

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# THE DINOSAURS

## Pterodactyl

This dinosaur lived in the upper Jurassic period, about 150 million years. It was carnivorous and is believed to hunt fish and other small animals.



Its fossil remains have been found primarily in the Solnhofen limestone, Bavaria, Germany. Some fragmented remains have also been found in other parts of Europe and Africa. The first specimen of this dinosaur was identified in 1784.

Like bats, the wings of pterodactyl were formed with a skin membrane that extended from its elongated fourth finger to its hind limbs. Its wings were a wonder of engineering because they were supported internally by collagen fibers and externally by keratin edges.

Its name is derived from the Greek words pteron, which means wing, and daktylos, which means finger, and refers to the way in which the wing is held by its large fourth finger. It had a long neck and a kind of soft tissue crest on its head; these crests have only been found on the adult specimens.

An adult pterodactyl had approximately 90 teeth, which were extended from the tips of his jaws; but a young pterodactyl had only 15 teeth. The pterodactyl was not a giant as seen in the movies; it was about the size of a turkey. Its wingspan was a meter and a half long.

