

Resources for ages 4–7

From early 2018 to late 2020 the Natural History Museum's iconic *Diplodocus* cast, Dippy, is on a Natural History Adventure across the UK. We hope that Dippy will inspire you to go on your own adventure, exploring the incredible natural history collections and amazing biodiversity right on your doorstep!

These resources are a collection of pick-and-mix, cross-curricular activities and some useful facts to enrich Science, Maths, English, DT, Music and PE, covering a combination of dinosaur- and bird-related topics.

Dippy on Tour

A Natural History Adventure



In partnership with



Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION



Supported by



Debbie Powell for NHM

nhm.ac.uk/dippyontour

Dippy at the Natural History Museum

Dippy on Tour: A Natural History Adventure is an exploration of the UK's natural history past, present and future. Dippy, the replica cast of a *Diplodocus* skeleton that was given to the Museum in 1905, is a catalyst for exploring different aspects of the natural world along the eight-stop tour to museums and cultural hubs.



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Dinosaurs and birds

Much of what scientists are learning about dinosaurs is supported by studying birds. In the 2000s a large number of fossilised feathered dinosaurs were discovered in China, along with very early birds in the same rocks. This has helped to further confirm the long-held idea that dinosaurs and birds are very closely related. Similarities include feathers, limbs adapted to flight and bone structure.

Dippy the *Diplodocus* was just one of many species of dinosaur living on the land that is now Wyoming in the USA during the Jurassic Period, about 150 million years ago. Other *Diplodocus* fossils have been found in Utah and Colorado (also in the USA), suggesting it was a widespread dinosaur. Other fossils found include: small mammals, turtles, crocodiles, fish and some of the plants that Dippy might have eaten.

Many scientists refer to extinct dinosaurs such as Dippy as non-avian dinosaurs – birds did not evolve from Dippy. Dippy is a sauropod – a plant-eating dinosaur that walked on four legs. Sauropods were an evolutionary dead-end. Birds that are alive today evolved from meat-eating dinosaurs. Palaeontologists (scientists who study dinosaurs) believe that birds are direct descendants of a group of meat-eating dinosaurs that also had feathers. Victorian scientists who investigated the very first dinosaur bones ever discovered spotted how similar some dinosaur bones are to bird bones. But all this has only been confirmed quite recently, following the discovery of the feathered dinosaur fossils in China.

There are lots of other similarities between dinosaurs and birds that give us clues about how closely related they are. Understanding birds through observation and other methods helps scientists to learn more about how dinosaurs might have looked and behaved.



Archaeopteryx. Painting by Maurice Wilson from his drawings collection (1950). © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London. All rights reserved.