

NAXOS
AudioBooks

JUNIOR
CLASSICS
UNABRIDGED

Jen Green

Dinosaurs

Read by **Benjamin Soames**



1	Chapter 1: What Were the Dinosaurs?	9:28
2	Almost everything we know about dinosaurs...	6:54
3	Two hundred years ago...	6:41
4	In 1902, an American fossil hunter Barnum Brown...	7:04
5	Chapter 2: Dinosaurs of the Triassic	8:38
6	Another exciting find from the Valley of the Moon...	7:26
7	About the same time as packs of Coelophysis roamed...	4:47
8	Chapter 3: Jurassic Dinosaurs	9:06
9	Mention the word dinosaur to most people...	10:54
10	Towards the end of the Jurassic...	6:57
11	With its tall, diamond-shaped plates, Stegosaurus...	4:00
12	Chapter 4: Dinosaurs of the Early Cretaceous	5:52
13	The 1870s brought more important discoveries...	6:02
14	China is a rich source of fossils...	6:01
15	About the same time, Chinese scientists announced...	6:34
16	Chapter 5: Dinosaurs of the Late Cretaceous	7:28
17	In 1971, a team of fossil hunters from Poland and Mongolia...	10:44
18	North America in late Cretaceous times was home...	6:59
19	At the opposite end of the scale was a tiny predator...	10:06
20	Chapter 6: Death of the Dinosaurs	7:37
21	We will probably never be sure...	4:44

Total time: 2:34:14

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Millions of years ago, long, long before humans existed, Planet Earth was dominated by reptiles. Flying reptiles called pterosaurs were masters of the air. Resembling giant bats, they swept through the skies on skin-covered wings. Sea-dwelling reptiles shaped like dolphins or long-necked Loch Ness monsters ruled the oceans. The group of reptiles we call the dinosaurs lived on land.

Dinosaurs were impressive and fearsome creatures. They included the very largest and heaviest animals ever to have lived on land – far bigger than modern elephants and rhinos. The very biggest measured as long as two tennis courts laid end to end and weighed more than 1,000 people.

However, not all dinosaurs were large. The smallest were only the size of chickens. This gives you some idea of the variety of the group. Some dinosaurs went

on two legs, others four. Some were huge, lumbering beasts built like tanks. Others were slim, graceful and speedy. Many of the dinosaurs that are most famous today were terrifying predators, but most were peaceful plant-eaters.

Dinosaurs vanished from Planet Earth 65 million years ago, wiped out by a mysterious disaster. Soon there was little trace that they had ever existed. Their remains were preserved as fossils, but no one understood what these were. Then, in the 1840s, an English scientist named Richard Owen studied the fossilised remains of three dinosaurs. Owen was an expert in anatomy. He realised that the bones belonged to a distinct group of reptiles that were no longer alive anywhere on Earth. He named the group Dinosauria, which means ‘terrible lizards’.

Dinosaur fossils have now been found on each of Earth’s seven continents,

including Antarctica. Of all the continents, North America is probably the richest in dinosaur fossils. Many spectacular discoveries have been made in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in the west. When a large number of dinosaur skeletons are found together, it is called a dinosaur graveyard. One such graveyard was uncovered in western Canada, at a place which is now Dinosaur Provincial Park. Further south, at Ghost Ranch in southwestern USA, 500 skeletons of a predatory dinosaur called *Coelophysis* were found piled together.

Not so far away, the rocks of the Morrison Formation in Utah and Colorado were the location of the so-called Bone Wars, a bitter feud between two rival fossil hunters. Between them they identified over 100 dinosaur species. This area is now Dinosaur National Monument. The most famous dinosaur of all time, *Tyrannosaurus rex*, was first dug up at a place called Hell Creek, Montana. This site dates to 65 million years ago, at the very end of the age of dinosaurs.

The continent of South America holds some of the most ancient dinosaur fossils

ever found, and also some of the largest. The bleak, barren Valley of the Moon in Argentina yielded the remains of a small predatory dinosaur named *Eoraptor*, dating from 228 million years ago. This is the earliest dinosaur ever identified. Not so far away, the remains of an enormous creature named *Argentinosaurus* came to light. This was probably the very longest and also the heaviest land animal that has ever walked the Earth.

Europe is home to the very first dinosaurs that were ever identified, in the 1820s. These were mostly found by amateur fossil-hunters, who have also unearthed some amazing finds in recent times. In the 1860s, the discovery of the remains of an ancient reptile-like bird, and also a feathered dinosaur, in a limestone quarry in Germany suggested that dinosaurs and birds were closely related. Less than 20 years later, dozens of skeletons of a plant-eating dinosaur named *Iguanodon* were found in a coal mine in Belgium. This was the first evidence that dinosaurs lived in herds.

Spectacular dinosaur finds in Asia, Earth's largest continent, have changed

the way we think about dinosaurs for ever. In the 1920s an American expedition discovered the first known dinosaur eggs and nests in the barren Gobi Desert in Mongolia. Much more recently, in the 1990s, finds of amazing feathered dinosaurs in China confirmed the theory that birds are descended from a group of small, predatory dinosaurs.

