

The Carbon Dating Game

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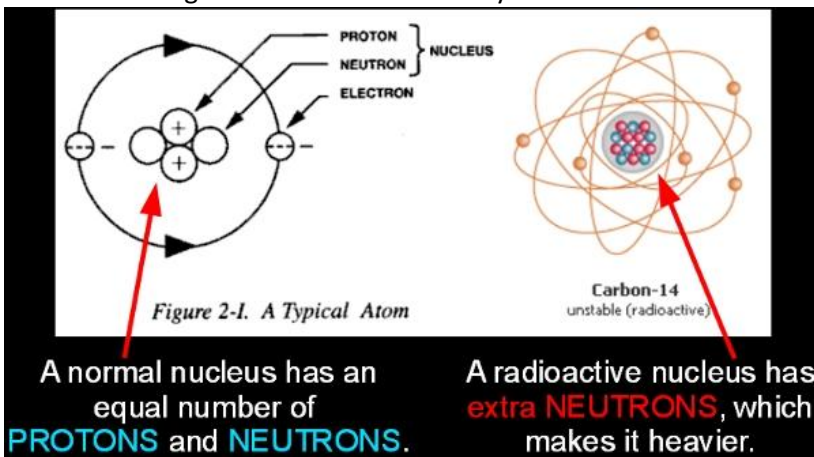
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In 1950, Willard F. Libby invented Carbon dating, winning a Nobel Prize (chemistry) for it in 1960. Since then, in the public schools of America, we are generally taught that carbon dating is a measurement used to accurately record the dates of creatures and artifacts. More specifically, the implication is given, in textbooks and other media sources, that carbon dating is proof for evolution, due to the claim that if things were dated longer than 6,000 years, then the Bible cannot be true.

Many people, who do not understand how carbon dating works and the assumptions it's based on, believe that it is valid because they were told so in classrooms and on TV. This article is designed to help Christians gain some insight into carbon dating, where it came from, how it works, and why it is unreliable.

How does carbon dating work?

Our Earth's atmosphere is made up of 78% Nitrogen, 21% Oxygen, (approx.) .06% Carbon Dioxide, and the remainder is mixed random gases. There are some very small traces of Carbon 14 (C14), which is called a radioactive isotope.



isotope: any of two or more forms of a chemical element, having the same number of protons in the nucleus, or the same atomic number, but having different numbers of neutrons in the nucleus
radioactive isotope: an isotope having an unstable nucleus that decomposes spontaneously
(See 'isotope' Random House Dictionary, ©Random House, 2010; See also Collins English Dictionary, 10th Edition, 2009 ©William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979)

So put simply, C14 (Carbon 14) is a heavier, radioactive atom than normal carbon.

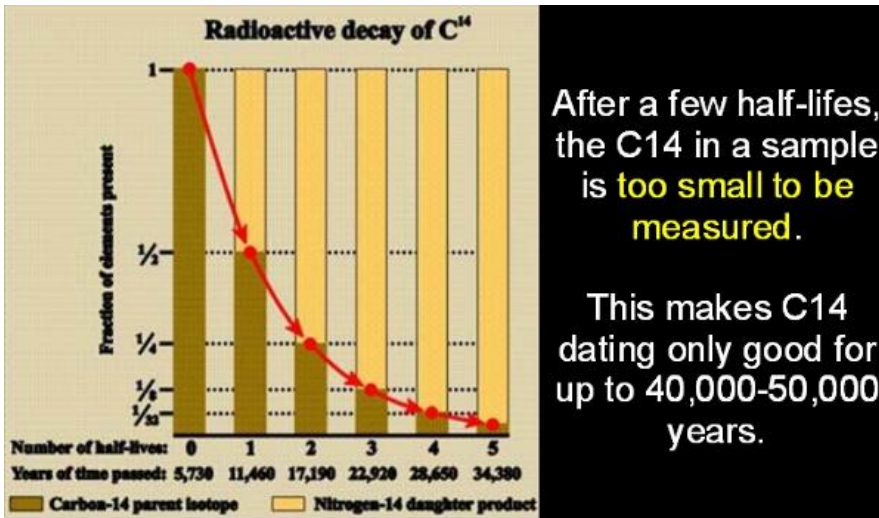
Carbon has an atomic weight of 12. Nitrogen has an atomic weight of 14.

boron 5 B 10.811	carbon 6 C 12.011	nitrogen 7 N 14.007
aluminium 13 Al	silicon 14 Si	phosphorus 15 P

C14 is produced from the radioactive energy of the sun's rays striking nitrogen in our atmosphere. Slowly, this radioactive carbon 14 breaks apart and decays back into normal nitrogen again.

