

Ivan Schwab, M.D., is “Evolution’s Witness”

“For over 500 million years, eyes have been ‘standard equipment’ for earth’s creatures and fundamental to speciation and survival, including human survival. But the history of precursors to the fully formed eye begins 3.75 billion years ago”, according to Dr. Ivan R. Schwab, Director of the Eye Center’s Cornea Service. Dr. Schwab, who has been on the UC Davis faculty for over 20 years, is an avid student of comparative biology. He has just completed his “magnum opus”, a new book entitled, “Evolution’s Witness—How Eyes Evolved”.

Released November 1, 2011, the book incorporates 400 photographs and other images into a text that provides many insights new to science and illustrates key steps in the evolution of the eye and visual system. Besides Dr. Schwab’s photographs of eyes in their almost unimaginable variety, the book includes photographs taken by another UC Davis Eye Center Faculty member, Dr. James D. Brandt, Director of the Eye Center’s Glaucoma Service.

According to Dr. Schwab, “I have been interested in natural history for many years. I’m fascinated with what we can learn about ancient creatures, their anatomical development, the world they inhabited, and what that tells us about our world today. I hope that the story of the eye, as presented in my book, will amaze the readers as it has amazed me.”

“Evolution’s Witness” is published by Oxford University Press and is available through the Oxford website at <http://www.oup.com/us/catalog/general>, enter “Evolution’s Witness”.

Other Eye Center Faculty preparing books for publication include Dr. Jack Werner, Distinguished Professor of Ophthalmology, whose book, “The New Visual Neurosciences”, will be published in October 2013, and Dr. Mark Mannis, working on the second edition of his book on ocular surface disease, scheduled for publication in 2013.

