



Dinosaur Dolphins: New Zealand's Surprising Survivors

Description

Press Release – Canterbury Museum

Ichthyosaurs were marine reptiles that looked like dolphins. They mostly went extinct about 100 million years ago. Dr. Paul Scofield from Canterbury Museum and George Young, a master's graduate from the University of Canterbury, studied a fossil for three years.

This fossil, found in North Canterbury, is 4 meters long. Their work was published in the [*Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*](#).

They found that a special ichthyosaur lived in New Zealand for 5 million years after others had died out. This ichthyosaur is the best-preserved one found in New Zealand.

Using special scanners, Paul and George looked inside the fossil. They discovered it was evolving into something like a whale.

The fossil was found by Professor James Crampton near the Clarence River in 2010. It is not complete, so it cannot get a name yet.

Paul thinks more discoveries could be made in this area because it is not well explored.

Ichthyosaurs first appeared around 250 million years ago and lived until about 95 million years ago.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Ichthyosaurs** /ɪkθiəˈsɔːr/ (noun): Marine reptiles that resembled dolphins known for living in prehistoric oceans.
2. **Fossil** /ˈfɒsl/ (noun): The preserved remains or traces of a once-living organism typically found in sedimentary rock.
3. **Preserved** /prɪˈzɜːvd/ (adjective): Maintained in their original condition; kept intact from decay or destruction.
4. **Evolving** /ɪˈvɒlvɪŋ/ (verb): Developing gradually especially from a simple to a more complex form.
5. **Discovered** /dɪˈskʌvəd/ (verb): Found out or revealed something that was previously unknown.
6. **Explored** /ɪkˈsplɔːrd/ (verb): Investigated or traveled through (a place) in order to learn about it.

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. Which institution was Dr. Paul Scofield from?
Option: Canterbury Museum
Option: University of Canterbury
Option: North Canterbury College
Option: Tata Institute of Fundamental Research

2. Where was the fossil studied by Dr. Paul Scofield and George Young found?
Option: North Canterbury
Option: South Canterbury
Option: East Canterbury
Option: West Canterbury

3. In which journal was the work of Dr. Paul Scofield and George Young published?
Option: Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology
Option: National Geographic
Option: Scientific American
Option: New England Journal of Medicine

4. Where was the ichthyosaur fossil found in New Zealand?
Option: Clarence River
Option: Waikato River
Option: Manawatu River
Option: Waitaki River

5. How long did the special ichthyosaur live in New Zealand after others had died out?
Option: 5 million years
Option: 10 million years
Option: 2 million years
Option: 8 million years

6. What did Dr. Paul Scofield and George Young discover the fossil was evolving into?
Option: Something like a whale
Option: Something like a shark
Option: Something like a sea turtle
Option: Something like a crocodile



True-False

- 7. Ichthyosaurs went extinct about 100 million years ago.
- 8. The fossil found by Dr. Paul Scofield and George Young is complete.
- 9. Dr. Paul Scofield and George Young studied the fossil for one year.
- 10. Ichthyosaurs first appeared around 250 million years ago.
- 11. Dr. Paul Scofield is a graduate from the University of Canterbury.
- 12. The fossil was found by Professor James Crampton near the Waitaki River in 2010.

Gap-Fill

- 13. The ichthyosaur fossil found by Professor James Crampton was _____ meters long.
- 14. The special ichthyosaur lived in New Zealand for _____ million years after others had died out.
- 15. Ichthyosaurs lived until about _____ million years ago.
- 16. Dr. Paul Scofield and George Young studied the fossil for _____ years.
- 17. Dr. Paul Scofield found that the ichthyosaur was evolving into something like a _____.
- 18. More discoveries could be made in the area where the fossil was found because it is not well _____ . (explored/discovered/surveyed/researched)

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Canterbury Museum 2. North Canterbury 3. Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology 4. Clarence River 5. 5 million years 6. Something like a whale

True-False: 7. True 8. False 9. False 10. True 11. False 12. False

Gap-Fill: 13. 4



14. 5 15. 95 16. 3 17. whale 18. explored

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. How are fossils typically _____?

- Option: Covered with rocks
- Option: Damaged by sunlight
- Option: Preserved in sediment or rock
- Option: Left out in the open

2. Who are individuals that offer judgment or evaluation of something?

- Option: Explorers
- Option: Critics
- Option: Scientists
- Option: Artisans

3. What is the seasonal movement of animals from one region to another?

- Option: Hibernation
- Option: Migration
- Option: Adaptation
- Option: Evolution

4. What is a treatment intended to relieve or heal a disorder?

- Option: Vaccination
- Option: Therapy
- Option: Medication
- Option: Surgery

5. Natural phenomena characterized by strong winds and heavy rains are called _____.

- Option: Storms
- Option: Breezes
- Option: Calm
- Option: Soft showers

6. In what manner would you complete a task if you do it expeditiously?



- Option: Quickly
- Option: Slowly
- Option: Carefully
- Option: Thoughtfully

7. Data and facts regarding something are referred to as _____.

- Option: Intelligence
- Option: News
- Option: Information
- Option: Knowledge

8. What term describes a range of different things or people?

- Option: Uniformity
- Option: Diversity
- Option: Homogeneity
- Option: Monotony

9. Something not natural but created by humans is called _____.

- Option: Authentic
- Option: Genuine
- Option: Real
- Option: Artificial

10. What are results or consequences of actions events or situations called?

- Option: Beginnings
- Option: Outcomes
- Option: Intentions
- Option: Causations

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. The family embarked on a long _____ across the continent.

12. The team worked hard to build a strong sense of _____ among its members.

13. The latest _____ helped simplify everyday tasks for the users.

14. The news of their upcoming adventure was truly _____ for the group.

15. The school offered various extracurricular _____ for students to participate in.



16. The archaeologists _____ ancient ruins deep in the jungle.
17. Technology is constantly _____ to meet the changing needs of society.
18. The advanced _____ performed tasks with precision and efficiency.
19. Renewable sources of _____ are being explored to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
20. Living organisms must _____ to changes in their surroundings to survive.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. Ensuring diverse voices are heard in decision-making processes is crucial for proper representation.
22. The researchers used GPS technology for tracking the movements of the endangered species.
23. She mistakenly thought the event was on Friday instead of Thursday.
24. The team of scientists explored the uncharted territory in search of new species.
25. Promoting diversity and inclusion within the workplace leads to a more harmonious environment.
26. Mutual trust in a relationship is built on honesty and reliability.
27. The investigative journalist prepared a detailed report on the corruption scandal.
28. The fashion industry is continually evolving to reflect changing trends and consumer preferences.
29. The factory implemented robotic technology to streamline production processes.
30. The community center offers various programs for seniors to engage in social activities.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Preserved in sediment or rock 2. Critics 3. Migration 4. Therapy 5. Storms 6. Quickly 7. Information 8. Diversity 9. Artificial 10. Outcomes

Gap-Fill: 11. Journey 12. Trust 13. Gadget 14. Exciting 15. Programs 16. Discovered 17. Evolving 18. Robot 19. Energy 20. Adapt

Matching sentence: 1. Representation 2. Tracking 3. Mistakenly 4. Explored 5. Inclusion 6. Trust 7. Report 8. Evolving



9. Robot 10. Programs

CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL1

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