

Sky Hunters Environmental Education



Bird Evolution Are There Dinosaurs in Our Backyards?

Paleontologists theorize that not all the dinosaurs were wiped out 65 million years ago. Learn about the recent discoveries of feathered dinosaurs fossils and ancient birds found in Spain and Mongolia and compare these to living raptors. See a replica of a fossil found in a German limestone quarry 150 years ago that had both bird and dinosaur features. Learn why the finding of Archaeopteryx was so controversial then and why it is still controversial today. We will chart what is now believed the rise of flight from the ashes of the Dinosaurs.

Audience: All ages

California Science Content Standards for Grades 2 and 7.

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/scmain.asp>

Sky Hunters brings two live raptors to our presentation to point out those features in our present-day birds that show their reptilian roots. We also bring a life-size reproduction of an Archaeopteryx fossil and artists renditions of early birds. This introduction to the fossil record of birds is for any age interested in evolution of flight, but is particularly developed for fossil introduction in grade 2 and evolution in grade 7.

A suggestion for 7th grade participation:

- Advance study of Darwin's twin theories of Evolution and Natural Selection.
- In-class debate: Was it a bird? A lizard? Or Darwin's predicted "missing link" in bird evolution? An Archaeopteryx fossil was discovered two years after Charles Darwin published On the Origin of Species. What was the evidence then? What is it now?

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