

## Editorial

PAUL GARNER

Our second issue of *e-Origins* deals with some matters of debate and controversy within young-age creationism. In the last three decades a series of discoveries have been made of dinosaurs with feathers or feather-like coverings, many of them from fossil deposits in China. These discoveries have been greeted with suspicion by many creationists, who see them as giving support to the evolutionary idea that birds are the modified descendants of theropod dinosaurs. The critics have proposed instead that these animals are dinosaurs with decayed soft tissues that only superficially resemble feathers, or that they are not dinosaurs at all but rather extinct types of flightless birds. However, there is growing evidence that feathered dinosaurs really did exist and in our first article vertebrate palaeontologist Matthew McLain reviews this evidence. He argues that feathered dinosaurs pose no threat to the creationist model of origins and that, far from denying their existence, we should instead be trying to understand what they can tell us about God's design blueprint for the biological world.

Another contentious area within creationism concerns the interpretation of tree rings, and especially their use in constructing chronologies. North American bristlecone pines have received much of the attention, but oaks have been similarly used in Europe. Cross-matching the ring patterns from living trees to dead trees allows researchers to extend tree-ring chronologies far back into the past. However, these chronologies present a problem for young-age creationism, given that they appear to go back beyond the biblical date of the Flood, and even the date of Creation, according to the widely accepted Masoretic text of Scripture. Robert Porter has been investigating these and related issues for many years and in our second article he explains the methodology and some of the challenges it presents. Although there are no easy answers, he suggests some possible avenues for further research that may lead us to a deeper understanding of the tree-ring data in a biblical context.

The final contribution in this issue is by your editor and is a review of a major book critiquing theistic evolution from philosophical, scientific and theological perspectives. This review article was originally published in *Evangelical Times* and is reprinted here by permission of the editor. However, our version includes the endnotes

and references that were omitted when it first appeared.

We hope you enjoy reading these articles. Do remember that we are open to future contributions that fall within our journal's remit. Our focus is on positive creation model-building – we are looking for articles based on scholarly work but written in a way that is accessible to non-experts. We pay our authors for accepted contributions, so why not contact us if you have an idea for an article? Our author guidelines are available on the journal home page.

### AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

**Paul Garner** is a full-time Researcher and Lecturer for Biblical Creation Trust. He has an MSc in Geoscience from University College London, where he specialised in palaeobiology. He is a Fellow of the Geological Society of London and a member of several other scientific societies. His first book, *The New Creationism: Building Scientific Theories on a Biblical Foundation*, was published by Evangelical Press in 2009.

