

***DINOSAURS: ANCIENT FOSSILS, NEW DISCOVERIES***  
**EXHIBITION OVERVIEW**

**Exhibition Run:**

April 18 – August 17, 2008

**Admission:**

Admission to *DINOSAURS: Ancient Fossils, New Discoveries* is free with Museum admission.

**Exhibition Tour:**

- **INTRODUCTION:** The opening section illustrates how modern paleontologists are using new ideas, new discoveries and new technologies to revolutionize the understanding of dinosaurs.
- **HOW DINOSAURS MOVED:** The latest biomechanical studies on dinosaur movement spring dramatically to life with accompanying computer interactives.

Highlights include:

- A full-size cast skeleton of a ***Tyrannosaurus rex*** (*T. rex*).
  - A stunning, 60-foot-long model of an *Apatosaurus* skeleton. Three large high-definition video screens display a **computer animation** that depicts the morphing of the dinosaur first into a realistic, fossil skeleton then gradually by adding layers of muscle and skin, into a full-fleshed *Apatosaurus*.
  - A robotic, six-foot-long ***T. rex* skeleton walking in place**. It is the most accurate, three-dimensional representation of a dinosaur in motion ever created.
  - A 15-by-10-foot recreation of the famous **Davenport Ranch Trackway**, a collection of sauropod and theropod dinosaur prints unearthed in Texas in the 1920s and 1940s revealing new ideas on herding behavior.
  - ***Bambiraptor feinbergi***, the most well-preserved and complete dromaeosaur fossil yet found in North America. It is covered in primitive feathers, adding to strong evidence that dinosaurs are closely related to modern-day birds.
- **THE LIAONING FOREST:** A 700-square-foot, walk-through diorama depicting a 130-million-year-old forest that existed in what is now Liaoning Province, China — one of the largest recreations of a prehistoric environment ever built. The prehistoric ecosystem of Liaoning Province has yielded a rich diversity of exceptionally, well-preserved fossils.

Highlights include:

- A life-size, model of a **newly identified primitive tyrannosaur**, *Dilong paradoxus*, covered with branched protofeathers – precursors to the feathers found on living birds.

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- A model of the **largest Mesozoic mammal yet uncovered**, the badger-sized *Repenomamus giganticus*.
  - A model of a ***Microraptor*** gliding between trees with wings on both its arms and legs. Discoveries like this provide further compelling evidence that birds are living descendants of theropod dinosaurs.
- **HOW DINOSAURS BEHAVED:** This section demonstrates how scientists are reinterpreting old fossil evidence using new approaches and new technologies to unlock the secrets of dinosaur behavior.

Highlights include:

- A large wall of **mounted dinosaur skulls**, ranging from a three-horned Triceratops to the dome-headed *Pachycephalosaurus*, which illustrates the latest theories on the purpose of the unusual horns, frill, crests and domes found on many dinosaur skulls.
- **EXTINCTION:** Visitors explore the hard evidence for theories on the possible events that ended the “Age of Dinosaurs” including an asteroid impact, global climate change and massive volcanic eruptions.

Highlights include:

- **Interactive computer simulations and animations** that present vivid recreations of various extinction scenarios and analyze the pros and cons of various theories.
  - A **newly-collected sedimentary slab** clearly showing a thin layer of iridium. Scientists believe this layer represents the remnants of a massive meteoroid that vaporized upon impact and contributed to the extinction of more than half of all species on Earth.
- **PALEO-LAB:** Families also can test their fossil-finding skills by getting their little ones’ hands dirty in the Paleo-Lab. Tickets to the Paleo-Lab are \$2 per activity.

Activities include:

- A fossil dig.
- Excavate dino replicas using paleontology tools.
- Create take-home fossil impressions.
- Join a hands-on fossil footprint hunt and estimate how fast a dinosaur can run based on their tracks.
- Create a Geo Time Scale to identify the age of fossils.

#### **Exhibition Location:**

Level 2 of the Museum.

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