



Dinosaur Lives: Unearthing an Evolutionary Saga

By John R. Horner, Edwin Dobb



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In this “wonderful benchmark of dinosaur studies” (Los Angeles Times), the paleontologist who advised Steven Spielberg on Jurassic Park gives readers an eye-opening tour of dinosaur discoveries and controversies and a close-up look at his own pioneering fieldwork. Line drawings and black-and-white photographs.



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Dinosaurs fascinate and captivate us, yet we really know relatively little about them--and that only from a fragmentary fossil record painstakingly reconstructed by paleontologists. *Dinosaur Lives* offers a colorful first-person account of one paleontologist as he uncovers fossilized bones, eggs, and more from the wastelands of Montana. John R. Horner and Edwin Dobb explain the process of prospecting for paleontological clues and what the fossil record tells us about dinosaur anatomy and their behavior. Much of the news is surprising: dinosaurs probably weren't reptiles at all but more closely related to birds, and many were social animals that lived in herds. Especially fascinating is trivia such as the fact that the ostensibly fearsome T. Rex was probably a scavenger akin to a vulture.

From Library Journal

Dinosaur doyen Horner changes how we look at thunder lizards.

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From Kirkus Reviews

A top dinosaur paleontologist spins wondrous tales about his fieldwork and ponders what it means. Horner, the curator of paleontology at the Museum of the Rockies and the technical advisor for Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World* (which opens this summer) teams up with a science journalist for a summary of his paleontological work over the last decade. Horner (*Digging Dinosaurs*, not reviewed) is less interested in unearthing spectacular museum pieces than in learning how dinosaurs lived and responded to their environment. This approach requires examining large numbers of fossils; as a result, Horner prefers to study smaller dinosaurs, whose bones can be excavated more easily than those of the huge sauropods. In fact, he once reburied a skeleton too large to fit in his museum. More attractive to him are nesting areas with dinosaur eggshells and skeletons of juveniles, or sites where large numbers of animals were killed at once, as in a drought. Surprisingly, these abound in the Montana hills. But Horner makes it clear that the fieldwork is only the beginning. The paleontologist's analytical tools include studying the evolutionary relationships of various kinds of animals and new ways to examine the internal structure of the fossils—for example, microscopic examination of thin slices of bone. The study of living animals also sheds light on the past, and so Horner visits a pelican nesting ground to learn what it might reveal about whether (and how) dinosaurs nurtured their young. Horner often gives the reader a chance to puzzle out the meaning of a discovery before he offers his interpretation, as in a site where only the feet and lower legs of the specimens were preserved. One comes away from *Dinosaur Lives* with a healthy respect for Horner and his colleagues, whose discoveries and studies may be among the most fascinating endeavors in science. Must reading for dinosaur fans. -- *Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

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