

# SCIENCE & YOU

VISIBLE CREATION SHOWING US THE INVISIBLE GOD

Every four years, athletes from all over the world compete to represent their nations in the Olympic Games. The games originally began in Greece where athletes competed in events such as boxing and wrestling. The modern Olympic Games have today become a forum for national pride in addition to a celebration of athletic achievement. The winners of the Olympic Marathon race set the standard for endurance and dedication for all Olympic athletes. Running the 26 miles 385 yards takes incredible determination and aerobic conditioning. Such top Olympic runners must train for years to reach this elite level.

As impressive as human athletic achievements are, one does not have to look very hard to find examples of incredible endurance among the birds, feats no human could match. Take, for example, the Pacific Golden Plover<sup>1</sup>. This small bird sets out each winter on an 88-day non-stop migration from the Arctic Circle to Hawaii. It is a non-swimmer and does not rest or sleep during its migration, losing 50% of its body weight during the journey. Even more incredibly, the Plover's chicks mature in the Arctic and make exactly the same migration after its parents, but without instruction in navigation over the open ocean where an error of only one degree would cause them to miss their destination. Whether the Plover uses the sun or stars or both to guide it is not known.

The Robin covers about 40 miles a day during its migration, a distance few people could cover in one day unassisted, let alone for 78 days in a row as the Robin does. In experiments with homing birds taken from their home range and released, the Lesser Yellowlegs covered the 1900 miles between Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and their island home of Martinique in just six days. An average of 316 miles per day<sup>2</sup>!

The physical stamina and aerobic efficiency of birds that migrate up to seven thousand miles is impressive enough. But add to this the ability to navigate to precise locations over unfamiliar ground, or "home in" on a familiar location from thousands of miles away. One begins to wonder how an evolutionary process could "create" these abilities. It stretches the limits of credibility to believe that undirected chance mechanisms of evolution produced the organs and systems which birds need for long distance migrations, let alone the pre-programmed knowledge of how to use the sun, stars or landmarks to navigate to a place they have never seen before. Since birds don't acquire the physical or navigational abilities for migration by practice and learning, isn't it more plausible that these abilities are a result of intentional, conscious design rather than undirected chance?

In bird migration we come to appreciate that God understands distance, time, and physical needs for survival, as well as how to use the sun, moon and stars as navigational signs. If He programs birds to fly with such endurance, can He not also help us to "run with endurance the race set before us"? (Heb. 12:1).

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1 Martin J. *Incredible Creatures that Defy Evolution II*. ExplorationFilms.com

2 Tyne J, AJ Berger. *Fundamentals of Ornithology*. John Wiley & Sons, 1976, pp. 362-363.

