参考译文

Bird Fossil Shared Earth with T. rex

鸟类化石与雷克斯霸王龙共享地球

Who’s your favorite superhero? Captain Marvel? Superman? Well, in a minute you might just change your answer to...the Wonderchicken.Announcer: “Yes, the Wonderchicken: strange visitor from this planet, a 67-million-year-old fossil that’s helping researchers piece together the bird family tree.”

你最喜欢的超级英雄是谁?神奇队长吗?超人吗?等一下，你可以把答案改成…Wonderchicken。解说员:“是的，神奇的鸡:来自这个星球的奇怪访客，一个6700万年前的化石，它正在帮助研究人员拼凑鸟类家谱。”

An amateur fossil hunter dug up this specimen 20 years ago in Belgium. But it wasn’t much to look at—just some damaged broken rocks with a few limb bones poking out. That is, until researchers recently decided to peer inside.“We took these not very promising looking rocks and CT scanned them. And when we did that we were amazed to discover that inside the rock was a beautiful, nearly complete, three-dimensionally preserved bird skull.” Paleobiologist Daniel Field, of the University of Cambridge in the UK.

20年前，一位业余化石猎人在比利时发现了这个化石标本。但这并不是什么值得看的东西——只是一些破损的岩石和一些伸出来的肢骨。直到最近，研究人员才决定深入研究。“我们用CT扫描了这些看起来不太有希望的岩石。这时，我们惊奇地发现岩石里面有一个美丽的、几乎完整的、三维保存的鸟类头骨。英国剑桥大学的古生物学家丹尼尔·菲尔德说。

The result was so striking that coming up with a nickname for this newly discovered species was easy.“The combination of the shock and the chickeny nature of the fossil resulted in the name Wonderchicken.”And the specimen isn’t just special because of the incredibly preserved skull.  The Wonderchicken is actually a record breaker.“So this is actually the oldest fossil ever found that’s clearly a representative of the group of modern birds.”

结果如此惊人，为这个新发现的物种想出一个昵称是很容易的。“让人震惊的化石和小鸡的特性结合在一起，形成了Wonderchicken这个名字。“这个标本之所以特别，不仅仅是因为它保存了令人难以置信的头骨。这只神奇的鸡打破了记录。“所以这是迄今为止发现的最古老的化石，显然是现代鸟类的代表。”

The Wonderchicken walked the Earth less than a million years before the asteroid impact that wiped out dinosaurs. In fact, this approximately 400-gram—or about seven-eighths of a pound—bird would have been a contemporary of many of the best-known dinosaur species, like Tyrannosaurus Rex and Triceratops.

在小行星撞击地球导致恐龙灭绝之前不到一百万年，神奇鸡在地球上行走。事实上，这只重约400克的鸟可能与许多最著名的恐龙物种是同时代的，比如霸王龙和三角龙。

Even though great amounts of evolutionary history can now be deduced by studying the genomes of living species, fossils like this one still play a valuable role. For example, they can help pin down the date of branches in a family tree. The Wonderchicken fits into the bird family tree right around the split between chicken-like birds and duck-like birds. [Daniel J. Field et al, Late Cretaceous neornithine from Europe illuminates the origins of crown birds, in Nature]

尽管现在通过研究现存物种的基因组可以推断出大量的进化史，但像这样的化石仍然发挥着重要的作用。例如，它们可以帮助确定家谱中分支的日期。这只神奇的鸡正好在鸡类和鸭类鸟类的分界线附近，属于鸟类谱系树的一部分。

“So fossils provide irreplaceable information for evolutionary studies because they provide the only direct evidence we’ll ever have for how evolution has actually taken place.”And given the incredible detail in this specimen, the team are hoping that there’s still plenty to learn from this fossil fowl.

“因此，化石为进化研究提供了不可替代的信息，它们为我们提供了关于进化是如何发生的唯一直接证据。”“考虑到这只标本中令人难以置信的细节，研究小组希望从这只化石鸡中仍有很多东西可以学习。”

“So I think there’s still a number of mysteries that this fossil is going to shed light on.”

“因此，我认为这具化石仍有许多未解之谜。”

听力原文

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