A Brief History on the Evolution of Birds

Ashley Hall, Outreach Program Manager, Museum of the Rockies

Take flight through time in this fascinating lecture that traces the origin and evolution of birds from their dinosaur ancestors to the diverse species we see today. Beginning with the dramatic rise of the theropod dinosaurs, we'll explore the pivotal adaptations—such as feathers, flight, and changes in metabolism—that led to the rise of modern birds. Discover how these creatures survived mass extinctions, evolved new forms of locomotion, and adapted to a wide range of environments, from the skies to the oceans. We'll also delve into the latest scientific discoveries, including cutting-edge fossil evidence and genetic research, that have reshaped our understanding of avian evolution. From the first feathered dinosaurs to the global avian family tree, this lecture will show how birds are not just descendants of ancient creatures but also living proof of evolutionary ingenuity. Whether you're a birdwatcher, a dinosaur enthusiast, or just curious about the natural world, this lecture will leave you with a new appreciation for the remarkable creatures soaring above us—and a deeper understanding of how they came to rule the skies.