

Sulfur-cycling bacteria 1.8 billion years old the same as today

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Natural selection has been redefined from ‘survival of the fittest’ to differential reproduction. Accordingly, the organism with the most offspring is more fit and should evolve faster than those with few. If this were true, rapidly multiplying bacteria should have evolved far faster than the branch that led from amphibians to humans, which by comparison have few offspring.

Bacteria that do not change with time

In spite of evolutionary expectations some bacteria have not changed for billions of years. A formation in Western Australia claimed to be 1.8 Ga old contains fossilized sulfur-cycling bacteria.¹ These bacteria metabolically are fueled by seawater sulfate, meaning they can live in an anoxic zone. They are very similar to those found in another formation that is dated 2.3 Ga old. Contrary to evolutionary theory the sulfur-cycling bacteria are essentially *identical* with modern types:

“An ancient deep-sea mud-inhabiting 1,800-million-year-old sulfur-cycling microbial community from Western Australia is essentially identical both to a fossil community 500 million years older and to modern microbial biotas discovered off the coast of South America in 2007.”²

Claims of similarity are based on morphology, community structure, habitat features, and physiology inferred from the characteristics of the mineral deposits. This presents a conundrum for evolution. Why have the bacteria “remained fundamentally unchanged over billions of years?”³ Little or no change has also been noted with Precambrian cyanobacteria supposedly over billions of years.⁴

The researchers suggest that the stasis is because the environment had remained unchanged:

“Once subseafloor sulfur-cycling microbial communities had become established, however, there appears to have been little or no stimulus for them to adapt to changing conditions.”⁵

How likely is it that the environment remained the same for a few billion years? More to the point, how would the researchers know the environment did not change?

A confirmation of Darwin's null hypothesis?

This stasis is supposedly a ‘confirmation’ of Darwin’s null hypothesis that environments must change for evolution to take place. The authors admit that, “Although logically required, this aspect of evolutionary theory has yet to be established.”⁶ The authors then go on to admit the tenuous nature of their arguments by pointing out that evidence based on morphology does not say anything about relatedness at the genomic level.

Stasis is evidence for creation

Stasis of course is no surprise to creation scientists, even in a ‘changing environment’. Creation scientists would expect kinds to remain unchanged although variety within each kind would exist. In a recent book, Michael Denton states that the supposed evolution of at least

100,000 unique biological features had to occur rapidly. This is based on the fossil record in which the features suddenly appear with no ancestors. Then the fossil record shows amazing stasis once the feature has ‘evolved’.⁷ This is an interpretation with no evidence. Evolution is hypothetical while the real evidence shows supports creation with burial in the Flood and not evolution.

References

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