

# *Archaeoraptor liaoningensis* Flying Forgery

A new bird like fossil was recently found in the Liaoning Province, China that supposedly shows that dinosaurs are the evolutionary ancestors of birds. Notice the following quote:

"Scientist funded by National Geographic studied the animal, named *Archaeoraptor liaoningensis*, under ultraviolet light and used CT scans to view parts of the animal obscured by rock. Preliminary study of the arms suggests that it was a better flier than *Archaeopteryx*, the earliest known bird. Its tail, however, is strikingly similar to the stiff tail of a family of predatory dinosaurs called dromaeosaurs. This mix of advanced and primitive features is exactly what scientists would expect to find in dinosaurs experimenting with flight."

**It was later found that the fossil was a fake.**

It is a composite (fake) of the body of a fossil bird and the tail of a dinosaur. Two different fossils were glued together by a Chinese farmer and sold to a fossil dealer. It then made its way to the United States where it was bought at a gem and mineral show. It then came to the attention of National Geographic. They ran a feature article in their November 1999 issue entitled *Feathers for T Rex?* (Sloan 1999) using this fossil as "proof." National Geographic later had to retract its story.

Lewis Simons who was hired by National Geographic said the following (Simons 2000): "Using what I've seen, heard, and read, I've assembled a brief history of *Archaeoraptor*. It's a tale of misguided secrecy and misplaced confidence. Of rampant egos clashing, self-aggrandizement, wishful thinking, naïve assumption, human error, stubbornness, manipulation, backbiting, lying, corruption, and, most of all abysmal communication. It's a story in which none of the characters looks good."