gorillas, orangutans, and chimpanzees simply appear on the modern scene. According to current scientific interpretation, the fossil record of apes for the past 8 million years has not been discovered.

Evolutionary theory holds that humans did not evolve directly from a monkey, but developed from an ape-like line of ancestry. Recent advances in molecular biology, especially the comparison of DNA composition, indicate a very close biochemical relationship between apes and humans. Anatomical similarities and some social behavior patterns tend to confirm this close relationship.

However, similarity does not necessarily prove a common ancestor. A close relationship can also be used to prove a common designer. Similarity of design may be used as circumstantial evidence for a common ancestor, a common designer, or both.

Evidence that humans are actually descended from an ape or protoape must ultimately depend on fossils that show a transition from ape to man. What is the evidence in the fossil record?

THE SEARCH FOR THE MISSING LINK

Ever since Darwin's theory of evolution became the conventional scientific wisdom, paleoanthropologists (those who study human ancestors) have searched for a missing link between monkeys, apes, and man. They have placed great reliance on jaws and teeth as the premise of their hypotheses for two reasons. First of all, jaws and

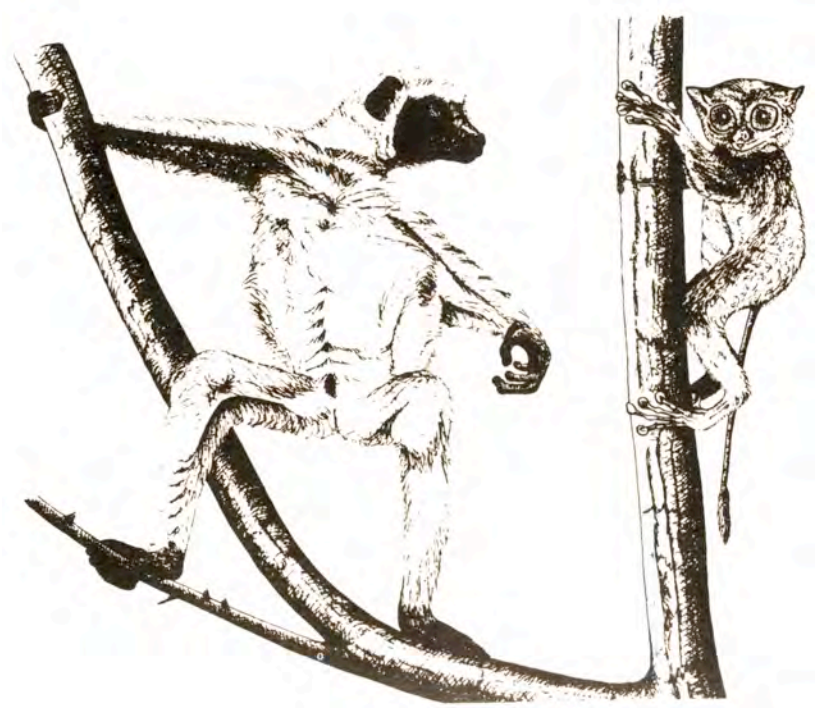

FIGURE 10.2.
The lemur of Madagascar, left, and the big-eyed tarsier of Borneo, *right*, are thought to be similar to possible primate ancestors.