



## A New Mechanism Discovered for Preserving Soft Tissue

Stephen Mitchell

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Email: [Jesus.inHistandS@gmail.com](mailto:Jesus.inHistandS@gmail.com)

A favorite claim by Young Earth Creationists (YEC) is that the finding of apparent soft-tissue in dinosaur bones proves that they cannot actually be millions of years old. It is a fact that scientists were surprised to learn that tiny fragments of material have been found that preserve the original soft tissue in amazing detail. Does such a discovery trump all of the other evidence that indicate that the Earth is ancient? That is a very tall order.

When initial announcements of finding apparent bone tissue and blood cells were made, paleontologists really had no explanation for how such tissue could be preserved. YEC jumped on this and claimed that because the scientists had no explanation at that time, no explanation could exist. History has not been very kind to this sort of “god of the gaps” argument. This seems to be another case of this.

Things have changed since those initial days where no explanations were available, Several explanations are now recognized (Senter 2022). In fact, another was announced this week. As the image shows here, MIT scientists have discovered that collagen can develop a type of “armor” that protects it from water that normally breaks it down. (Trafton 2024; Yang et

al. 2024). This adds to the list of mechanisms that are recognized that can enable fragments of soft tissue to be preserved over geologic timeframes.

How long can soft tissue be preserved? No one knows. We should all agree that in most cases it will not last more than a few hundred years. YEC typically say that dinosaur bones were buried by Noah's flood approximately 4350 years ago. Soft tissue would not last that long without some mechanism to sequester the cells. How long would these mechanisms work? They imply that it couldn't be much longer than it has so far but don't have data to support this. Some other tool is needed to measure the ages. Geologists and archaeologists use a number of methods, but the most important are radiometric methods. YEC typically throw them all out when they indicate ages that conflict with their interpretation of the Bible. Nevertheless, they have not been able to provide any scientific technique that provides data to support their view.

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### **Additional resources for both Young Earth and normal scientific views.**

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