

## ARCHAEOPTERYX INFORMATION SHEET

The Archaeopteryx gets his name from the Ancient Greek meaning of “original bird” or “first bird.”

Some paleontologists believe that the Archaeopteryx was the father of all birds we know today. Our knowledge of Archaeopteryxes dates back to 165 million years ago.

The Archaeopteryx is considered a reptile as well as a bird.

Its size was equivalent to that of a crow. At largest, the Archaeopteryx reached 1.6 feet.

The Archaeopteryx’s body was covered in feathers, but it had teeth and a tail of a typical reptile. Despite of his small size, his wings and ability to fly, the Archaeopteryx was biologically similar to a reptile than a modern bird. It had a jaw with sharp teeth, three fingers with claws, and a long tail made of bone.

Archaeopteryx fossils were found in south Germany. Its initial discovery was 1861 by Christian Erich Hermann von Meyer. More than 9 Archaeopteryx skeletons were unearthed that year.

The unearthed Archaeopteryx fossils are the first to be known as “transitional fossils” because it marks a transition between dinosaurs and birds. Its fossils contribute to the study of dinosaurs as well as the study of birds by scientists.

In the last 20 years, several ancient birds were found in places such as north China. Therefore, it is not the only “transitional fossil” around, but seen as a part of the dinosaur evolution in which dinosaurs turned into birds.

