Glorified Dinosaurs: The Origin and Early Evolution of Birds by Luis M. Chiappe

The Birth Of Bird Paleontology

The last few years have witnessed an unparalleled rate of discoveries of early birds and their dinosaurian predecessors. Written by a recognised authority in the field, Glorified Dinosaurs: The Origin and Early Evolution of Birds provides a comprehensive summary of these discoveries and addresses the fascinating topic of how modern birds evolved from fearsome dinosaurs akin to the celebrated Velociraptor. The book focuses on an evolutionary approach and presents current research and fossil discoveries. The title includes coloured photographs of fossils and fossil localities, many of which have been rarely reproduced elsewhere.

Glorified Dinosaurs: The Origin and Early Evolution of Birds is an invaluable resource for every palaeontologist, ornithologist, evolutionary biologist, geology and life sciences student. It is also an exciting reading for people interested in dinosaurs and avian evolution and for all those with a general interests in the topic.

My Personal Review:
Most books on evolution don't talk about the evidence in enough detail that you can really understand it, let alone be convinced by it. This is a tragic waste since there really is good fossil evidence for evolution, but the experts just can't be bothered to talk about it. There have been 3 recent exceptions to this rule: T. S. Kemp's The Origin and Evolution of Mammals, Jennifer A. Clack's Gaining Ground (origin of amphibians from fish), and now this book, which is the only one really accessible by the general public. Bird fossils is a field which have really exploded recently, I read lot's of science mags and try to keep up, but this book has tons of stuff I hadn't even heard about. The title of the review really says it all, I just want to add that the old debate about whether birds started as gliding tree dwellers or as two legged runners that flapped to go faster may have been finally settled. I won't give away the ending, though. Creationists will probably pay this book the supreme compliment of ignoring it completely, anyone with an open mind will be very impressed.

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