



PART I: THE CREATED WORLD

# BARA-WHAT?

by Todd Charles Wood



IMAGINE ADAM'S WONDER AS HE BEHELD THE FIRST CATTLE, BIRDS, AND BEASTS OF THE FIELD. HIS FIRST TASK WAS TO NAME EACH KIND OF CREATURE HE SAW. BUT WHAT WERE THOSE ORIGINAL "KINDS" (*min* IN HEBREW) AND WHAT DO THEIR DESCENDANTS LOOK LIKE TODAY? THE DESIRE TO CLASSIFY MODERN CREATURES — BASED ON THE ORIGINAL CREATED KINDS — HAS SPAWNED A NEW FIELD OF BIOLOGY KNOWN AS BARAMINOLOGY.

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ABOVE: Tigers, penguins, and hippos are among the created "kinds" that have been recently studied by baraminologists.

At the culmination of Creation Week, God created Adam, and Adam gave names to “all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field” (Genesis 2:20, KJV). Giving names to things seems to be very important in God’s plan. It’s a token of authority and a sign of personal knowledge about the object named.

God first showed His power and authority by naming the things He created, such as “day” and “night” and “earth” and “seas.” Then God let Adam share that power through his own naming. By naming the animals, Adam exercised his position as the image of God on earth. Today, we still discover new things, like Adam, and

we exercise our authority as images of God by naming these things.

What exactly did Adam name? Did he name them all individually (such as Stephanie, Roger, Connie), or did he give them category names (such as cat, dog, bear)? We know that it didn’t take very long, since God made Eve after Adam finished naming. It would be hard to name every individual animal and bird in only one day. Also, when Adam named Eve, he called her “woman” (Genesis 2:23), suggesting that on the day he was created, Adam gave category names rather than personal names.

As a biologist, the next question that occurs to me is what categories

did Adam name? Based on Genesis 2:20, it sounds like he named several subcategories under the three larger categories of “cattle,” “fowl of the air,” and “beasts of the field.” What were these subcategories?

Genesis 1 may give a clue. When God created creatures, He created them “according to their kind.” I suspect that Adam named the same groups, the “kinds,” mentioned in chapter one. I find it very interesting that God stopped naming things Himself when He started creating “according to their kind.” I think He was saving that naming job for Adam.