The time it takes for radioactive material to break down to its normal state is called half-life. Carbon 14, for example, has a half-life of about 5700 years on average. That means that half of the radioactivity in the C14 will decay in that amount of time.

Once half of radioactive carbon is gone, half of that remaining radioactivity will decay in another 5700 years. Then that half of the half in another 5700 years, and so on. In theory, it never goes to zero, but the majority will eventually turn back into nitrogen again.



Plants breathe in carbon dioxide, so they will take in small traces of C14. Animals eat the plants, and make it part of their body, so they also take in small traces of C14. So since you eat plants, or you eat animals that eat plants, you will have very tiny traces of C14 in your body as well. These small traces can be detected with a Geiger Counter, which are used to detect radioactive material.

This is a demonstration of a Geiger counter being used on an old perfume bottle made in the 1800s with uranium glass that has small traces of radiation on it.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=TtXFiHAgzVM

The theory goes that if you test an object for C14, and it only has about half the amount of C14 known to be in the atmosphere (.00003825%), then that object has been dead for about 5700 years. If you find only 1/4th of the C14 in the object, it would have been through 2 half-lives, and would be approximately 11,400 years old, and so on.

No Measuring Standard for C14



Let's say you were going to find a consistent number of grasshoppers in the world -- how would you begin? You would literally have to be all places in the world at the same time in order to confirm the presence, or non-existence, of grasshoppers in all locations. If you cannot be omni-present, which would be required for such a feat, then all you can do is put a guess on the number.

One cannot even conceive of how such a task could be accomplished with mankind's limited ability, and that is for something we can see (e.g. grasshoppers), let alone what is invisible to the naked eye (e.g. radioactive carbon).

No consistent amount of C14 has ever been calculated in the atmosphere, nor is it possible for mankind to do such a thing without having a device that, at minimum, spanned the circumference of the atmosphere. All scientists can do, and all they have done, is test the carbon levels in a few areas of our atmosphere, and **ASSUME** everything else is the same.

This already creates a serious problem because all measuring tools require a constant with which to measure anything. For example, a ruler requires a constant inch with which to measure inches.



In the United States, we have a [National Institute of Standards](#) with which any company that develops a measuring tool can contact to get the standard measurements of an inch when they develop a ruler.

Let's say you and I was building framework for a house, but our tape measures were using two different standards for an inch. We wouldn't be able to complete the project because nothing would fit together properly.

Radioactive carbon, as mentioned earlier, forms in the atmosphere from radiation striking nitrogen, and that radiation is randomly introduced into the atmosphere. How could anyone keep track of that fluctuation? Also, I have had evolutionists personally tell me that it is impossible to know for sure because the earth's magnetic field fluctuation also effects how much radiation comes through the atmosphere, so there again, the constant for C14 in the atmosphere today is a complete uniformitarian assumption.

Plants Match the Nonexistence Standard?

We just logically demonstrated that there is no way to verify a constant rate of comparison for C14 in the atmosphere, and now, to build on that, the evolutionist also must **ASSUME** plants, animals, and people all match this nonexistent standard.

In addition, even if it were possible to test for a constant level of C14 in the air, it would not be possible to test and prove that all life had the exact same amount. This is why some really wild numbers have appeared:



A freshly killed seal was carbon dated to be 1300 years old.

-*Antarctic Journal*, Vol. 6, Sept-Oct, 1971, p. 211

Shells from living snails were carbon dated at 27,000 years old.

-*Science*, Vol. 224, 1984, p. 58-61



Evolutionists will argue that these wild dates come from a phenomenon of "old carbon" in the water on the ocean floor, but all that does is demonstrate that we cannot know for certain if the samples we get from carbon dating are contaminated from other sources we are not aware of at this time. Again, it is all based on **ASSUMING** the C14 in the object being dated is the same as the C14 in the atmosphere when the creature dies, and we have no verification of this whatsoever, but it does help us demonstrate the evolutionists' presupposition, which most are content to continue believing in it despite the logical dissonance.

