

# Only God Can Make an Instinct

The Mallee Fowl is a mound building bird that lives in Australia. It is about the size of a chicken and is an incredibly busy worker. In the fall of each year, the male begins to dig a hole about three feet deep. After the hole is dug, he piles leaves and twigs into the pit. After each rain he covers a layer of vegetation with sand sealing in the moisture. The mound he builds can be up to 35 feet across and 15 feet high. He will move as much as 6000 pounds of material to build his mound. As the wet vegetation decays, it produces heat. So as the leaves and twigs rot, the pile warms up.

The Mallee Fowl keeps checking the temperature of the mound by pushing his heat sensitive beak and tongue into the mound. It may take four months for the mound to reach the perfect temperature (92 °F). When it is warm enough, the male digs an egg chamber and the female starts to lay eggs over a period of many days. After each egg is laid, the male covers it with sand. He continually tests the temperature of the mound with his bill and adjusts the insulating layer of sand to raise or lower the interior temperature of the mound.

If the nest is too hot because of the rotting plants under the eggs; he removes sand from the egg chamber to let it cool down. If the nest is too hot from the sun heating the nest from above; he adds sand to the nest to insulate it better. If the nest is too cold and the sun is out he will remove insulation so that the sun's heat can warm the mound. The Mallee Fowl keeps the nest within 1°F at all times.

The female will visit the nest every few days until she has laid from 6 to 30 eggs. The eggs hatch after 9 weeks buried in the mound. Each chick, once it has hatched, will struggle from 2 to 15 hours to dig its way to the surface of the mound. They then totter to the shade to rest. Within 24 hours of hatching, they can fly! The baby birds then have no contact with their parents. They are on their own as soon as they hatch. The parents rest for a month and then start the whole process over again. The male Mallee Fowl spends up to 11 months a year taking care of the nest. That's dedication!

When Mallee Fowl mature at 2 years of age, they find mates and start their own nests. How do they know how to do that? They were never taught by their parents. No one taught them that as soon as they hatch they need to dig their way out of the mound of rotting vegetation. No one taught them which way is up. How do they know to find shelter in shade? How do they know to eat seeds? How do they know that their tongue can be used to sense exactly 92 °F? How do they know to add sand or remove it to keep a steady temperature? How do they know to bury plants because rotting vegetation gives off heat?

Even if one bird somehow discovered some of these things; countless scientific experiments have shown that learned knowledge is not biologically passed from one generation to the next.

The way animals know how to survive is called instinct. Instinct is knowledge which is programmed into a creature before birth. Man has never been able to explain how it could have developed by any evolutionary process. Such programmed wisdom demands an intelligent programmer. Such intelligence testifies to a creator. Psalm 104:24 says it best, "*O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom Thou hast made them all. The earth is full of Thy riches.*" God is the one Who made instincts.

**Lanny and Marilyn Johnson** run the children's ministry at Alpha-Omega Institute. Alpha-Omega reaches thousands of people worldwide with the evidence of creation. They can be reached at their website: [discovercreation.org](http://discovercreation.org)