

# OBSERVE A DINOSAUR

**How did ancient dinosaurs move and behave?** To find out, paleontologists look for clues in fossils, such as fossilized footprints, eggs, and even dung. They also observe and analyze the movement and behavior of living dinosaurs and other animals. These data help paleontologists interpret the fossil evidence.

**You can also observe living dinosaurs.** Go outdoors to find birds in their natural habitat. (Or you can use online bird videos, such as the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's video gallery at [www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/VideoGallery.html](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/VideoGallery.html))

## 1. Record Your Observations

In a notebook, first record information about the environment:

- Date and Time
- Location and Habitat
- Weather and temperature

Then observe a bird and record:

- How does the bird move?
- What does the bird eat?
- Is the bird alone or in a group?
- How does the bird behave with members of its species?
- How does the bird behave with members of other species?

### Tips:

- Weather conditions can affect how animals behave. Try observing birds in different conditions and different times of day.
- To collect good data, try to observe similar groups of birds two or three times.

## 2. Analyze Your Data

What can you conclude about bird behavior? What clues to this behavior might be preserved in the rock record (e.g. footprints)?



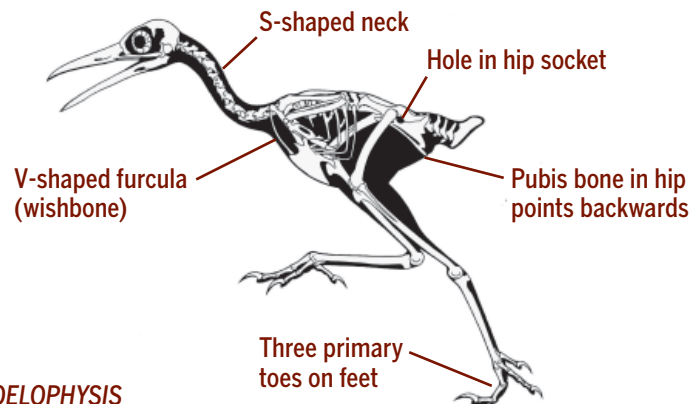
The heaviest dinosaurs, such as *Argentinosaurus*, may have weighed up to 100 tons. That's as heavy as 15 elephants! The lightest dinosaur, the hummingbird, weighs about 4 grams. That's less than the weight of a nickel!

## WHAT EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT BIRDS ARE DINOSAURS?

Over 125 years ago, paleontologists made a startling discovery. They recognized that the physical characteristics of modern birds and a species of small carnivorous dinosaur were alike.

Take a look at the skeletons of roadrunner (a modern bird) and *Coelophysis* (an extinct dinosaur) to explore some of these shared characteristics. Check out the bones labeled on the roadrunner. Can you find and label similar bones on the *Coelophysis*?

### ROADRUNNER



### COELOPHYSIS

