

Beavers, Engineers and Evolution
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by Butch Barhorst

Beavers are amazing creatures. They can build dams of strength and size that can hold back water as well as any man-made dam, and they do it with nothing but sticks and mud. They've been doing this for hundreds of years. Scientists like to use the word evolution, so they say beavers have "evolved" into what they can do. All I know is that nature's first engineers, "the beaver", are good at what they do.

This story actually started back last fall, when a very good friend of mine informed me that a beaver had built a lodge on one of his ponds. The next day I went to take a look. When I arrived at the site, imagine what went through my head, when I laid eyes on this lodge that was built directly under an old wooden electric box with the main power cord going straight down from the box into the beavers lodge! There was also a piece of PVC pipe running parallel to the ground, and it too was going straight into the side of the lodge.

I wondered if this beaver figured out how to have a home with all of the creature comforts of electric utilities and indoor plumbing? Has this engineer of nature "evolved" that quickly?

This much evolution in such a short time scared me, so my friends' boys, Logan and Luke, helped me work out a plan to stop this evolutionary process in its tracks.

We waited until January, when the pond froze over and the snow covered it, then we executed our plan. We set a well placed bodygrip trap in a channel cutting through the pond bank and crossed our fingers, hoping that this engineer of a beaver had never seen a trap before.

The next morning the boys called and gave me the news that the beaver's engineering days were over, as it was securely caught. We now know for sure that this electrical, plumbing engineer of a beaver cannot pass along its knowledge to the next generation, as that knowledge passed on with the beaver in the bodygrip.

Not only did we stop this fast paced evolutionary process, but also I wonder how many electrical and plumbing jobs we may have saved? Have fun, and take a kid trapping. ### Butch Barhorst, 4058 Possum Run Rd., Dayton, OH 45440