

# Dinosaurs & Fossils of Lesotho

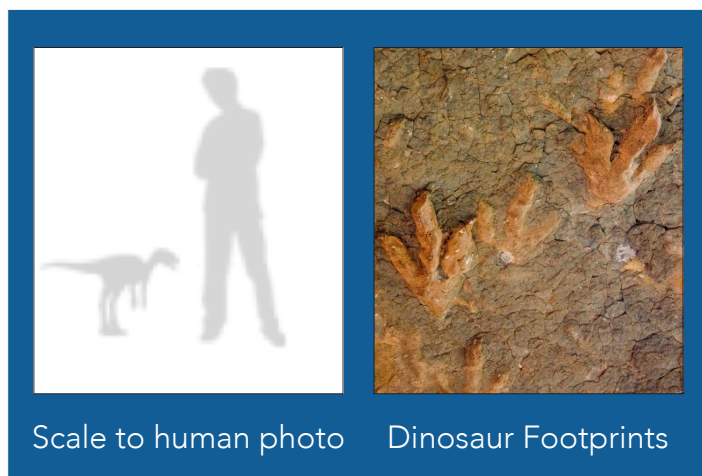
Lesotho is home to numerous plant and animal fossils, as well as dinosaur fossils. The majority of the earliest fossils discovered were found by missionaries who explored the land. Lesotho has one of the largest concentrations of dinosaur footprints in the world. Lesotho has numerous footprint locations with sites at Morija, Subeng Stream and Tsikoane Plateau, Moyeni, Matsieng, and Mohale's Hoek.

## The Dinosaur of Lesotho: The Lesothosaurus!

Peter M. Galton discovered the fossils of an unknown dinosaur in 1978. The Lesothosaurus lived in the early Jurassic period, approximately 200 million years ago. The Lesothosaurus was one of the earliest ornithischians, or "bird-hipped" dinosaurs. The Lesothosaurus was a small and lightly built dinosaur. It was about 1 m long and would have come up to the thigh of a 2 m person. The dinosaur was lizard-like in that it walked on two long legs and had feet with four toes. It had short arms with hands with five fingers, a flexible neck and a small head. The tail was about 3 feet long. They were herbivores and had teeth designed for shredding plants.



Image © National Geographic Society



Scale to human photo

Dinosaur Footprints

It is believed that the Lesothosaurus died out in the mid-Jurassic period. Other members of the ornithischians species lived for another 150 million years until the extinction of dinosaurs. Other dinosaur fossils found in Lesotho included those of the Massospondylus and Heterodontosaurus.

