, 2000.
5. It's not that evolution *does* explain all the fossil patterns, but that evolution's practitioners think it can. So it is just a matter of thinking of a scenario that seems to explain each observation. But these scenarios are often contradictory. The flexibility of the just-so story telling makes evolution effectively unfalsifiable.
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Two more late Ice Age megafloods discovered

Michael J. Oard

It took 40 years for mainstream geologists to accept the Lake Missoula flood, despite hundreds of pieces of obvious evidence.¹ The acceptance forced many geologists to shift from strict uniformitarianism (the reason they rejected the Lake Missoula flood in the first place) to believing in neo-catastrophism—the idea that the earth in rare instances does have huge catastrophes. The meteorite impact hypotheses for the extinction of the dinosaurs² and Ager's discovery that some sedimentary units were quickly laid down over hundreds of kilometers³ has reinforced the trend towards neo-catastrophism among mainstream geologists.

Numerous Ice Age megafloods

It is interesting that once the Lake Missoula flood was accepted in the 1960s, numerous other Ice Age megafloods have come to light. Geologists could not comprehend or see any evidence for these megafloods before the possibility entered their minds. Similar to the effect of the Ice Age megaflood controversy, I believe the worldview of mainstream scientists keeps them from seeing the copious evidence for the Genesis Flood in the rocks and fossils.

Some of the megafloods discovered include the Bonneville flood down the Snake River of southern Idaho and southeast Washington, caused by pluvial Lake Bonneville overspilling a low point in southeast Idaho with the top of the lake dropping over 100 m.⁴ A dammed glacial lake burst in the Altai Mountains of south central Siberia sending a huge flood on the scale of the Lake Missoula flood down the Chuja and Katun Rivers.⁵ The floor of the eastern English Channel is now believed to have been carved by the catastrophic drainage of a huge lake in the area of the southern

North Sea⁶ (figure 1). Two megafloods have been postulated,⁷ but, regardless, the flood/s probably severed England from mainline Europe.

Numerous Ice Age megafloods from glacial Lake Agassiz in central Canada have been claimed.⁸ These floods are believed to have flooded south down the Mississippi River, east through the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence Seaway, north into Hudson Bay and out into the North Atlantic, and northwest down the Mackenzie River and into the Arctic Ocean.

Glacial Lake Wisconsin was formed along the edge of the Green Bay Lobe of the Laurentide Ice Sheet. As the ice receded, the lake breached catastrophically and flowed down the Wisconsin River.⁹ This flood overtopped another ridge, creating what is now a water gap. Many water gaps were also formed during the Lake Missoula flood. Both of these floods provide analogs for the thousands of water gaps across the Earth caused by the channelized runoff of the Genesis Flood.¹⁰

These are only the well-established Ice Age megafloods. There is also the category of superfloods, around an order of magnitude larger, that supposedly flowed under the ice sheets and out the edge. The study of these superfloods has been pioneered by John Shaw of the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Shaw has published numerous papers linking unique landforms to subglacial floods.¹¹ Superfloods issuing from under the ice are also postulated for southwestern Russia and Antarctica. Subglacial superfloods are not popular with the majority of scientists, but the evidence for them seems substantial.¹²

Two new megafloods

Recently, at least two new megafloods have been added to the list. The first is actually an old one, but is now considered much larger based on new evidence. This is an outburst megaflood from glacial Lake Agassiz that swept northwest into the Mackenzie River and out into the Arctic Ocean.¹³

The second megaflood is one of several postulated to have spilled out