Nothing Has Changed in Millions of Years?

So we cannot determine a constant measuring standard, and we cannot verify that standard measurement in all life on earth, but now we get a uniformitarian assumption that even IF there was a standard, and IF we could verify all life for that standard, the evolutionist still **ASSUMES** C14 amounts and the half-life rate of C14 has been the same for thousands and millions of years. It is not possible that anyone could know that unless you travel back in time and get accurate measurements for things we cannot measure!

To demonstrate this concept more simplistically, let's scientifically analyze a candle and ask a few questions.

Let's imagine we walk into a room, a candle is burning on a table, we measure the candle, and find the candle is six inches tall. Can we determine when the candle was lit? Not without **ASSUMING** how tall the candle was before it was lit. We analyze the candle for a while, and determine that it is burning one inch per hour. Can we determine when the candle was lit? Not without **ASSUMING** how tall it was and if it has always burned at the same rate. Perhaps we can put together the melted wax and find out tall the candle was before it was lit? Even doing so, we must recognize some wax evaporates with the burning of the candle, irretrievably lost. Further still, we are **ASSUMING** that the wax we are analyzing is not from a different candle, and also **ASSUMING** that upper melted portion of the candle is the same shape as the rest of the candle we currently see burning on the table!

There is only one way to verify when that candle was lit: You have find the person who lit it and ask, or they must leave a note telling us how long ago it was lit. To determine the origin of something, we must refer to eye-witness accounts (aka historical evidence) because science is limited on what it can determine.

Likewise, evolutionists that rely on carbon dating must **ASSUME** how much C14 was there to begin with, they must **ASSUME** C14 has always burned at the same rate, and they must **ASSUME** the C14 can come from no other source except the one burning on the table in front of them.

Once viewed in this light (no pun intended :), it seems childish to make these assumptions without any credible historical

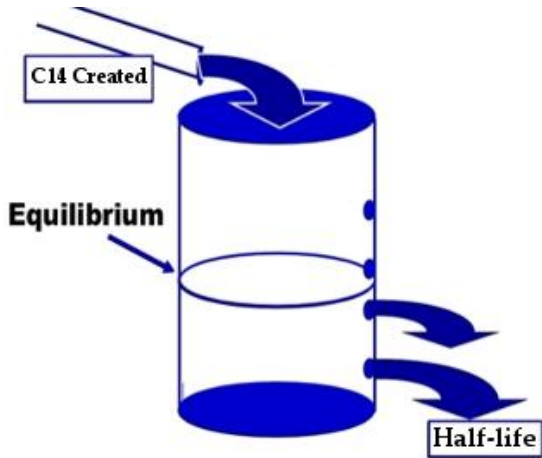
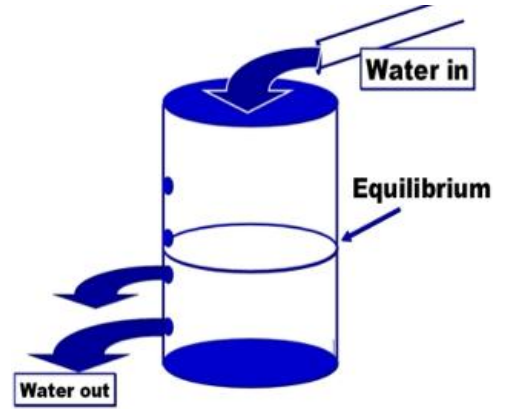
evidence backing it. The historical record God gives us is the main reason why the Biblical Christian model is far superior to any evolutionary interpretation.

C14 Shows Us the Earth is Young

To understand this section, we need to understand **equilibrium**:

If we turned on a garden hose and used that constant rate of water to fill up a barrel, but I drilled holes in the side of the barrel, the hose would begin to fill up the barrel, but as the water got higher, more of it would begin to leak out. At a certain point, the water level would stay in place unless we turn up the rate of water or plugged up the holes.

When the water reaches that steady state, it is called **equilibrium**.



C14 is continually being made by the sun's rays striking nitrogen (water pouring in), and continually decaying from the half-life mentioned earlier (water pouring out). C14 in the atmosphere would eventually reach equilibrium.

