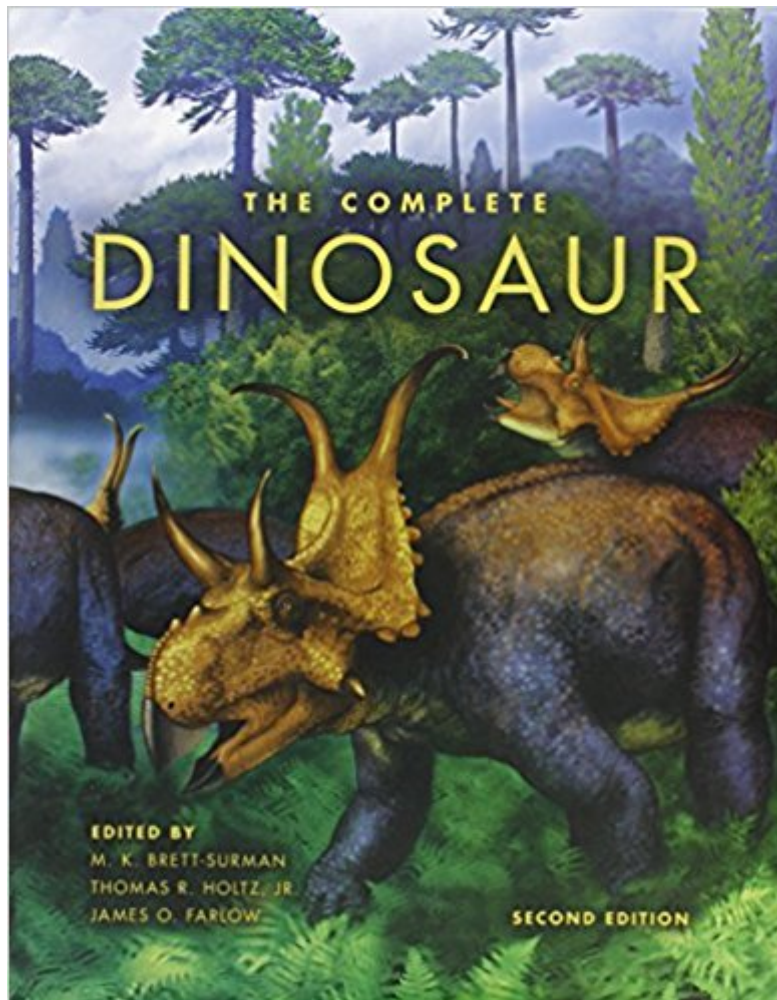




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# The Complete Dinosaur (Life Of The Past)