The great continent of Africa has produced some incredible fossils. In the early 1900s, a hill called Tendaguru in Tanzania, East Africa was the site of the world's largest-ever dinosaur dig, involving 900 people. The expedition uncovered the remains of a long-necked giant called *Brachiosaurus*, the tallest species found to date. Around the same time, a German fossil-hunter unearthed a priceless treasure trove of dinosaur fossils at an oasis in the Sahara Desert in Egypt. The finds were shipped to a museum in Germany, but sadly they were destroyed by a World War II bombing raid. More specimens have recently come to light at the same location.

Deserts and dry scrublands cover much of the continent of Australia. Few

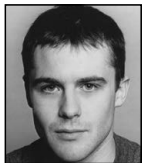
fossils had been found in this hostile land until relatively recently, but now the Fossil Triangle in the northeast, and Dinosaur Cove on the southeast coast are major dinosaur-hunting areas. The first dinosaur fossil was found in New Zealand in 1979, and on the vast, icy continent of Antarctica in 1986. In 1991 the remains of a unique crested dinosaur were found high on a mountain in Antarctica. The continent must hold many more fossils, but unfortunately, most are buried beneath a thick sheet of ice.

A surprising number of the very best dinosaur finds came to light by accident, discovered by people such as miners, farmers, road-builders and jewel-hunters. Some of these discoveries were made in out-of-the way places such as deserts and mountains, but fossils also regularly turn up in fields, woodlands, by rivers or at the seaside. For this reason it's always good to keep an eye out for fossils whenever you are outdoors in the countryside or on the coast!

Notes by Jen Green



Jen Green is a writer and editor of non-fiction, specializing in history, geography, nature, environment and earth science. She received a doctorate from Sussex University and then worked in publishing for many years. Now with a freelance writing career spanning 15 years, she has published over 200 books, many of which have been translated, and numerous articles for encyclopedias and journals.



Benjamin Soames trained at LAMDA. He appeared in the popular TV series *Sharpe* and toured worldwide in the acclaimed Cheek by Jowl production of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, directed by Declan Donnellan. He has read *The Tale of Troy*, *The Adventures of Odysseus*, *Tales from the Greek Legends*, *Great Rulers of Ancient Rome*, *Great Scientists and their Discoveries*, *Great Inventors and their Inventions*, *Stories from Shakespeare: The Plantagenets* and featured in *From Shakespeare – with love* for Naxos AudioBooks.

Credits

Recorded at Motivation Sound Studios, London

Produced by Nicolas Soames

Edited and mastered by Sarah Butcher

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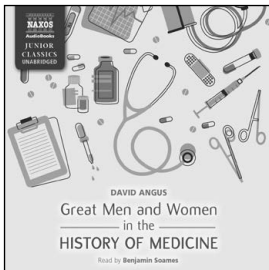
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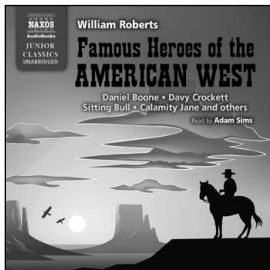
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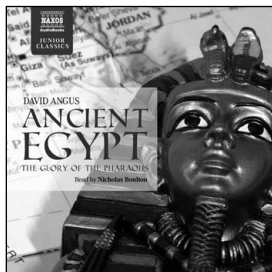
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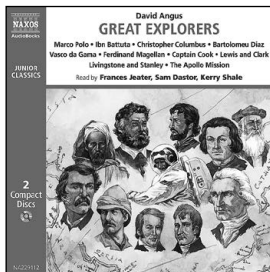
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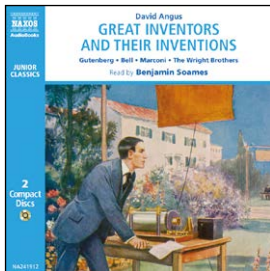
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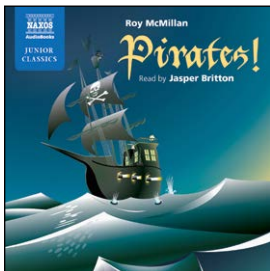
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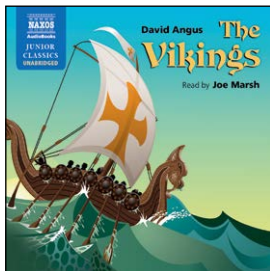
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Jen Green

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Journey back in time to the age of the dinosaurs, the biggest, scariest creatures the world has ever known. Which dinosaurs hunted in packs like wolves? What was the deadliest dinosaur of them all? Which were the very largest species? Not all dinosaurs were bloodthirsty meat-eaters, but all were armed and dangerous. You are advised to keep well clear as we tour the world of the dinosaurs, taking a detailed look at all the most amazing species.



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