Willard Libby, the inventor of carbon dating, did some research on equilibrium in the atmosphere. He calculated that if you were to instantaneously create a new earth out of nowhere, and get it spinning around the sun, it would take approximately 30,000 years for the earth's atmosphere to reach equilibrium.

Based on the **ASSUMPTION** that the earth is billions of years old, Willard Libby, and most evolutionists since then, have ignored equilibrium question. It has recently been demonstrated that the earth's atmosphere has still not reached equilibrium.

"Radiocarbon is forming 28-37% faster than it is decaying."

-R.E. Taylor et al., "Major Revisions in the Pleistocene Age Assignments for North American Human Skeletons by C-14 Accelerator Mass Spectrometry," American Antiquity, Vol. 50, No. 1, 1985, p. 136-140

This not only indicates the earth to be less than 30,000 years old, it also shows us the earth is probably *much* less than 30,000 years because of the large increase. This gives more evidence of a young earth, and matches the Bible, which says God created the earth roughly 6000 years ago, but is rarely ever talked about because it's devastating to the evolutionary presupposition.

THE GEOLOGIC COLUMN			Typical fossils
Eras	Periods	Millions of Years Ago	
CEANOZOIC	QUATERNARY	2	Human, mammoth, bison
	TERTIARY	65	Dinosaur, mammoth, bison
MESOZOIC	CRETACEOUS	130	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth
	JURASSIC	180	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth
	TRIASSIC	225	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth
PALAEOZOIC	PERMIAN	275	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth
	CARBONIFEROUS	345	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth
	DEVONIAN	405	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth
	SILURIAN	435	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth
	ORDOVICIAN	480	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth
CAMBRIAN	600	Dinosaur, pterosaur, mammoth	
	PRE-CAMBRIAN		

Radiometric Dates are Cherry Picked

Since evolutionists are using a method of dating that is inconsistent and unreliable, **why does it appear that they get consistent dates?**

To answer that, we need to understand that radiometric dating is not actually used for dating, but for appearance. In reality, the geologic column is what is used for dating methods, so when evolutionist get a wide range of numbers, dates are cherry picked that match their preconceived time scale.

"Apart from very 'modern' examples, which are really archeology, I can think of no cases of radioactive decay being used to date fossils."

-Derek V. Ager, *New Science*, Vol 100, p 425

"Radiometric dating would not have been feasible if the geologic column had not been erected first."

-J.E. O'Rourke, quoted by Yale University Dept. of Geology and Geophysics, *The American Journal of Science*, Vol. 276, published J.D. & E.S. Dana, 1976, p. 54

(See Lies of Evolution: Geologic Column here at creaionliberty.com for more details)

Is he saying that the geologic column is what dates the rock and fossils, and not radiometric dating? That is *EXACTLY* what he's saying. This also applies to the other dating methods:

"In conventional interpretation of K-Ar (potassium-argon) age data, it is common to discard ages which are substantially too high or too low compared with the rest of the group or with other available data such as the geological time scale. The discrepancies between the rejected and the accepted are arbitrarily attributed to excess or loss of argon."

A. Hayatsu, "K-Ar Isochron Age of the North Mountain Basalt, Nova Scotia," *Canadian Journal of Earth Sciences*, Vol. 16, p. 974

Basically, they get a wide range of numbers all over the scale, they select the number they want based on how old they already think it is, publish those numbers based on the standard geologic column, and lead people to believe that radiometric dating has proven ages beyond what the Bible says. It's a sleight-of-hand magic trick the average person won't catch, and while I believe most evolutionists don't catch it themselves, there are some out there who know the public won't notice the illusion.

(See Lies of Evolution: K-Ar Dating here at creaionliberty.com for more details)

"If a C-14 date supports our theories, we put it in the main text. If it does not entirely contradict them, we put it in a footnote. And if it's completely 'out of date', we just drop it."

