



Two-Million-Year-Old Fossil Reveals Upright Walking Ancestors

Description

Scientists found a hip bone from a small human ancestor called *Paranthropus robustus*. This species lived a long time ago, around the same time as our direct ancestors. The bone shows that they walked upright, like us. This finding also shows that *Paranthropus* was smaller than we thought, which made it more vulnerable to large predators in its environment.

The name *Paranthropus robustus* was given in 1938. Fossils have been found mainly in one area in South Africa called the Cradle of Humankind. Most of these fossils are skulls and teeth, which tell us a lot about their brains but not about how they lived.

Finding the hip bone, thigh bone, and shinbone in Swartkrans Cave is important. These bones look like smaller versions of human bones. They prove that *P. robustus* walked on two legs instead of moving like an ape.

This species was small, about 1 meter tall and weighing 27 kilograms. It lived in an area where big animals, like hyenas, were also present. This made it hard for *P. robustus* to survive, even with tools.

This discovery changes our understanding of how they lived and reproduced.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Ancestor** /'æn.ses.tər/ (noun): A person typically one more remote than a grandparent from whom one is descended.
2. **Vulnerable** /'vʌl.nər.ə.bəl/ (adjective): Open to attack criticism or harm; susceptible to physical or emotional injury.
3. **Environment** /ɪn'vaɪrənmənt/ (noun): The surroundings or conditions in which a person animal or plant lives or operates.
4. **Discovery** /dɪs'kʌv.ər.i/ (noun): The act of discovering or finding something; a new and significant finding.
5. **Understanding** /ʌn.dər'stæn.dɪŋ/ (noun): The ability to comprehend or grasp the nature of something; knowledge.
6. **Species** /'spiː.ʃɪz/ (noun): A group of living organisms consisting of similar individuals capable of exchanging genes or interbreeding.

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. What is the name of the small human ancestor mentioned in the text?
Option: Homo sapiens
Option: Paranthropus robustus
Option: Australopithecus afarensis
Option: Neanderthal
2. Where were most of the Paranthropus robustus fossils found?
Option: Europe
Option: Asia
Option: South America
Option: South Africa
3. What does the discovery of the hip bone, thigh bone, and shinbone prove about Paranthropus robustus?
Option: They were quadrupedal
Option: They were tree-dwelling
Option: They walked on two legs
Option: They were aquatic
4. How tall was Paranthropus robustus according to the text?
Option: 2 meters
Option: 1 meter
Option: 3 meters
Option: 0.5 meters
5. Which area in South Africa is mentioned as the location of the main fossil findings?
Option: Kalahari Desert
Option: Namib Desert
Option: Cradle of Humankind
Option: Drakensberg Mountains
6. What made Paranthropus robustus more vulnerable to large predators?
Option: Being tree-dwelling
Option: Walking on four legs
Option: Their small size
Option: Living in groups



True-False

7. The fossils discovered were mainly skulls and teeth.
8. Paranthropus robustus lived at the same time as Neanderthals.
9. The study on Paranthropus robustus was published in the Journal of Human Evolution.
10. Tools were not effective in helping Paranthropus robustus survive in its environment.
11. Paranthropus robustus had a smaller brain compared to modern humans.
12. Paranthropus robustus was a predator in its environment.

Gap-Fill

13. The name Paranthropus robustus was given in _____.
14. Paranthropus robustus was approximately _____ meters tall.
14. Paranthropus robustus was approximately _____ meters tall.
15. Finding the hip bone, thigh bone, and shinbone in Swartkrans Cave was significant in proving that Paranthropus robustus walked on _____ legs.
16. Paranthropus robustus weighed around _____ kilograms.
17. Being small and weighing 27 kilograms made Paranthropus robustus more vulnerable to large predators in its _____.
18. The discovery of the hip bone, thigh bone, and shinbone changed our understanding of how Paranthropus robustus _____.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Paranthropus robustus 2. South Africa 3. They walked on two legs 4. 1 meter 5. Cradle of Humankind



6. Their small size

True-False: 7. True 8. False 9. True 10. True 11. True 12. False 14. True

Gap-Fill: 13. 1938 14. 1 15. two 16. 27 17. environment 18. lived and reproduced

Answer

CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL1

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