

# Fossilised – dug up

Fossils come in all forms providing evidence about the history of life on Earth

## Accolade for restaurant

THE LONELY PLANET TRAVEL GUIDE TO AUSTRALIA has been named the best travel guide in the world for the 10th year running.



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## WORDY NEWS

HAVE you ever come across a word in the newspaper that you haven't seen before or don't know what it means?

This week's word is **ACCOLADE**  
Definition: strong praise, approval, acclaim, an award or honour.

## TRY THIS

How many words can you make from the letters in the word fossilised?

For more activities check out:  
■ [mjksiteachingideas.com/pdf/MysteryBones.pdf](http://mjksiteachingideas.com/pdf/MysteryBones.pdf)  
■ [www.abc.net.au/beasts/fossilfun/](http://www.abc.net.au/beasts/fossilfun/)  
■ [mylearning.org/fossils-game/interactive/2402/#mainmenu](http://mylearning.org/fossils-game/interactive/2402/#mainmenu)

## QUIZ TIME

Each week we will test your knowledge on what's been happening in the news. For the answers visit NIE online.

- 1 WHO carried the flag for Australia during the closing ceremony at the Sochi Winter Games?
- 2 HOW many medals did Australia win at the Games?
- 3 WHERE is the Australian cricket team currently playing a three-match Test series?

THERE are many secrets held in Earth's ancient rocks and scientists around the world are continually exposing evidence of past life found in the layers beneath the crust.

Fossils are the remains of plants or animals or their tracks and traces which are preserved in sedimentary rock.

For the remains to exist they had to be buried before they completely decomposed or were eaten.

Over time more and more sediment covered the remains. In the right circumstances and conditions parts of the animal or plant then turned into fossils.

## Ways a fossil is preserved:

Original material – original bone, shell or exoskeleton is preserved.

Replacement – the original shell or skeleton is replaced by some other mineral. An example of this is petrified wood.

Compression – fossil remains are flattened by the force of compression of the overlying sediment which buried the organism. Fossil plants are often preserved in this way.

Impression – material is compressed and then dissolved leaving only a trace of the organism.

Natural moulds and casts – skeletal material within the sedimentary rock is dissolved leaving a space. If the space remains empty moulds of the fossil can be formed. If the space is filled a natural cast is formed.

Permineralisation – a fossil has its pores filled up with minerals making it more robust and heavier. Many fossil bones are preserved in this way.

Special preservation – some fossils are preserved in exceptional

## DID YOU KNOW

- Fossil comes from the Latin word fossilis, which means 'dug up'
- Palaeontology is the science dealing with the life of past geological periods as known from fossil remains.
- For remains to be considered fossils, scientists have decided they have to be over 10,000 years old.
- A specialist in palaeontology is a palaeontologist.
- Fossils are usually too old to have their age directly measured. Instead, age can be determined from radioactive elements occurring within rock found around the fossils.
- Fossils have been found on every continent on Earth.

circumstances. These include mummification, freezing, preservation in amber

Trace – the preserved evidence of an animal's activity or behaviour, rather than the remains of the animal itself. Examples of this is fossilised poo.

## Australia's fossilised past

Australia has a rich, unique fossil record, dating from approximately 3.2 billion years ago. The world's best example of dinosaur tracks where nearly 200 dinosaurs left about 30,000 footprints can be found near Winton, Queensland. The Riversleigh fossil site, near Mount Isa Queensland, is also recognised as one of the most important fossil sites in the world.

For more information visit [australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/australias-fossil-past](http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/australias-fossil-past)

CHECK IT OUT



## Win a set of iPads

Have you started collecting the tokens in your newspaper for the chance to win a set of ten iPads for your school. Remember the school with the most tokens at the end of the five-week promotion will be rewarded with these great educational tools. You will find a token in this newspaper every day until Monday, March 31. For more information about the promotion check it out on our website at [www.dailymercury.com.au](http://www.dailymercury.com.au).

## News in the spotlight

Discuss the following topic and let us know what you think.

Skulls could rewrite history  
**SCIENCE**

ONE of the most dramatic discoveries in the study of human origins has been revealed: a perfectly preserved fossilised skull of an ape-like man who lived about 1.8 million years ago.

The discovery, along with the remains of four other individuals who lived at the same time and in the same place, has generated intense excitement among palaeontologists who believe the finds could rewrite the early history of human evolution.

The skull and its lower jawbone were found at a site in the foothills of the Caucasus range in Georgia.

Researchers have spent the past years studying the fossil skull, which was discovered in 2000.

– STEVE CONNOR,  
THE INDEPENDENT



NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC:

Farming Family

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