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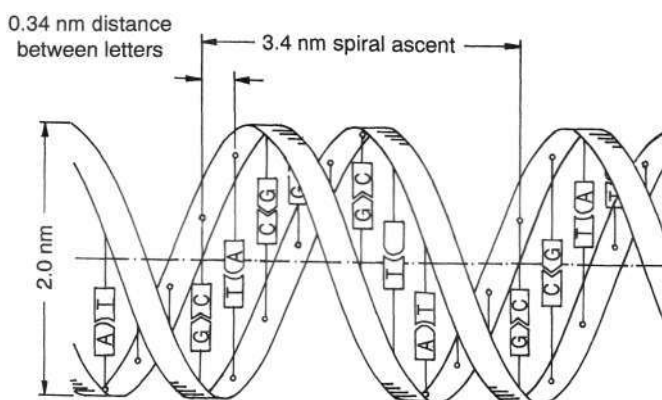
J. D. Sarfati

## 'Junk' DNA (Again)

When introns were discovered, some evolutionists suggested that these represented 'junk' DNA. Introns, as well as other sequences which did not code for protein, were considered to be left-overs of evolutionary ancestry — 'vestigial' DNA.

History has shown the foolishness of rushing to the 'vestigial' argument. Well over 100 organs in the human body were pronounced as useless left-overs of evolution at one stage, but the list has shrunk to almost zero as research has revealed the functions.<sup>1</sup>

Little by little, the so-called 'junk' DNA is revealing its functions.<sup>2</sup> In a further revelation, researchers have found that mutations in an intron interfere with imprinting, the process



The structure and dimensions of the DNA molecule.

by which only certain maternal or paternal genes are expressed, not both. Expression of both genes results in a variety of diseases and cancers.<sup>34</sup> The discovered intron segment in some way promotes the transcription of an antisense-RNA sequence which is involved in suppressing the expression of the paternal gene in this case.

The burgeoning field of molecular biology continues to reveal unimagined complexity in the biochemistry of cells. It would be foolish indeed to pronounce anything as 'junk'. Like the 'vestigial organs' idea, it seems that evolutionary ideas about the molecular machines in cells feed on lack of knowledge.

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D. J. Batten

## Bird-Dinosaur Link Challenged

Most palaeontologists not only believe that birds evolved from dinosaurs, they have also convinced themselves that '*Birds are dinosaurs*'.<sup>1</sup> Kevin Padian and Paul Olsen assert:

*'The footprints of ratites should be of special interest to dinosaurian paleontologists because birds are*

*living dinosaurs. Their origin from Mesozoic coelurosaurian theropods is now beyond reasonable dispute. . . . By cladistic convention, birds must be classified as theropod dinosaurs because they evolved from theropod dinosaurs.*<sup>2</sup>

Theropods are small, bipedal carnivorous dinosaurs. This conventional view has reinforced the belief that *Archaeopteryx* is a feathered dinosaur. Cladistics has shown a number of morphological similarities between birds and theropod dinosaurs, such as the similarity in limb structure,