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Evolving Idea: On the Evolution of Lamarckism

Ian Crawford

[Letter to the Editor *New Scientist*, No 1245, p. 765 (19 March 1981)]

I read with interest Colin Tudge's article, "Lamarck lives – in the immune system" (19 February, p 483). If Lamarckism does occur in nature, is it not more likely that it has been *evolved* by natural selection?

For example, perhaps creatures which have a Lamarckian aspect to their immune system stand a better chance of survival than those that do not and hence are favoured by natural selection. Surely nature must first evolve a creature sufficiently complicated to require an immune system, then evolve the immune system itself, and only then remodel it along Lamarckian lines if this is found to be more efficient.