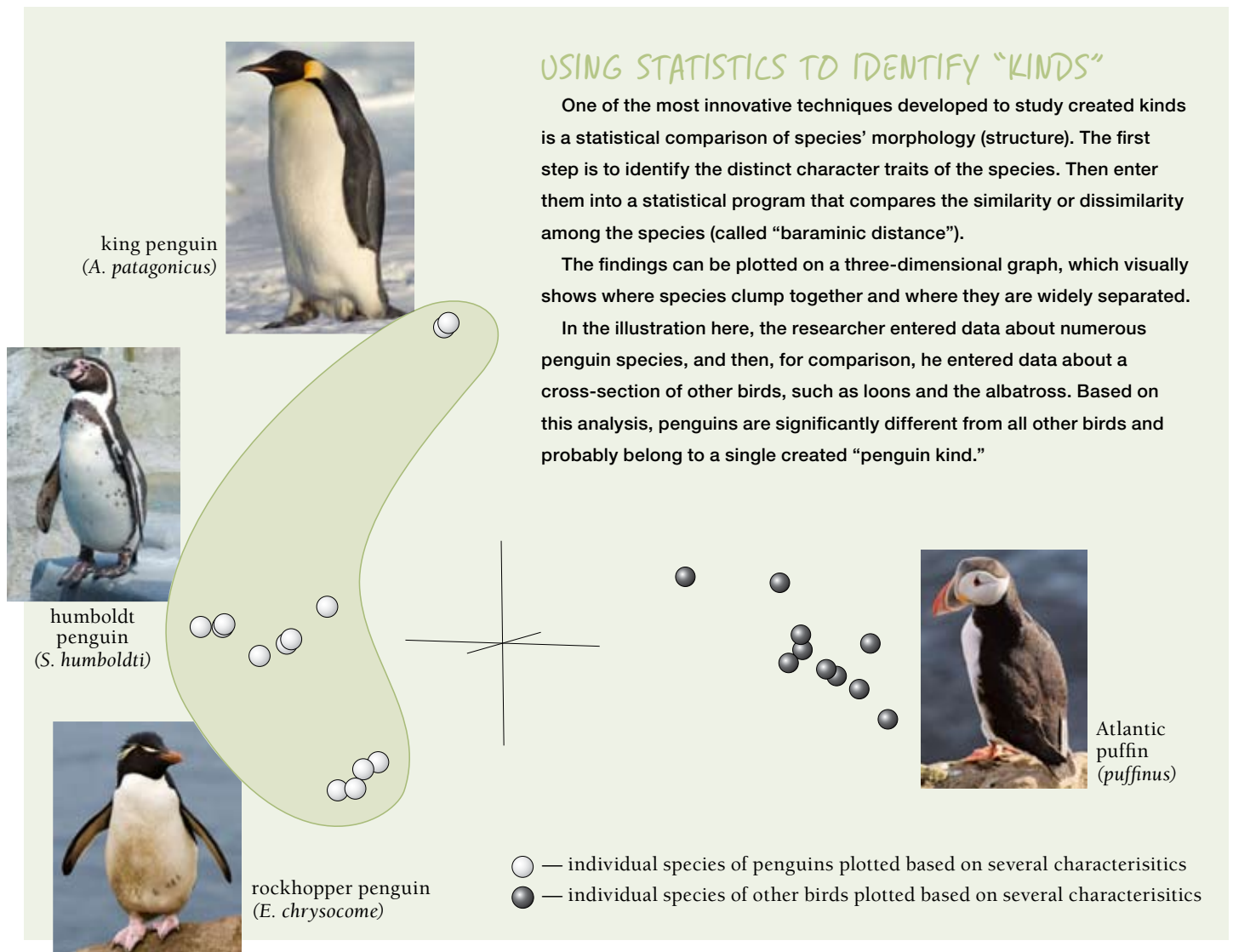
All these biblical considerations still don’t answer my original question:

### USING STATISTICS TO IDENTIFY “KINDS”

One of the most innovative techniques developed to study created kinds is a statistical comparison of species’ morphology (structure). The first step is to identify the distinct character traits of the species. Then enter them into a statistical program that compares the similarity or dissimilarity among the species (called “baraminic distance”).

The findings can be plotted on a three-dimensional graph, which visually shows where species clump together and where they are widely separated.

In the illustration here, the researcher entered data about numerous penguin species, and then, for comparison, he entered data about a cross-section of other birds, such as loons and the albatross. Based on this analysis, penguins are significantly different from all other birds and probably belong to a single created “penguin kind.”





What did Adam name? Okay, he named the “kinds” of Genesis 1, but what are the “kinds”? Is there any way for me as a scientist to identify the original kinds that Adam named? That’s where baraminology comes in.

Bara-what? Baraminology. The word comes from a term that pioneer creation biologist Frank Marsh invented, *baramin*. In Marsh’s words, “I recommend the coining of a new word to represent the Genesis kind. . . . What could be more appropriate than to build this word from the two Hebrew words ‘bara’ (created) and ‘min’ (kind)? This would give us the word ‘baramin.’”<sup>1</sup>

The modern field of baraminology attempts to identify those created kinds using sophisticated mathematical formulas to identify categories of creatures.<sup>2</sup> We think these categories are likely the categories that Adam originally named, even if they might look different today.

