

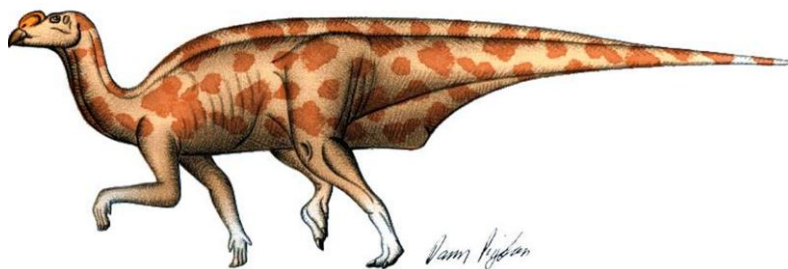
Australian Studies

Australian Dinosaurs

Suitable age group: 10 and older

These printable lessons will be
added to as time goes along.

(Solutions to questions are not provided)





Opalised Dinosaurs

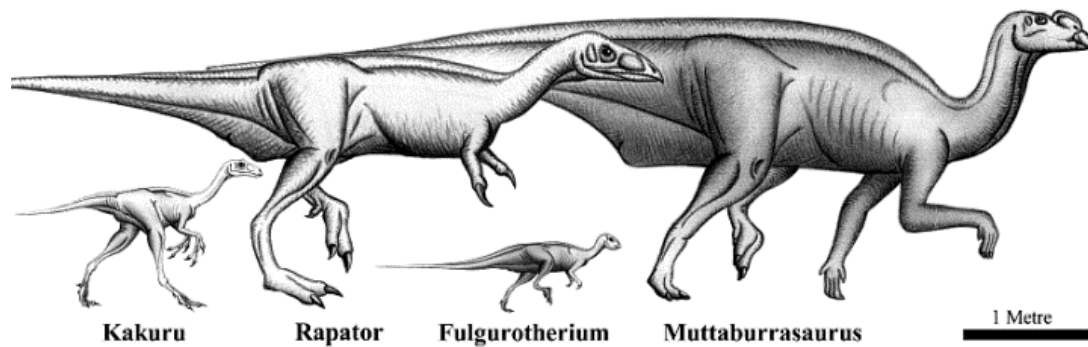


image courtesy and © Dann Pigdon

Dinosaur remains have been found in the opal fields of South Australia and New South Wales.

Kakuru is represented by a single almost-complete tibia (lower leg bone) from Andamooka in South Australia. The word "Kakuru" means "rainbow serpent" in the local Aboriginal language, probably because the opalised fossil sparkles with many colours. Other South Australian fossil material includes a juvenile hypsilophodontid vertebra from Andemooka, and an ankle bone of a large ornithopod, perhaps something like **Muttaborrasaurus**, from Coober Pedy.

Talk about or Write about

1. When people learn that dinosaurs lived in Australia many don't realise that our land looked nothing like it does now. The Australian continent had not long broken away from Antarctica and would have had a different size and shape than what it has today. Also, there was a large inland sea occupying about a third of Australia's land area. So what does it actually mean to say that dinosaur remains have been found in South Australia?
2. What do opals and rainbows have in common?
3. Looking at the image above, how tall and how long would you say Kakuru was?
4. What would you estimate the height and length of Muttaborrasaurus to be?
5. Of the four dinosaurs in the picture, three are bipeds and the other is quadrupedal. What does this mean?
6. What modern-day creature does Kakuru most remind you of?
7. If you were lucky enough to find an opalised dinosaur fossil would you value it more for its beauty or its rarity? What would you do with it?

