

THIS WEEK'S CREATION MOMENT

Frog Pharmacists



He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. (Matthew 13:22)

Some frogs are regular little drug factories. Their skins produce a wide range of powerful alkaloids, which are a large family of chemicals usually produced by plants. Familiar alkaloids include quinine, caffeine and morphine. Different alkaloids have different effects, usually on the nervous system.

The poison-arrow frog may be the most famous alkaloid-producing frog. South American natives simply rub their arrows or darts on the frog's back. One species of this frog contains enough poison to kill 100 people! Another frog, native to Ecuador, produces an anesthetic more powerful than morphine. South American natives rub another frog on their wounds. Researchers discovered that the frog's skin makes a powerful antiseptic. Yet another frog alkaloid will change the colors on parrot feathers. Some of the alkaloids produced by frogs are so complex that it takes years of study, using modern science's most sophisticated equipment, to discover the active chemical.

Researchers in this field are only beginning to learn about the alkaloids produced by frogs. They have yet to research a frog that natives claim to use to heighten their senses for the hunt. What puzzles scientists who believe in evolution is that the frogs' exotic skin chemistries don't follow the patterns they anticipated based upon expected evolutionary relationships.

This means that these frogs have one more exciting purpose. They provide evidence against evolution and for the Creator.

Ref: Pennisi, Elizabeth. 1992. "Pharming frogs." Science News, v. 142, July 18. p. 40. Photo: Blue Poison Dart frog. (PD)

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