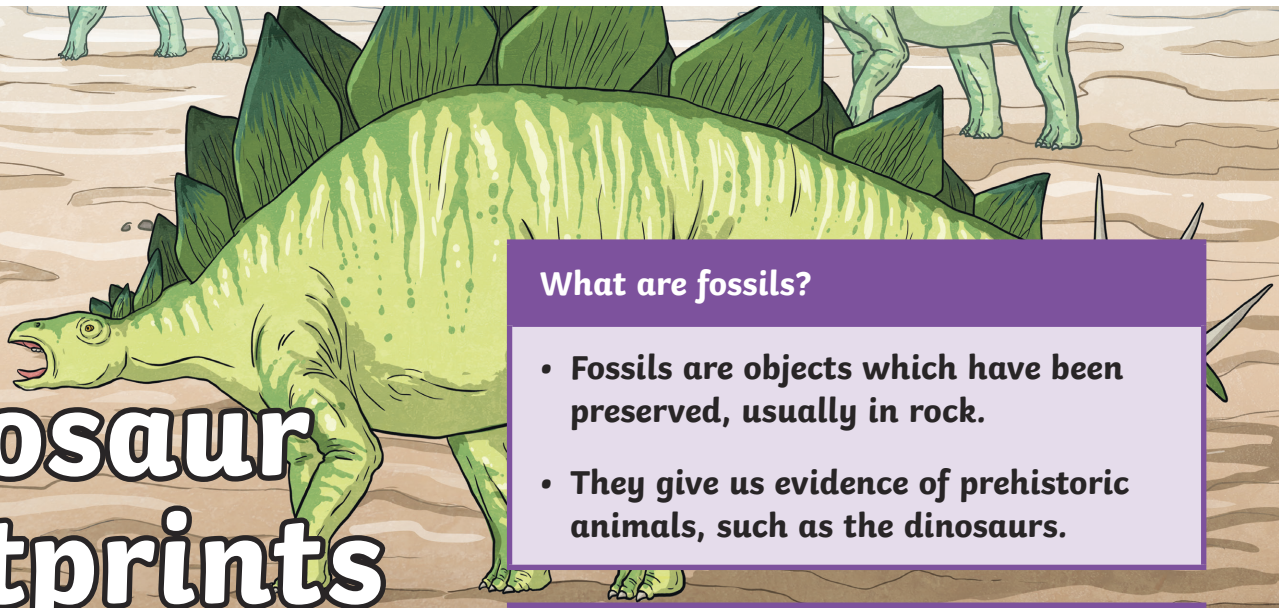




## Dinosaur Footprints



### What are fossils?

- Fossils are objects which have been preserved, usually in rock.
- They give us evidence of prehistoric animals, such as the dinosaurs.

Illustration: A stegosaurus.

## Dinosaur Fossils on Isle of Skye

Scientists have found 50 dinosaur footprints on the **Isle of Skye**, Scotland. They were under **boulders** for many years.

They found the footprints at a place called Brother's Point on the island. Dinosaur fossils have been found here before.

But when a storm hit the island, the wind moved some boulders. The storm helped to reveal the fossils. This gave scientists proof that dinosaurs had once stomped there.

One of the top finds was evidence of stegosaurus footprints. A stegosaurus was a **herbivore**. It had two rows of bony plates running down its back.

A stegosaurus could grow up to nine metres long. It could weigh 6 tonnes. The largest footprint they found was 70cm wide

Dr Steve Brusatte is a **palaeontologist**. He said they could learn more about "the dinosaurs that lived in Scotland 170 million years ago."

Scientists are very excited. This is because the fossils are from the Middle Jurassic

period. It was 174-164 million years ago. Fossils from this time are very rare.

The Jurassic period was a really interesting time. It was when huge dinosaurs, such as the diplodocus, lived on Earth.

Other dinosaurs called theropods also lived at this time. They hunted other dinosaurs.

Scientists will be searching the island in more depth. Who knows what the next storm could uncover?

### Glossary

**isle** An island.

**boulders** Large rocks.

**herbivore** An animal that gets its energy by feeding only on plants.

**palaeontologist** A scientist that studies fossils to find out more about dinosaurs and prehistoric creatures.

# Questions

1. When was the Middle Jurassic period?

- 1 billion years ago
- 174-164 million years ago
- 166 million years ago exactly
- 130 million years ago exactly

2. 'But when a storm hit the island, the wind moved some boulders. The storm helped to reveal the fossils.'

Find and copy a word from these sentences that means the same as 'uncover'.

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3. 'When a storm hit the island, the wind moved the boulders.'

This suggests that...

- The boulders could have been moved at any time.
- The boulders must have been heavy.
- The scientists weren't looking very hard for fossils.
- Storms like boulders.

4. Find and copy a piece of evidence that shows that stegosaurus were large creatures.

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5. Do you think more fossils will be found on the Isle of Skye?

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6. Write a summary of the story in 15 words or fewer.

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# Answers

1. When was the Middle Jurassic period?

- 1 billion years ago
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- 166 million years ago exactly
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Find and copy a word from these sentences that means the same as 'uncover'.

**reveal**

3. 'When a storm hit the island, the wind moved the boulders.'

This suggests that...

- The boulders could have been moved at any time.
- The boulders must have been heavy.**
- The scientists weren't looking very hard for fossils.
- Storms like boulders.

4. Find and copy a piece of evidence that shows that stegosauruses were large creatures.  
**Accept any piece of evidence that refers to the story, e.g. It could grow up to 9 metres long. It could weigh 6 tonnes. The largest footprint they found was 70cm wide.**

5. Do you think more fossils will be found on the Isle of Skye?

**Accept any answer which refers to the story, e.g. Yes, I think more fossils will be found on the Isle of Skye because scientists have found a lot recently.**

6. Write a summary of the story in 15 words or fewer.

**Any reasonable summary that is 15 words or fewer, e.g. Scientists have discovered 50 footprints of dinosaurs on the Isle of Skye.**