## Synopsis

Praise for the first edition: "A gift to serious dinosaur enthusiasts" *Science* "The amount of information in [these] pages is amazing. This book should be on the shelves of dinosaur freaks as well as those who need to know more about the paleobiology of extinct animals. It will be an invaluable library reference." *American Reference Books Annual* "An excellent encyclopedia that serves as a nice bridge between popular and scholarly dinosaur literature." *Library Journal* (starred review) "Copiously illustrated and scrupulously up-to-date... the book reveals dinos through the fractious fields that make a study of them." *Publishers Weekly* "Stimulating armchair company for cold winter evenings.... Best of all, the book treats dinosaurs as intellectual fun." *New Scientist* "The book is useful both as a reference and as a browse-and-enjoy compendium." *Natural History* What do we know about dinosaurs, and how do we know it? How did dinosaurs grow, move, eat, and reproduce? Were they warm-blooded or cold-blooded? How intelligent were they? How are the various groups of dinosaurs related to each other, and to other kinds of living and extinct vertebrates? What can the study of dinosaurs tell us about the process of evolution? And why did typical dinosaurs become extinct? All of these questions, and more, are addressed in the new, expanded, second edition of *The Complete Dinosaur*. Written by many of the world's leading experts on the "fearfully great" reptiles, the book's 45 chapters cover what we have learned about dinosaurs, from the earliest discoveries of dinosaurs to the most recent controversies. Where scientific contention exists, the editors have let the experts agree to disagree. Copiously illustrated and accessible to all readers from the enthusiastic amateur to the most learned professional paleontologist, *The Complete Dinosaur* is a feast for serious dinosaur lovers everywhere.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The 40-plus chapters in *The Complete Dinosaur* range from raw, cutting-edge science that drips with original data to surveys of the history of dinosaur collecting that are suitable for even the most jargon-shy readers. Editors James O. Farlow and M. K. Brett-Surman admit that they were "teenage geeks who loved the movies of Willis O'Brien, Ray Harryhausen, and Jim Danforth, and the novels of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Edgar Rice Burroughs," and they do not neglect their roots. There are chapters covering all the hot topics of contemporary dinosaur research, including footprints, metabolism, and meteor strikes; there is also a section on determining how many lawyers you need to feed a captive *Tyrannosaurus rex*. It's a remarkable fusion between scientific research--warts, conflicts, and all--and public understanding. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Very similar in length and scope to the *Encyclopedia of Dinosaurs* (LJ 11/1/97), this work features signed articles by many of the same distinguished paleontologists with the goal of providing a single authoritative account of dinosaur paleontology accessible to the general reader. The contributors were instructed to keep technical jargon to a minimum. The articles are grouped by six categories: Discovery of Dinosaurs, Study of Dinosaurs, Groups of Dinosaurs, Biology of Dinosaurs, Dinosaur Evolution, and Dinosaurs and the Media. When controversial topics arise, the editors have provided opposing viewpoints rather than picking sides. For example, the "extinction" article is presented as "A dialogue between a Catastrophist and a Gradualist." Dinosaurs are described by group rather than by individual genera, so this is not the place to find a picture of a specific kind of dinosaur (though the illustrations are generally informative). With simpler language, more background information, and a subject rather than an alphabetical organization that makes for a more coherent presentation, this is a better purchase for public and school libraries than the *Encyclopedia of Dinosaurs*, which is written as a review of dinosaur research literature for specialists. An excellent encyclopedia that serves as a nice bridge between popular and scholarly dinosaur literature. ?Amy Brunvand, Univ. of Utah, Salt Lake City Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Let's say you have read the delightful *\_My Beloved Brontosaurus\_* by Brian Switek and you find yourself hankering for more facts and scientific insight. Let's say you remember being enchanted with dinosaurs as a kid and you wonder what you'd be doing now if the rest of life hadn't turned you away from that initial fascination. Let's say you just want to get the latest on what paleontologists are doing. Here's what to do: get *\_The Complete Dinosaur\_* (Indiana University Press), edited by M. K. Brett-Surman, Thomas R. Holtz, Jr., and James O. Farlow, with Bob Walters as art consultant, and written by sixty experts in different subspecialties. The book is as fine and as imposing a volume as any I have seen from a university press. It is enormous, 1,100 big pages and over six pounds in weight. The pages have lovely wide margins often used for illustrations, and there are illustrations aplenty, not just of the amazing beasts, but of their descent trees, bone loading, tracks, bone growth rings, and much more. This is not light reading, in any sense. I could not take the book to bed for nighttime reading, nor even to my recliner. I wound up setting it on one of my weight benches and reading it from an adjacent chair. The chapters are full of detail and the prose is (at least in big chunks) necessarily technical; you will find many sentences like, "Plagued by inconsistent definitions, use, and predictions, it is not always clear whether gigantothermy postulates a convergence of metabolic rates as well as thermoregulatory performance, or whether the supposed metabolic convergence is toward the reptile level, the mammal level, or in between." (The appendices do include a big and useful glossary, as well as a list of dinosaur-related websites.) The forty-five chapters here, however, represent detailed thought, sustained over centuries (and this is the second edition of the book, the first having come out in 2007). The erudition on display, applied to ancient animals that interest everyone, is an inspiration. The start of the book gives a history of human thought about dinosaurs, showing that fossil discoveries were made by many primitive societies and may have been the source of myths about monsters, griffins, or dragons. If you fantasize about going into the field and uncovering the next *\_T. rex\_*, there are detailed and basic instructions here. Get the permission of the landowner and respect the landscape are the first rules. "Dinosaurs are no longer trophies. Instead they are scientific specimens whose context is as important as the bones themselves." Mapping has been made much easier with GPS. There is a chapter here on specific modern technology used in the field, like handheld devices to upload notes and descriptions of finds directly into a field office, avoiding much of the confusion from the transcription of field notes (or the theft or loss of field journals). A huge amount of the book deals with just how much information we might draw out of fossils. Muscular tissue is seldom fossilized, but putting flesh on dinosaur bones is essential for understanding what they looked like and how

