

Plesiosaurs – What If?
By Greg Neyman
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www.answersincreation.org/plesiosaur.htm

I wish I had a dollar for every time I heard that there are dinosaurs living today! This common claim is so rampant in young earth creationism circles that I would be a millionaire! But wait a minute...what if they are right! What about all those claims for living plesiosaurs...the Loch Ness Monster, the Lake Champlain Monster, and others. Kent Hovind, in his seminar on dinosaurs, says these reports of modern day plesiosaurs prove that dinosaurs are alive today!

Is this true? If these claims are true, are dinosaurs alive today? The simple answer is no. You see, plesiosaurs are not dinosaurs. Plesiosaurs are of the Superorder Sauropterygia, a class of marine reptiles, and dinosaurs are of the Superorder Dinosauria. The chart below diagrams the classification.

- **Subclass** Ornithodira (dinosaurs and pterosaurs)
- **Superorder** Dinosauria (dinosaurs)
- **Order** Saurischia and Ornithischia (based on hip structure)

The dinosaurs and pterosaurs are grouped together at the subclass level because it is thought that they had a common ancestor. However, all dinosaur species are in their own superorder, separate from the marine reptiles. There is a vast difference between dinosaurs and the Sauropterygia. All dinosaurs dwelled on land, and none of them lived in water.

Therefore, if a live plesiosaur were found today, it would not be proof that a living dinosaur exists today...it would be proof that a living marine reptile, once thought to be extinct, was still alive (a Living Fossil...see www.answersincreation.org/livingfossil.htm). Naturally, young earth creationists would jump on this, and claim dinosaurs were alive, but this would not be the truth.

Is there a chance that there are live plesiosaurs today? Sure, anything is possible. While there are many tales of sightings, there is no solid evidence. That does not mean they do not exist. When considering the extinction event that killed the dinosaurs 65 million years ago, the marine reptiles would have had a better chance at survival. However, you may be asking why we have no plesiosaur fossils during the Tertiary period, from 65 million years ago to 11,000 year ago. Good question...one that is unanswered. Even though this question cannot be answered, it does not improve the young earth argument...it simply means that there are no fossils of plesiosaurs younger than 65 million years. An argument from a lack of evidence is an empty argument.

I would rejoice at the discovery of a live plesiosaur...but it would not be proof of a young earth. It would be evidence taken out of context with the rest of science. It would be a piece of straw in the young earth creationists hand, yet the young earth creationist would be ignoring the stack of hay where it came from, which contains millions of straws.

To Learn more about Plesiosaurs, visit <http://www.plesiosaur.com/index.htm>.