

## Dinosaurs or Dragons: the cultural identity of fossils

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The traditional history of paleontology, as told through the lens of the Scientific Revolution, teaches that fossils were first discovered and recorded by Robert Hooke in his 1665 work "Micrographia". However, over the past 20 years, as there has been a greater push to explore anti-colonial scientific narratives, a growing body of evidence suggests encounters between early peoples and fossils were occurring as far back as the Neolithic, continued into Ancient Greece, and are evident in the history of the earliest indigenous people in North America. These interactions are recorded in the documentary and archaeological record, and have been preserved to this day through mythology, folklore, and place names across different continents and cultures. The dual identity of fossils as foundations of our palaeontological theories and as items of cultural, historical, and archaeological importance, should be considered by institutions when displaying fossils to the public, as well as by paleontologists when naming new species or prospecting for fossils, particularly when on or near traditional indigenous lands.