
The quest for our origin — a step closer to the origin of tetrapods

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Thu 14 February



12:00 pm

South Lecture Theatre 1



For more than 500 million years, the evolution of vertebrates has been punctuated by major changes and transitions. Over the past 10 years, the fish-to-tetrapod transition has been probed to understand anatomical transformations associated with locomotion, breathing, hearing, and feeding with regard to this major change in habitat — from water to land. As we discover new fossils, but also as technologies advance, we learn to dissect this transition dating back to 380 million years ago. The recent discovery of a complete Late Devonian fossil fish from the Miguasha fossil site (UNESCO World Heritage) in Québec, eastern Canada, is at the heart of this evolutionary debate: *Elpistostege watsoni* is considered the closest relative to all tetrapods. A series of anatomical characters at the transition between the fish and the first tetrapods makes this species crucial to our understanding of the conquest of the terrestrial environment. Not only does this discovery elucidate the evolutionary context of the origin of tetrapods, but also provides clues about paleoecological and paleoenvironmental aspects of this transition.

Ecology and Evolution Research Group Seminar series
