

# Extinction

## Are Any Dinosaurs Alive Now?

Millions of years ago, the Earth was full of life. Warm seas were swarming with creatures. The sky was full of insects and flying reptiles. On the ground, dinosaurs and mammals populated the forests and plains.

## Where Are The Dinosaurs Now?

Some of the dinosaurs' ancestors have evolved into animals we see on Earth today. This includes mammals, birds and reptiles. Some animals, such as birds are very closely related to dinosaurs.



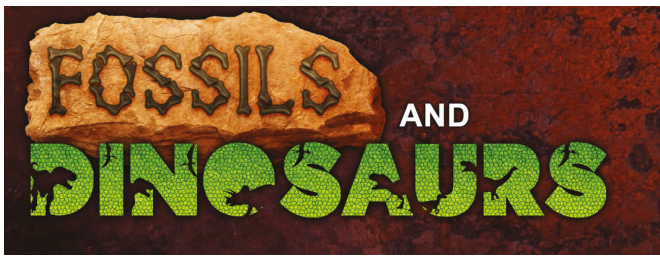
## The Event

Scientists know that about 66 million years ago something happened. A comet or an asteroid smashed into the Earth. It was the size of a mountain. It was traveling at around 40,000 miles an hour.



A huge fireball (brighter than the sun) lit up the land and skies. Within seconds, the heat and explosion wiped out everything within a 700 mile radius. Huge rocks were sent flying to the edge of space. They then fell all over Earth, killing more and starting fires. A giant tsunami, hundreds of metres high, raced across the oceans.

The skies darkened as the ash and dust from the explosion hung in the atmosphere. The dust cut out sunlight. It changed the environment and caused global warming. This global warming eventually wiped out 80% of remaining life.



# Extinction

There is a lot of evidence that this dinosaur extinction theory is correct. A 112 mile-wide crater was discovered in the 1990's. It shows that a comet or asteroid, about 8 miles wide, did hit the Earth about 66 million years ago. The centre of the crater is located off the coast of South East Mexico.



This is a picture of a rock sample. The rock sample shows a lighter layer of rock. This layer has higher levels of a chemical called iridium (100 times higher) than the layers around it. This layer is from 66 million years ago. It is more proof that a huge asteroid or comet collided with our planet.



This event set off other events that eventually wiped out the dinosaurs. With the dinosaurs gone, the mammals could evolve and thrive. This eventually led to the dominance of the human race.