Arthropods supposedly invaded land 40 million years earlier

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Researchers claim they have pushed back the appearance of arthropods on land by 40 million years within the uniformitarian timescale.[1] This event supposedly took place in the Late Cambrian–Early Ordovician, 500 million years ago. They base this deduction on 25 rows of footprints (Figure 1) of a lobster-sized centipede-like creature that is estimated to be 50 cm long. The animal is supposed to have had 16–22 legs and possibly dragged its tail, based on linear grooves in the trackways. The tracks were found in a quarry near Kingston, Ontario, Canada. This new find suggests to the evolutionists that animals may have taken to the land from the sea much earlier than once thought.[2]

Previously the oldest evidence of arthropods tracks was from the Middle Ordovician. Body fossils of arthropods, however, are not found until the late Silurian, about 400 million years ago. It is an evolutionary paradox why there are no body fossils of arthropods during this 100 million year period. Maybe this 100 million year period never existed!

It is interesting that the evolutionists keep pushing back the earliest onset of various organisms.[3] However, in this case, I would say it is based on questionable criteria. The trackways were marked on sand that was previously designated as subaqueous sediment. Similar tracks occur in marine sediments that are said to be only a little younger than the Ontario outcrop.[4] Although covered by marine strata, MacNaughton and colleagues claimed the sandstone was aeolian (caused by wind).[2] They base this conclusion on the thickness of the sandstone and its laterally extensive bedsets containing simple cross-bedding. The sand particles are also subrounded to well rounded, of high sphericity, and commonly show frosted surfaces. This analysis is based on simple uniformitarian deductions from modern sand dunes. It is of course harder to analyze underwater sand dunes and sheets. One problem with the aeolian interpretation is that some of the trackways are very well preserved. How can such preservation occur in dry sand?

This reinforces the idea that paleoenvironmental interpretations (which seem to change with time) are questionable. They are often based on simple uniformitarian assumptions ignoring even the possibility of a global Flood.[5–8]

The interpretation of sandstones as being of terrestrial or subaqueous origin is controversial. There is evidence that some assumed aeolian sandstones, such as the Coconino sandstone of Grand Canyon, were formed underwater.[9] The aeolian interpretation ignores the possibility that the violence of the Flood could have produced large cross beds along with the special features of the

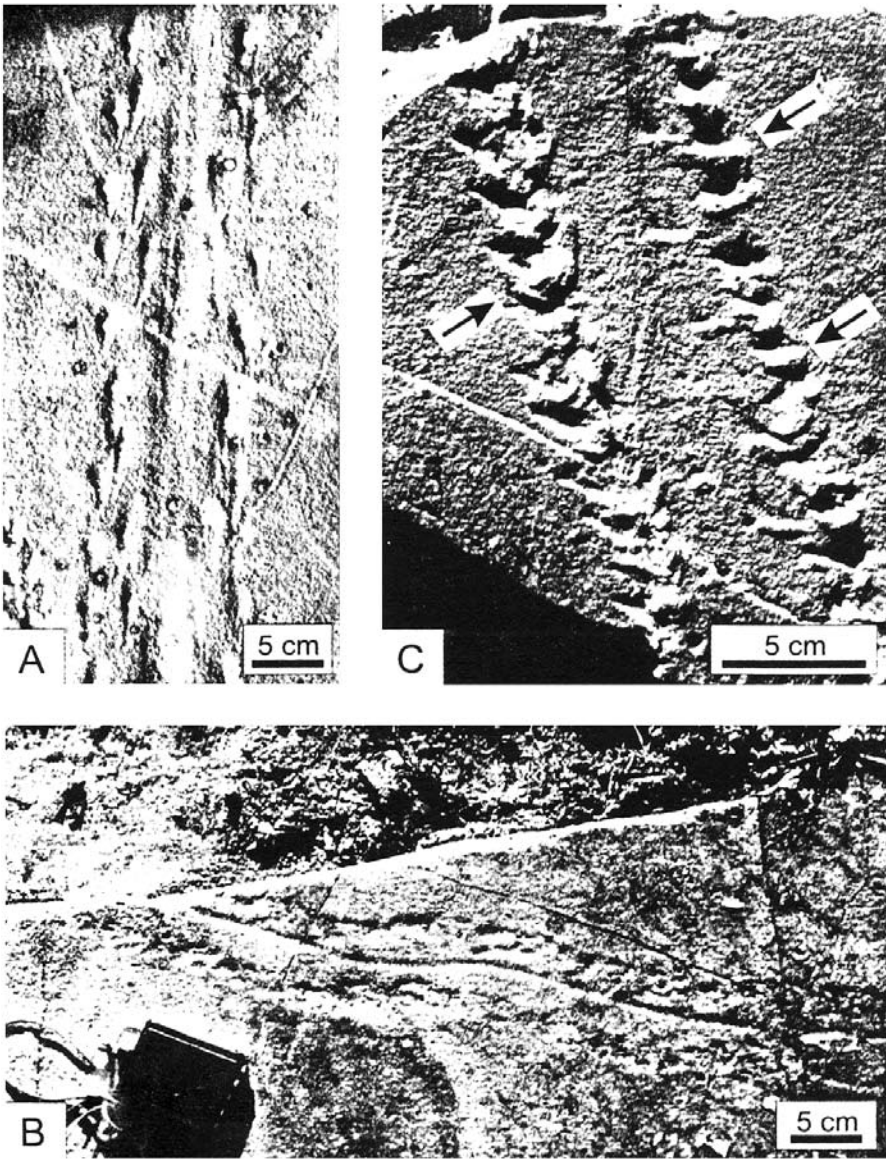

Figure 1. *Field photographs of representative trackways. Scale bars represent 5 cm. A: Trackway with central drag and well-defined appendage marks. Bottom surface. B: Trackway with central drag and poorly defined appendage marks. Top surface. Surface dips to top of photograph; note downdip offset of central drag. C: Robust trackway with well-developed appendage marks and no central drag. Note push-ups of sand (arrows) associated with appendage impressions (from* MacNaughton et al.*).*[1]

sand grains. The paleoenvironmental interpretation of a terrestrial or a subaqueous environment makes quite a difference to subsequent interpretations. In this case, it led to the deduction that arthropods conquered the land much earlier.

However, this reinterpretation comes with an evolutionary price because the new discovery runs counter to other evolutionary deductions. One of these deductions is that there was nothing for an arthropod to eat on land except algal mats. Vegetation had not yet evolved by the Late Cambrian–Early Ordovician, according to the evolutionists.[2] To get around the problem of these creatures being 'too old' to live on land, it is suggested that the creatures lived in the sea but ventured ashore to mate, lay eggs, escape predators, or eat the algae. However, this contradicts standard evolutionary thinking that animals colonized the land to eat the leaves of plants.[2] Oh well; there is always a new evolutionary story to be told to fit the winds of paleoenvironmental interpretations.

References

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