-T Save-Soderbergh and I. U. Olsson, "C-14 Dating and Egyptian chronology in Radiocarbon Variations and Absolute Chronology", Proceedings of the Twelfth Nobel Symposium, New York, 1970

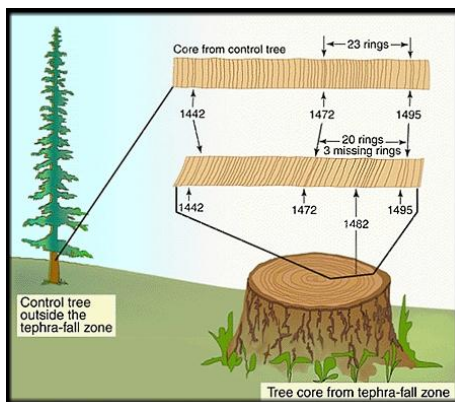
If it's completely out of date, out of date compared to what? See how they are not letting the dating method do the dating? It's all dated based on how old they already think it is from the geologic column that was made up by pure imagination.

"No matter how 'useful' it is, though, the radiocarbon method is still not capable of yielding accurate and reliable results. There are gross discrepancies, the chronology is uneven and relative, and the accepted dates are actually selected dates. This whole blessed thing is nothing but 13th-century alchemy, and it all depends upon which funny paper you read."*

-Robert E. Lee, *Radiocarbon: Ages in Error*, Anthropological Journal of Canada, Vol. 19(3), 1981, p. 9-29

If one is basing their eternity (questioning the accuracy of the Bible) on carbon dating, I highly suggest not doing that. It is a very flimsy theory and full of holes, just as the evolution theory itself. I admire the evolutionists' extraordinary faith to believe in something so frail, but I just don't have enough faith to believe in it. I will hold the Bible as my foundation over mankind's speculation.

Problems with Tree-Ring Dating



dendrochronology: the science dealing with the study of the annual rings of trees in determining the dates and chronological order of past events

(See 'dendrochronology' Random House Dictionary, Random House, 2010; See also Collins English Dictionary, 10th Edition, 2009 William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd.)

Here's how tree-ring dating works: A core-drill is used to get a small portion of the width of a tree, then the rings of the tree are counted. Each ring is supposed to count as a year, so if they count 100 rings, then the tree is supposed to be 100 years old.

This, however, **ASSUMES** the rings are "annual." That has never been proven. In fact, many trees throughout the world have been demonstrated to produce more than one ring per year.

(See: Dr. Gerald E. Aardsma, "Tree-Rings Dating and Multiple Growth Ring Per Year," *Creation Research Journal [CRSQ]*, Vol. 29, No. 4, March, 1993)

No one knows for sure why they produce more than one per year, but experiments seem to indicate changes in humidity levels cause the ring patterns. **Trees can produce more than one ring per year**, and sometimes produce only one ring in multiple years. In some cases, one ring can be equal to one year, but not in all cases.

(See: Dr. Duane T. Gish, Ph.D, "More Creationist Research, Part II: Biological Research" *Creation Research Journal [CRSQ]*, Vol. 26, No. 5, June, 1989)

The evolutionists will typically point to the bristle-cone pine tree as their evidence.

Bristle-cone pine's are a tangle, gnarled mess of tree. After seeing one of these trees, the first question anyone should ask is, "How do they get a core sample from this?" Where do you begin? Where do you end? I doubt anyone could prove that a particular core sample is accurate for a bristle-cone pine.



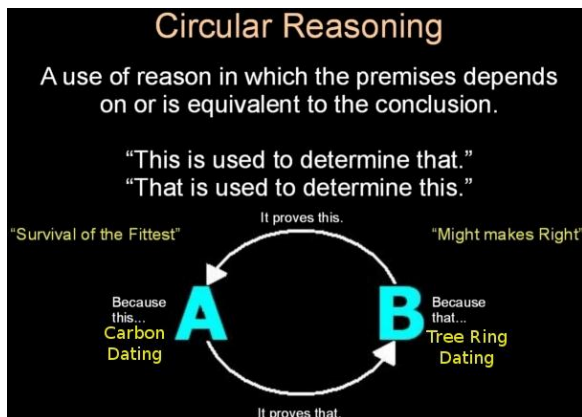
One bristle-cone pine, named "Methuselah" after the longest living man in the genealogy of the Bible, is located in the White Mountains in California, and considered to be the oldest living tree on the planet (4,789 yrs/rings, found in 1957). It's exact location is not made public to protect the tree from potential vandalism.

