

CREATION MOMENTS

Proclaiming Evidence for Truth

THIS WEEK'S CREATION MOMENT

Lima Bean Self Defense



May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you... (Psalm 20:1)

You may not think of plants as being intelligent on any level since it appears that they just sort of sit in the soil and grow. However, we have done a few Creation

Moments programs on plants that try to poison or repel a predator. Now we will see that the lima bean employs an even more sophisticated defense strategy that not only warns surrounding lima beans of the attack, but also calls in defenders.

Anyone who has ever worked with plants is familiar with spider mites. There are many varieties, but one of the most dangerous to the lima bean is the two-spotted spider mite. These mites inject their saliva into a plant's tissues, dissolving them. One of the mites' biggest enemies is a carnivorous mite that feeds on these two-spotted mites. These carnivorous mites are small and travel wherever the winds carry them. When two-spotted mites attack a lima bean, the plant sends out a special chemical signal. When this distress signal reaches surrounding lima beans, they, too, begin to send the signal even though they are not under attack. The signal carries several messages to different species. Spider mites not on the plant being attacked are repelled from the area. On the other hand, any carnivorous mites that drift into the area will stay to feed on the two-spotted spider mites. As a result, the lima bean defends itself by sending specific messages to three different species!

The lima bean's intelligent defense strategy is difficult for evolutionists to explain. It is easily accounted for by a Creator Who cares about all His creatures.

Ref: Bombardier Beetles and Fever Trees, William Agosta, 1997, pp. 28-30. Photo: Female spider mite by Gilles San Martin. (CC BY SA 2.0)

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