they moved. There is even bone evidence for how nerves ran, or infections, or cancers. Bones are not the only things dinosaurs left behind. Rarely, dinosaurs left footprints, and such variables as hip height, print length, or narrowness of separation between left and right prints can be used to calculate speed. Reflecting on the booming field of investigation of what dinosaurs ate is a message that could apply to many of the other subjects of this book: "There is much here to entertain and frustrate the paleontologists of the future!" There is so much information here in this enormous book: how different dinosaurs evolved; how they are put up as museum exhibits; their bird descendants; their reproductive biology; and much, much more. I will end with a personal note. Every medical student learns the twelve cranial nerves (along with a more or less silly or ribald mnemonic for their names). If someone had asked me about cranial nerves in other mammals, I would have expected that they'd be there, too. But it was a surprise, in the chapter on dinosaur paleoneurology, to see a cast of the inside of the casing of a T. rex brain, and to find the twelve cranial nerves, all lined up in order just like our own. And in the chapter on ankylosaurs, yet another casting of the inside of a braincase shows all twelve. Dinosaurs have what one author here calls "a high coefficient of weirdness," but I was amazed to learn from these examples that maybe they are not so distant after all.

The book is absolutely monstrous. It's more than a thousand pages of Dinosaurian goodness. Written by dozens of scientists, all experts in different aspects of Dinosaur science. This book will NOT be delivering you false, outdated information. It was published in 2012 and as of 2014 it still holds up and probably will be for many years to come. This book is a true masterpiece and will hopefully encourage new interest in the beauty and majestic mystery that was the Dinosaur.

This volume is very informative but also poses many new questions as it opens doors in our quest for knowledge. The illustrations are superb, suitable for framing and the chapters are concise and pertinent. All in all a good introduction to paleontology in general and dinosaurs in particular. The sections that specifically describe field work, site preparation and illustrating dinosaurs are well done and especially interesting to me. I highly recommend this book. ( An added bonus: if you dress out at 110 pounds and often walk across a windy campus, this is the book you want under your arm.) This reasonably priced volume is worth every penny. Grandpa Rich

Finally, a popular book about dinosaurs for intelligent adults. Hopefully your ten year old child won't understand the chapters or at least, would be bored. On the other hand an adult dinosaur fan will be

thrilled,by the book as it treats dinosaur just like any other animal. I especially enjoyed the chapter on brain morphology and it's implications on brain function.

A good overall read. There are good descriptions of the differences between dinosaurs, making it a good research book. My only issue is the style of writing. I own one of Dr. Holtz's other dinosaur books, which I thoroughly enjoy, but this one does not have quite the engaging poise. Still, a good textbook, and one of my primary tools of research!

An ESSENTIAL book to have for any Zoologist/Paleontologist. This book is a fantastic well detailed introductory guide to Dinosaurs and their ancestors. It is a fairly large book and is expensive (reasonably) but it is well worth the cost. If you are serious about Paleontology, Zoology, Geology, Biology, Anatomy or any other field that might relate to the subject. I highly recommend the purchase of this book.

Favourite textbook thus far - very easy entry level read, lots of excellent diagrams but watch out this book is HEAVY -- you're not taking it to the beach.

A book for the fans of dinosaurs who aren't into all the technical issues. Explains the many types of dinosaurs and their related non-dinosaur cousins often mistaken for dinosaurs. A good read and informative.

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