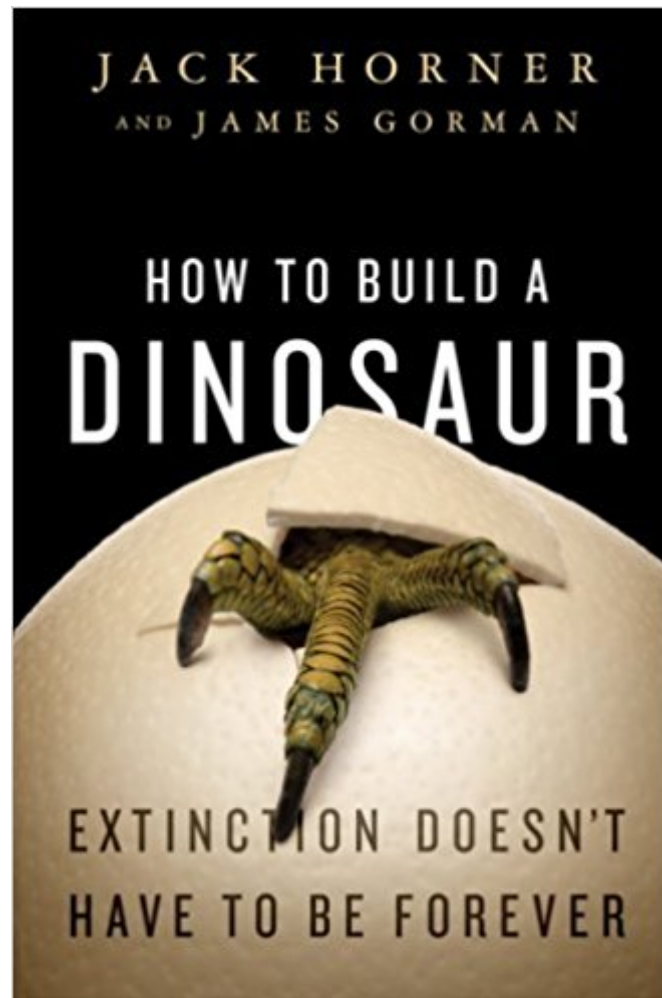




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How To Build A Dinosaur: Extinction Doesn't Have To Be Forever



Synopsis

In movies, in novels, in comic strips, and on television, we've all seen dinosaurs-or at least somebody's educated guess of what they would look like. But what if it were possible to build, or grow, a real dinosaur without finding ancient DNA? Jack Horner, the scientist who advised Steven Spielberg on the blockbuster film Jurassic Park and a pioneer in bringing paleontology into the twenty-first century, teams up with the editor of the New York Times's Science Times section to reveal exactly what's in store. In the 1980s, Horner began using CAT scans to look inside fossilized dinosaur eggs, and he and his colleagues have been delving deeper ever since. At North Carolina State University, Mary Schweitzer has extracted fossil molecules-proteins that survived 68 million years-from a Tyrannosaurus rex fossil excavated by Horner. These proteins show that T. rex and the modern chicken are kissing cousins. At McGill University, Hans Larsson is manipulating a chicken embryo to awaken the dinosaur within-starting by getting it to grow a tail and eventually prompting it to grow the forelimbs of a dinosaur. All of this is happening without changing a single gene. This incredible research is leading to discoveries and applications so profound they're scary in the power they confer on humanity. How to Build a Dinosaur is a tour of the hot rocky deserts and air-conditioned laboratories at the forefront of this scientific revolution. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Let me preface this review by clarifying that this is not the first time I've been exposed to this body of research. Watching the Discovery Channel special in early 2008, I became so fascinated with the material that I dug up as much information as I could and wrote a paper about the possibility of

bringing back dinosaurs, mammoths, sabre-tooth cats, etc. Since then, I've followed the research closely -- particularly that of Dr. Larsson -- and when I began editing the paper again this year "for fun" and stumbled upon this book for preorder by chance, I was ecstatic. I am also a long, longtime fan and admirer of Dr. Horner, who I remember fondly on my tv set as a child, talking to me about dinosaurs while I listened raptly. The book itself tends to meander every which way, although all in the scope of the fossil paleontology and microbiology community, charting efforts all across the board (and globe) until now. I suppose if you're looking for a very specialized sort of thing, it'll seem scatterbrained, and the real "meat" of what you're dying for is in the last 1/3 of the book. But pay close attention, and be patient; you'll be glad you did. Dr. Horner and Mr. Gorman are great writers, and storytellers. This is a treat to read. It also makes quite a stirring case in the end regarding ethical, financial, and philosophical issues; I believe this is no mistake on the author's part, someone who is clearly reaching out to the public for both their interest, their awe, their faith in the value of the work, and their \$\$\$ investment. No doubt, Horner is beginning to understand the gravity of the work being done here: if he doesn't push for it, no one will.

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