**WEIRD AND WONDERFUL**

The Skunk Cabbage

**GOD WAS PLEASED!**

Do you like painting or craft-work? When you finish painting a picture or making a model, you usually feel pleased with it. You may even finish painting a picture or making a model, and it was very good.” (Genesis 1: 31). Surely God must have really enjoyed creating everything, especially things like flowers and butterflies! And He also enjoyed creating us: “He made us in His image. We are creative because God is a Creator, and He made us in His image.

**Puzzle Answers**

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Chameleons (above) are masters of disguise. These amazing lizards can change colour very quickly to match their surroundings. On a tree-trunk or rock they can become brown, and among leaves turn green. Under their see-through skin there are layers of cells with yellow, blue, red and white colouring. These are mixed together to make different shades, much like the way an artist mixes paints on a palette. Underneath these layers is a brown layer, which is used to make the colours darker.

Chameleons can change from being green to dark brown — and all the colours in between. Scientists still don’t really understand how chameleons do it. They certainly don’t change colour by thinking about it. It seems that this ability to change colour so quickly is part of God’s design.

Flowers that fool insects

Many flowers depend on insects to pollinate them. Some orchids look and even smell like insects to attract pollinators. One of them is the Bumble-bee Orchid (left). This looks and smells so much like a female bumble-bee that male bumble-bees go to it, where they get dusted with pollen, which they then take to another flower. The Hammer Orchid (below) depends on just one kind of wasp to pollinate it, and the flowers look and smell like a female. They also have a special hinge. When a male wasp, looking for a mate, lands on the flower, the hinge (arrowed) tips the wasp forward, and dusts it with pollen, which is then taken to another orchid.

Evolutionists tell us that the orchids gradually evolved to look and smell like insects. This seems impossible. It makes more sense to believe that God created their amazing design.

Some insects have amazing disguises (known as mimicry), which help them avoid being eaten by birds. On the right (top to bottom) you see an insect that looks like a living leaf, one that is like a leaf with dead bits on it, another that is like a dead leaf, and one with false eyes, which would frighten birds away, since it would remind them of their own enemies — owls.

The caterpillar (below left) is also well disguised as a green stalk, and the stick insect (centre) looks just like a twig. Other insects, although they are harmless, look like stinging insects. Hover-flies are useful insects which eat pests called aphids, and many of them, like the one in the picture below (third right), look like wasps or hornets. This fools birds into thinking they will get stung if they eat them, so they leave them well alone.

The evolution theory says that these insects must have evolved to be the way they are over thousands of years. So leaf mimics gradually looked a little bit more like a leaf, until eventually their disguise was perfect. Can you really believe that these amazing imitations happened like that?

The water cycle is all part of God’s provision for His creation, and was mentioned in the Bible several thousand years ago — long before people understood it. “God takes the drops of water from the earth. And he turns them into drops of rain. Then the rain pours down from the clouds. And showers fall on people.” (Job 36:27-28) Let’s thank God for the rain. —Geoff Chapman

Please leave us alone!

Do you ever complain about rain? We often think we get too much, although people in many parts of the world would like a lot more. Without rain, plants wouldn’t grow, and we wouldn’t have any food. Our world has a wonderful system called ‘The water cycle.’ The power of the sun turns water from seas, lakes and rivers into invisible water vapour or steam — this is called evaporation. The vapour rises into the air, where it forms clouds. When the clouds cool, the vapour condenses into raindrops, which fall back to earth as rain. If it is very cold, the water vapour may freeze to make snow crystals, and raindrops sometimes freeze to become hail-stones. When the rain, snow or hail reach the earth, the whole cycle begins again.

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NATURE NOTES by the editor

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Take the first letter of each object to spell a Bible verse about what God did

1. Moth, ant, spider, locust.
2. Shark, dolphin, tuna, cod.
4. Parrot, bat, crow, eagle.
5. Toad, crocodile, iguana, snake.
7. Cow, pig, hedgehog, sheep.

(Answers on the next page)