

CREATION MOMENTS

Proclaiming Evidence for Truth

THIS WEEK'S CREATION MOMENT

Crystal Palace Dinosaurs



The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility. – Proverbs 15:33

If you visit London, England, there are a lot of interesting sights to see. You will probably want to take photos of the Horse-guard's Parade, Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament, among many, many other sights. But it might not occur to you to visit the Crystal Palace Dinosaurs. In the 1850s, Benjamin W. Hawkins designed and built a magnificent dinosaur park. Today, you can still see his fascinating sculptures, set in urban parkland in the London Borough of Bromley. However, it is not until you look more closely that you begin to notice something strange.

For example, you might take a look at the Crystal Palace Iguanodon. It looks like a giant lizard with a spike on its nose, just like the small iguana lizard. But if you look in your picture book of dinosaurs, you will probably find a picture of an iguanodon, standing upright on two legs, with a spike on its "hand". Why the difference? Fossil discoveries are rarely complete, and often the animal's bones are scattered over a large area. Moreover, many bones in the skeleton are missing. Nineteenth-century paleontologists discovered a spike among the iguanodon fossil bones and assumed it to be a nose. Later, more complete skeletons showed that the spike was a thumb rather than a nose.

Hawkins' Crystal Palace Dinosaurs should not be laughed at because he worked with the best scientific information available at the time. Rather, we should expect that modern scientists should have the humility not to make dogmatic statements about the form or behavior of their fossils lest they should turn out later to be wrong.

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