

# Landmark Dinosaur Discoveries

## Synopsis of Exhibit

### Introduction

This double frame, double page exhibit introduces the viewer to some of the key dinosaur discoveries that have been made around the world. Diverse philatelic items, spanning the last 100 years, have been selected to highlight ground-breaking finds. The frames are broadly organized by continent.

### Dinosaurs in Europe (pages 2 to 4)

We begin in the cradle of dinosaur science in the United Kingdom, where Dr. Richard Owen coined the name “Dinosaur” meaning “Terrible lizard”. Finds from Oxfordshire and Lyme Regis are highlighted, many of the latter made by Mary Anning, and uneducated lass.

We then explore the *Iguanodons* found in a coal mine in Bernissart before considering ancient reptiles from Switzerland and Italy. The lack of any Italian dinosaur stamps has led the author to design two stamps highlighting Scipionyx, who internal organs are well preserved and the meat eater *Saltriovenator*. On page 4 we learn about the “first bird”, *Archaeopteryx* of Germany.

### Dinosaurs in North America (pages 5 to 7)

This part of the world has yielded most of the most iconic species of dinosaurs. On page 5 we examine the Morrison Formation of Colorado and Utah, exploring the discoveries of *Allosaurus*, *Brontosaurus* and *Stegosaurus* amongst others, names that will be familiar to (almost) every child. Some wonderful errors on stamps accompany this area.

We then look at the first ever dinosaur to grace a postal missive, in California (Figure 1) and discuss the Cretaceous giants *Tyrannosaurus* and *Triceratops*. Moving North, Alberta features on page 7, in particular Dinosaur Provincial Park, where the author studied the geology. We learn how a catastrophic mistake led to the withdrawal and destruction of an entire

### Exhibit Plan

1. Introduction
2. Europe: United Kingdom; Belgium; Germany
5. North America: USA; Canada
8. South America: Argentina; Bolivia; Brazil
9. Africa: Niger; Morocco; Tanzania; Lesotho; South Africa
11. Asia: Japan; China; Mongolia; Thailand; Korea
15. Australia; New Zealand
16. Antarctica; Summary

issue in 2015 (Figure 2), and look at the incredible dinosaurian diversity in the region.

### Dinosaurs in South America (page 8)

This is truly the land of the giants, with the largest herbivorous dinosaurs and among the largest carnivorous. We look at dinosaurs in Argentina and trackways in Bolivia.

In South America, the stamp issues are usually more recent, less difficult to obtain and are often brightly coloured. One striking Brazilian personal issue became so popular that it was added to the roster of the national postal service. The Bolivian stamps show footprints from a locality that is so unique that it is applying to become a World Heritage Site, thereby joining the Park in Alberta.



Figure 2. Canadian maxicard, 1993, incorrectly showing Drumheller Hoodoos.

### Dinosaurs in Africa (pages 9 to 10)

The first page brings together Niger, Morocco and Tanzania. Selected postal items for the first two countries demonstrate *Ouranosaurus* and *Cetiosaurus*, with the latter stamp design reproduced by the original artist on a postally used envelope, without doubt unique.

Tendaguru in Tanzania has yielded some incredible specimens, none more so than the tallest dinosaur skeleton on display, *Giraffatitan* (formerly *Brachiosaurus*).



Figure 3. Printing error (missing value) from the 1965 Poland set: Prehistoric animals



Figure 1. Prepaid cover sent by Torrance Lime and Fertilizer Company, featuring what may be the first dinosaur on a postal item (see close up above by postmark). Only example known to exist.

### Special items of Interest:

1922 prepaid cover showing an image that includes what may be the first dinosaur illustrated on a postal item (unique).

Original artwork for a stamp from the Poland 1965 set of Prehistoric Animals (unique).

An error from the same 1965 set (ten examples of each stamp exist at most).

Original artwork commissioned from the artist, showing a reproduction of a stamp from the 1970 Lesotho “footprints of prehistoric reptiles” set (unique).

Japanese first day cover from 1977 showing an engraved and plated metallic cachet.

Canadian “UNESCO World Heritage sites” maxicard with error, issued in 2015, rapidly withdrawn from circulation (estimated that less than 25 still exist).

China 1958 First Day Cover with the first official dinosaur stamp.

Korean meter stamp dedicated to the World Dinosaur Stamp Exhibition (unique).

Various philatelic items including errors (Figure 3) and the official artwork for the Poland 1965 Prehistoric animals set are featured.

The following page focuses on the Permian to Jurassic Karoo fossils of southern Africa. Lesotho hosts some of the world’s most abundant trackways, shown on original artwork and some progressive proofs. Meanwhile South Africa issued one of the greatest dinosaur stamp designs on its Karoo miniature sheet in 1982. There are also very rare covers from Angola and Mozambique showing other species of this time period.

## Dinosaurs in Asia (pages 9 to 10)

Japanese material showcases the marine reptile *Futabasaurus*, with some charming artwork and some very rare material including a metal engraving. Stamps from other countries are used to compare plesiosaurs from around the globe

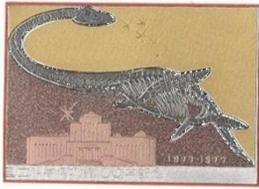


Figure 4.  
Japan 1977  
metallic  
cachet with  
plesiosaur

Next comes China and Mongolia. The first ever official dinosaur stamp is introduced, and *Lufengosaurus* discussed. China is also famous for its feathered dinosaurs and we get to see *Microraptor* in flight. The following page concentrates on dinosaur nests (Figure 4), with China hosting more dinosaur eggs than any other country. The diverse and important dinosaur fauna of Mongolia is also highlighted.



Figure 5. Swedish postcard with a baby *Maiasaura*.



Figure 6. Australian presentation pack, from 1993.

Other material from Asia is shown on page 14, with the highlight an original handstamp created to advertise a Dinosaur Exhibition in South Korea. There are also stamps from North Korea, a prolific dinosaur-oriented postal nation, and several exhibits from Thailand.

## Dinosaurs in Australasia (page 15)

Some beautiful stamps featuring local dinosaurs have been issued by both Australia (Figure 6) and New Zealand, and many of these are displayed on this page. Australia is well known for selling a diverse array of stamp related souvenirs and some eye openers are shown. Including one that produces a roar! The new Opalized Fossil issue gets its own page corner to share some lovely images.

## Dinosaurs in Antarctica (page 16)

Some charming issues have come out of this snowy continent, with some real design successes and a nice calendar card. Argentina has contributed several stamps to the continent's catalogue.

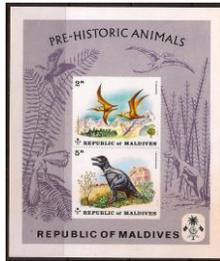


Figure 7.  
Miniature  
sheet from  
the 1972  
Maldives  
issue of  
Prehistoric  
Animals.

## Where are they now? (page 16)

The final section discusses how dinosaurs evolved into birds, and hence how we are surrounded by them. Similarly any thematic bird stamp collectors are secretly dinosaur collectors.

I hope that you enjoy the display. The aim was to feature as many different types of philatelic material as possible. Two frames barely scratch the surface of a collection spanning more than 30,000 items.

Jon (Noad), January 2021.

## References

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