



# The Great Dinosaur Atlas

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Many dinosaur books bore me stiff - being merely illustrated lists of species, frequently giving little detail about age, distribution, lifestyle or discovery of the creatures they show, and depicting only physical features in boring outline, so that one would suppose the whole earth to have been evenly populated by them all at once - strolling about in a sort of prehistoric Serengeti.

By hanging the dino-fauna upon the discipline of an atlas, Lindsay and the Dorling Kindersley team have effortlessly avoided all these pitfalls and have produced a splendid guide, proceeding continent by continent and introducing everything from *Albertosaurus* to *Vulcanodon* (top marks for the index too) on the way.

What emerges irresistibly from this treatment is the image of dino-archaeology as a global million-piece jigsaw, painstakingly put together by a mixture of experience, intuition, luck and sheer dedicated labour to provide the overall picture of 150 million years of dino-evolution that so fascinates us now.

#Matching the subject, the style and scale of this book are impressive. Lindsay's text provides a buoyant mix of fact and 'fancy that!' information (the Australian *Atlascoposaurus*, for instance, is named after the machinery used to excavate it); and Fornari's illustrations offer not only good colour and meticulous detail but provide a marvellous impression of the creatures' varying textures. Relative scale is well handled too - human walkers and cyclists provide the necessary comparisons.

There is a wealth of scholarship here, and the skills of author, artist and design team make it highly accessible and entertaining - the Great Atlas is rightly named. At 14 inches high it will be a pain to shelve in any library, but its appeal should ensure that it never needs to be.

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