Baraminologists have made a lot of progress, but we still have a long way to go.<sup>3</sup> We have identified only a handful of created kinds out of thousands that are expected to exist.<sup>4</sup> We hope that future research in this area will identify more of the created kinds and new ways of recognizing and verifying their identity. By doing so, we will continue to exercise dominion over creation and display the image of God on earth, just as Adam did at the beginning of the world. ■

**NOTES**

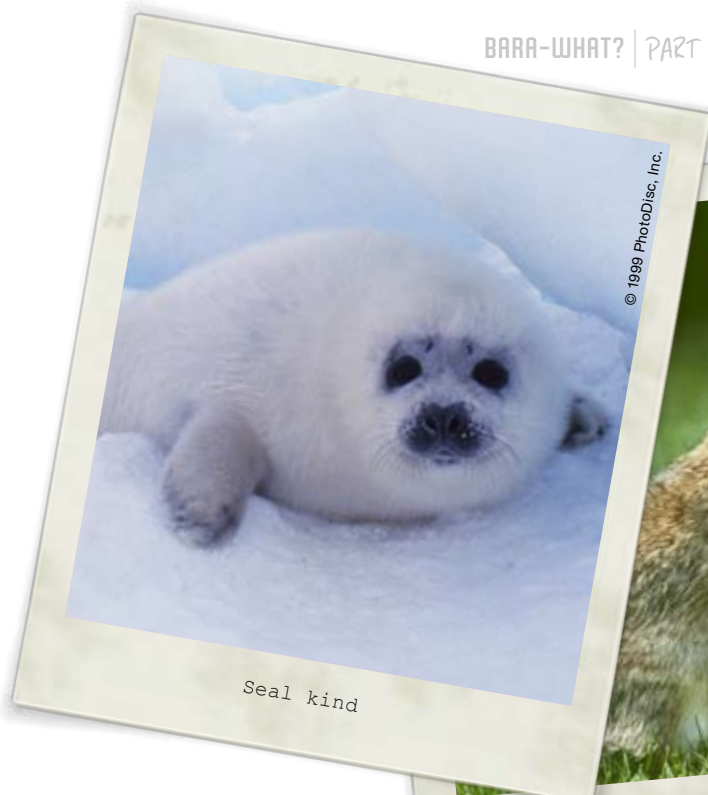
<sup>1</sup> F. R. Marsh, *Fundamental Biology* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Self-published, 1941), p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., see D. A. Robinson and D. P. Cavanaugh, “A Quantitative Approach to Baraminology with Examples from Catarrhine Primates,” *CRSQ* 34 (1998):196–208; T. C. Wood, “Visualizing Baraminic Distances Using Classical Multidimensional Scaling,” *Origins* 57 (2005):9–29.

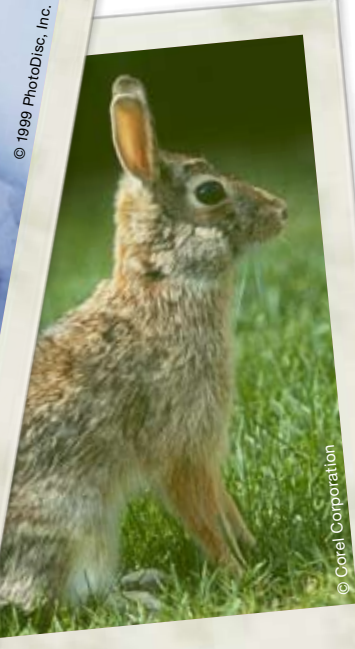
<sup>3</sup> T. C. Wood, “The Current Status of Baraminology,” *CRSQ* 43 (2006):149–158.

<sup>4</sup> Remember that Adam only named “beast of the field and fowl of the air” (Genesis 2:19) and did not name every created kind. For an estimate of the total number of created kinds, see A. J. Jones, “How Many Animals in the Ark?” *CRSQ* 10 (1973):102–108.

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Seal kind



Rabbit kind

HELLO  
MY NAME IS . . .

The original created kinds most likely looked very different from animals we see today, and yet we would easily recognize them based on their forms, whether they were seals, rabbits, iguanas, or bush babies.



Iguana kind



Bush baby kind