(See Donald Bain, "Explore the Methuselah Grove," *NOVA Online: Methuselah Tree*, PBS, 2001)

Though trees have been known to produce multiple rings per year, it is said by many evolutionists that the bristle-cone pine never produces more than one ring per year. That is, *as far as they know*. To make the claim that bristle-cone pines have never produced more than one ring per year, is to claim absolute knowledge of the tree over the past few thousand years. There would be no way to prove the climate of the area in which they grow has always remained the same. There would be no way to prove the tree itself has not produced more than one ring per year at any point in the past 4,000 years. They **ASSUME** the tree rings are annual at all points.

Dr. Walter E. Lammerts, Ph.D in genetics, ran experiments in Freedom, California that demonstrated **bristle-cone pines can produced extra rings in a year based on the humid/dry climate changes**. It would be a very large leap of faith to assume only one ring per year for thousands of years of undocumented climate in the White Mountains.

(See: "Are the Bristle-cone Pine Trees Really so Old?", *Creation Research Journal [CRSQ]*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Sept, 1983)



Why would evolutionists go so far to make this assumption and have it taught as fact? Because there are many of them that know carbon dating is flawed, and they need something to verify the selected dates. However, this creates a circular reasoning problem.

Tree-ring dating, just like carbon dating, is based on basic fundamental **ASSUMPTIONS**. So this assumption proves that assumption, and that assumption proves this assumption. It's another form of circular reasoning. Scientists have no verifiable way to tell for sure how old any tree is without direct observation from birth, and assumptions made in carbon dating are no help to the problem.

Problems with Ice-Core Dating

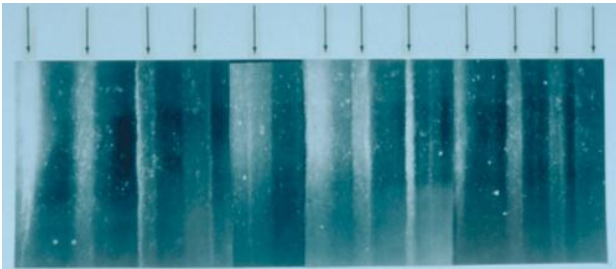
The [US National Ice Core Laboratory](#) drills down through thick layers of ice in places like Greenland and the South Pole. They retrieve core samples at these locations and bring them back.



"An ice core from the right site can contain an uninterrupted, detailed climate record extending back hundreds of thousands of years."

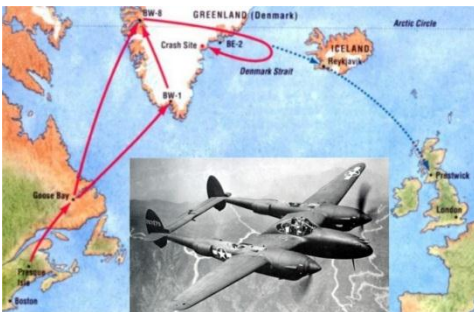
-Quote from NICL government website -- <http://nicl.usgs.gov/why.htm>

The ice cores contain many rings, just like a tree ring core sample. In the summer time, some ice is melted, becomes soft, and compacts. Then it refreezes in the winter and forms a distinct layer. The evolutionists make one big mistake: They **ASSUME** the ice core rings are "annual" rings.



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These rings/layers are called glacial firn. Firn is partially compacted snow and ice that's been recrystallized. However, it doesn't take an entire year for this process to happen. There are many places on the earth where many layers can be laid down in a matter of weeks, depending on the climate changes.



Let's take a look at an example:

In WWII, 1942, a group of P38 airplanes (Germans called them the "Fork-tailed Devil") heading from American to England got caught in a storm, and were forced to emergency land in Greenland. The first plane came in with the wheels down and flipped the plane over due to rough ice. The other planes were advised to belly-land without their wheels. After two weeks, the soldiers

