

Feathered Friends?

Velociraptor (Vel - osi - rap - tor)

Paleontologists have found evidence that all dinosaurs may have had feathers. This is very different from the images we see in books and in films. Can you imagine the movie Jurassic Park if all the dinosaurs had feathers?

This picture shows what a Velociraptor may have really looked like.

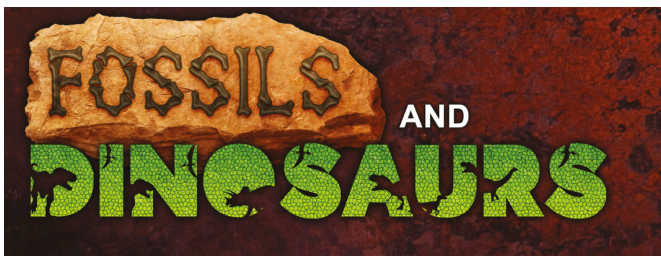
A Velociraptor was a small dinosaur which had long claws. Velociraptors could run very fast.



Was the Tyrannosaurus Rex Covered in Feathers?

It is likely that T-rex did have some feathers when it was young. It probably had less feathers as it got older.





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Where is the evidence?

If you have ever held a feather, you will know how delicate they are. Fossils of feathers are extremely rare. Paleontologists have to look at all the evidence. The more evidence they find, the more they learn about dinosaurs. Some recent discoveries have shown that all dinosaurs probably had at least some feathers. The biggest dinosaurs (like Tyrannosaurus rex) probably only had a few as fully grown adults.

Does this mean that dinosaurs could fly?

No. Scientists don't actually know why dinosaurs evolved to have feathers. It might have been to help keep warm. Evidence shows that some feathered dinosaurs did evolve to have wings. There was a dinosaur called

Archaeopteryx

Archaeopteryx (Ark-A-op-ter-ix) that lived about 150 million years ago. Archaeopteryx did evolve wings and was capable of flight. This could have led to the birds we see today.

This is a fossil of an archaeopteryx feather. There are not many fossils of feathers. That makes this a very special fossil.



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