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EARTH Magazine: The Trouble With Turtles

Alexandria, Va. – Turtles are the last major living vertebrate group to be placed firmly on the tree of life, and the arguments are getting messy. Three fields in particular — paleontology, developmental biology and microbiology/genomics — disagree about how, and from what, turtles may have evolved. In the latest EARTH Magazine feature story, contributing writer Naomi Lubick investigates how these creatures confound scientists on many levels — from their morphology in the paleontological record and in modern day turtles, to the analysis of their genome. Where do they belong in the evolutionary record?

Recent publications and meetings convened on turtle evolution have resulted in, for now, scientists agreeing to disagree. Meet turtles' potential ancestors, and explore the modern research and controversy in the April issue of EARTH Magazine: <http://bit.ly/1mqgN9o>.

Subscribe to EARTH Magazine to unlock all of the exciting stories, photos and interviews, including stories about the geological gems in Gubbio, Italy, how acid rain and ozone depletion may have been the double-whammy that ended the Permian, and how sediments are stumping scientists in Norwegian fjords in the newly redesigned www.earthmagazine.org.

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Keep up to date with the latest happenings in Earth, energy and environment news with EARTH magazine online at: <http://www.earthmagazine.org/>. Published by the American Geosciences Institute, EARTH is your source for the science behind the headlines.

The American Geosciences Institute is a nonprofit federation of 50 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.