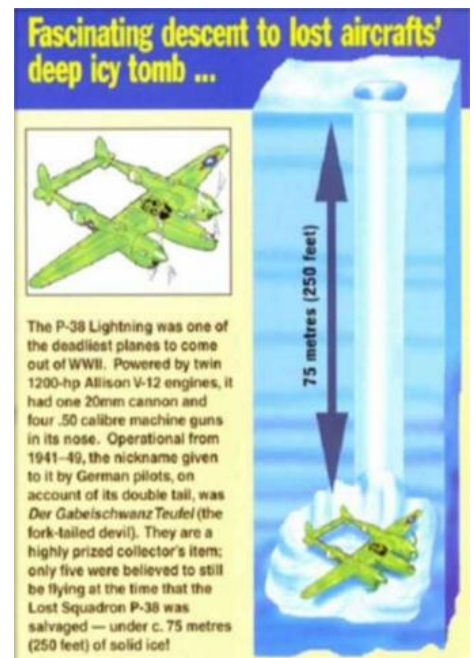
were rescued, and the planes were left behind because it would have been too costly to retrieve them from those harsh conditions. Today, these planes are commonly known as "The Lost Squadron."



In 1990, 50 years later, a man from Kentucky wanted to go get those airplanes and restore them. He suspected they would be sitting on top of the ice, waiting for someone to come pick

them up, but the retrieval turned out to be a bit more complicated.

Using ground penetrating radar, the planes were located 3 miles from where they originally landed because of the movement of the glacier. In less than 50 years, they were trapped underneath 263 feet of ice.

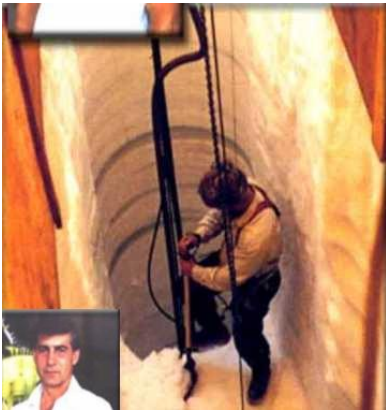


"In **Greenland** and Antarctic, where the weather is consistently dry and very cold, the glaciers are miles thick but the annual rings are very thin. The deepest cores can measure over **10,000 feet**... cores from Greenland drilled since 1990 show the northern climate was erratic... **135,000 years ago**."

-*Creation ex Nihilo*, June-Aug, 1997, p. 10

The Lost Squadron accumulated 263 ft. of ice in 48 years. That comes out to an average of 5.5 feet per year. If you have a 10,000 foot ice core sample, divided at that same rate, you only have about 1800 years, not 135,000.

Bob Cardin is one of the men that helped dig out the P38 fighter planes. In an interview, he reported at 62 feet down, they pulled up pieces of plywood where another team, in 1983, tried to dig out the planes. That comes out to about 8 feet per year. He also reported that **they dug through many hundreds of layers of ice as they went through 260 feet to get the planes.**



-Interview with Bob Cardin, by Dr. Kent Hovind, Middleboro, KY, April 18, 2001

If those were "annual" layers, there should have been 48 layers in 48 years. There were many hundreds of layers because those layers are *NOT* annual layers. The National Ice Core Laboratory has been informed of this data proving that their ice core dating is incorrect, but they still insist that the layers are "annual," because they are a tax-funded institution that is unable to publish anything that puts a black mark on the evolutionary religion.

Final Thoughts and Additional Reading

Though most evolutionists do not make the claim that carbon dating proves evolution, much of the public thinks this is true because they publish dates greater than 6,000 years, which would be more time than accounted for in the Bible. However, this method of "selective dating" only masks the truth: No radiometric dating method can be relied upon because it's all based on the geologic column, which is pretty much the bible for the evolutionist, created out of the imagination of Charles Lyell back in the early 19th century.

You may find some people unwilling to listen to any argument against carbon dating, making a statement like, "*The scientists would have seen what you are talking about -- I'm sure they can explain it,*" but that statement **ASSUMES** that a scientist cannot make a mistake because they have a degree and a labcoat. I'm not kidding, it's that bad; most evolutionists **ASSUME** another evolutionist can explain their **ASSUMPTIONS**, and **they take that on complete faith!** We need to put our foundation on a secure foothold, like the eternal security of Christ's Words, before we are crushed by the tower of assumptions created by faith in men.

(See "Why Are Christians Respecters of Persons?" here at creationliberty.com for more details)

If you would like to get more information on this topic, here are some suggested materials to help you get started:

Bones of Contention: A Creationist Assessment of Human Fossils, Marvin L. Lubenow
Baker Books, 2004, ISBN: 9781585581573