

# Scientists Study Dinosaur “Mummy”



The discovery of a dinosaur “mummy” is exciting news for scientists. They say the remains of a duckbilled dinosaur called a hadrosaur may be the closest they will ever get to touching a real, live dinosaur.

Even though scientists are calling the dinosaur find a “mummy,” this mummy is not like the mummies found in Egypt. It is being called a mummy because the creature’s body hardened into stone before it had a chance to decay. Many parts of the dinosaur -- including skin, muscles, and maybe even some of its organs -- have been preserved. Usually, scientists only get to study the bones of a dinosaur. It is very, very rare to find any remains of a dinosaur’s muscle or skin.

“It's unbelievable when you look at it for the first time,” said scientist Philip Manning. The skin is complete in many places around the tail, arms, and legs, he said.

When scientists find dinosaur bones they can usually only guess at how much muscle was packed between those bones. But now they have been able to see and study the hadrosaur’s muscles. That has changed their ideas about how hadrosaur looked and moved. Since it had larger muscles in its rear end than scientists thought, it probably had powerful legs. With legs like that, hadrosaur would be able to run at speeds of 25 miles per hour (mph). That is 10 mph faster than scientists think *T. rex* ran.

## **NEWS WORD BOX**

preserved hardened muscles  
decay organs nicknamed

“Hadrosaur was a prey animal and it didn't have big horns on its head like triceratops,” said Manning. Since its body didn't offer protection, it had to be able to run fast.

## **MORE FACTS ABOUT THE DINOSAUR MUMMY**

- The dinosaur is nicknamed Dakota because a teenager found it on his family’s ranch in North Dakota.
- Scientists think hadrosaurs could have been 40 feet long and weighed 3-1/2 tons.

## **THINK ABOUT THE NEWS**

What do you think scientist Phillip Manning meant when he said, “*This specimen exceeds the jackpot*”?