

The Ballad of Charlie Darwin

A topical ballad to be sung on Charles Darwin's birthday, February 12
Written for the Annual Charles Darwin Birthday Luncheon at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto

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Melody: "The MTA" (a la Kingston Trio)

C F
Now this here song is the tale of old Charlie
C G7
Darwin of Shrewsbury
C F
How he disappointed his mammy and pappy
C G7 C
When he went to the university

Chorus (repeat after every verse):

C F
Charlie Darwin was the one to bring out the sun
C G7
On eevo-lution to shine
C F
May we never regress to that dark wilderness
C G7 C
Of intel-li-gent design

Well he never was a grade A student
He muddled through a pass degree
Then he packed his Lamarck and set off on a lark
And sailed all out to sea

He sailed into the Galapagos Islands
Saying "What will become of me
These finches don't conform to the Gideon's Bible
I picked up in the hotel for free"

He sailed and he sailed and he sketched and he drew
Conclusions from every tree
He said "In a little while I'll be just like old Lyell
And write me a natural history"

He didn't know about genes and all them things in between
DNA and such chemistry
But when he got to thinkin' the ideas started clinkin'
He said "Selection's natural, you see"

He sailed back to England and he married Emma
And the moved to the counteree
He settled down at Down where he worked with a frown
And he raised him a family

He was a quiet man for the rest of his span
As he worked on the family tree
Of the orchid and the barnacle and earthworm and the bee
And the likes of you and me

(last verse slowly)

Now old Charlie's gone but his spirit it lives on
As we gather in his memory
And when you think you're poor and recession's* at the door
Just remember that Evolution's free

*(or "inflation's", depending on the economic climate)

*Please feel free to sing this, distribute it, improve on it, change the chorus, anything you like.
I'd appreciate a complimentary copy of any changes you make, or even better, an audio file of
your singing!*

- GW, 2009