

Those Clever Siberian Chipmunks

Siberian chipmunks are pretty low on the food chain. Everything from snakes to foxes seek out a chipmunk meal. However, Siberian chipmunks are very clever at using one of their enemies to defend themselves. If a Siberian chipmunk discovers a dead snake, it will be understandably careful in making sure that it is dead. Once it is certain, the chipmunk will chew on the dead snake's skin. Then, in behavior naturalists call "self-anointing," the chipmunk applies the chewed snake skin to its coat. The chipmunks will also self-anoint with snake urine and feces. Field studies showed that while the chipmunks ignore the carcasses of frogs, birds or lizards, they will self-anoint in this way from four species of snake.

Further field observations explained the reason for this strange behavior. Snakes are less likely to eat an anointed chipmunk. The snake odor on the chipmunk may also deter other animals that feed on the chipmunks. The chipmunks' defense strategy raises some difficult questions for those who believe that the living world is a product of chance. How could these chipmunks figure out that coating themselves with the skin of their mortal enemy would protect them from that enemy?

The task of developing this strategy and then overcoming its natural fear to approach that enemy, albeit dead, seems far too large for a chipmunk's mind. However, it is a small and simple task for the Creator, Who made all things and taught the chipmunks to protect themselves. That same God protects us from that old serpent, the devil, through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Psalms 7:10 "My defense is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.."

Prayer: Dear Father, help me to daily put on Christ to have Your protection. Amen.