Sister Ann ... the Galapagos ... and Evolution

Exotic and primitive are just two of the adjectives that describe the Galapagos, one of the world's best-known island groups, located off the coast of Ecuador. It was here, on these islands of turtles and volcanoes, that a controversy originated some 120 years ago—a controversy that continues today.

The Galapagos are the birthplace of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Here, he formulated his theory by observing the isolated and diverse wildlife, and later published "Origin of Species." Darwin's theory parallels Genesis and, in simplified terms, includes these key points:

- The earth is about 10,000 years old; the universe was created in six days by a supernatural being; the different types of plants and animals were created as they are, not through evolution; and a great flood killed the creatures now found as fossils.

- Creationists' arguments are based on a sincere concern for the future of religion.

- Charles Boardman, a biology professor at Seton Hill, spent 5 days visiting the islands last May. He explored the island flora and fauna to gain a concrete view of Darwin's theory and now uses her slides and observations as integral to her teaching.

- Creationists challenge Darwin's theory on scientific grounds, and want opposing views taught with equal emphasis in public schools. Creationists are disclosing the validity of dating methods used by scientists, the theory of the origin of the universe, and fossil records. They say no method has yet been proven, and thus the theory of evolution stands unsubstantiated by science.

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