

This month we are pleased to feature an “ode to evolution” by Emma Torberg, a student at Oregon State University. You can listen to Emma performing this song accompanied

by her ukulele at <https://soundcloud.com/emma-tornberg/the-natural-selection-song>. Thanks to Lori Kayes, from the OSU Department of Integrative Biology who brought this

to the attention of the American Biology Teacher. —FROM THE EDITOR

**Intro:**

C G  
Today the world is a beautiful place, it's got  
F G7  
Bugs, birds, mice, and manta rays,  
C G  
But how did the earth get this way?  
F G7  
With all the fun creatures we see today?

**Chorus:**

C E7/D A  
Natural selection!  
F  
The good things get more common  
C  
And the bad things fade away.  
C E7/D A  
Descent with modification!  
F  
Parents pass their genes down  
G7  
To their kids, and now we say:  
C G F  
Thanks to Charles Darwin we know,  
G7 (C, F, C, F, C)  
Evolution's how the earth became this way.

**Verse 1:**

C G  
Now I'll tell you a story of a gorilla named Gary,  
F G7  
Who wanted to know how he got so hairy,  
C  
Did his parents get cold?  
G  
And grow some extra fur?  
F G7  
No, that's called Lamarkism, and now we know that's silly.

**Chorus 1:**

C E7/D A  
Natural selection!  
F  
Hair helped the gorillas,  
C  
Over time it came to stay.  
C E7/D A  
Descent with modification!  
F  
Gary's parents passed their genes down  
G7  
For his hair and now we say,  
C G F  
Thanks to Charles Darwin we know,  
G7 (C, F, C, F, C)  
Evolution's how Gary got this way.

**Verse 2:**

C G  
Now I'll tell you a story of a snake named Sue,  
F G7  
Who wanted to know what her hip bones used to do,  
C  
Why does she have these bones?  
G  
If she doesn't have legs?  
F G7  
They're called Vestigial Structures, and this is why they stay:

**Chorus 2:**

C E7/D A  
Natural selection!  
F  
Over time less legs were better  
C  
To do snake stuff like catch prey.  
C E7/D A  
Descent with modification!  
F  
Through divergent evolution  
G7  
Legs are lost but hip bones stay,  
C G F  
Thanks to Charles Darwin we know,  
G7 (C, F, C, F, C)  
Evolution's how Sue got this way.

**Verse 3:**

C G  
Now I'll tell you a story 'bout a ground finch named Frederick,  
F G7  
Who had a smaller beak than the tree finch Kendrick.  
C  
It has to do with Niches  
G  
That each type of finch chose,  
F G7  
That caused the speciation, where differences arose.

**Chorus 3:**

C E7/D A  
Natural selection!  
F  
Their homes and types of seeds they ate  
C  
Caused differences today.  
C E7/D A  
Descent with modification!  
F  
The finches' beaks changed separately,  
G7  
And this is why we say  
C G F  
Thanks to Charles Darwin we know,  
G7 (C, F, C, F, C)  
Evolution's how Frederick got this way.

**Verse 4:**

C G  
Now my final story is a cautionary tale,  
F G7  
About a flying squirrel and a sugar glider named Gail.  
C  
They look almost the same,  
G  
But don't be fooled,  
F G7  
It's just convergent evolution, analogous structures are to blame.

**Chorus 4:**

C E7/D A  
Natural selection!  
F  
Separately, they both got  
C  
flaps that help them glide and play,  
C E7/D A  
Descent with modification!  
F  
They aren't all that related,  
G7  
But they look like it today.  
C G F  
Thanks to Charles Darwin we know,  
G7 (C, F, C, F, C)  
Evolution's how Gail got this way.  
C G F  
And thanks to Charles Darwin we know,  
G7 C  
Evolution's how the earth became this way.