Origin of flight: Fossils of feathered dinosaurs reveal bird evolution

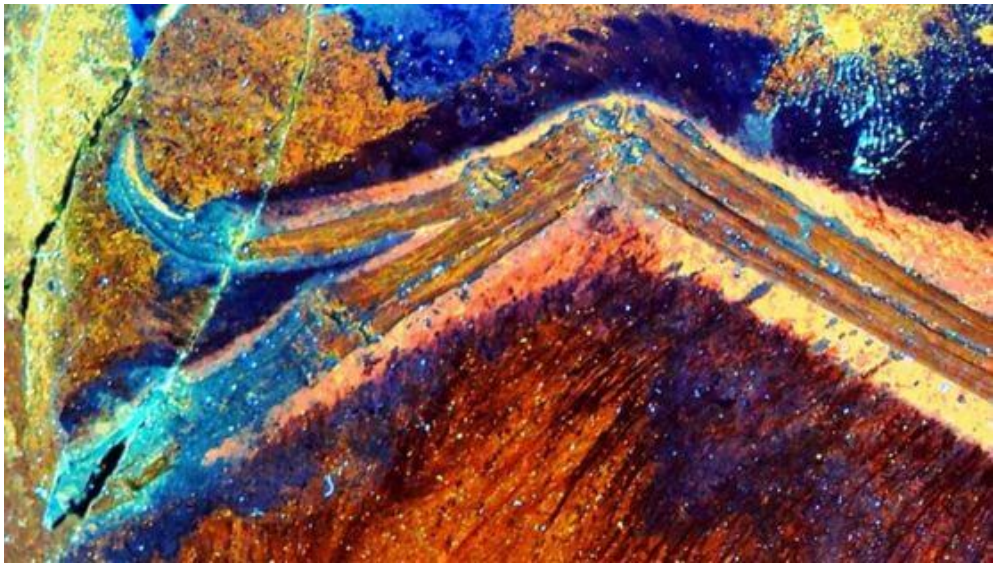
A dinosaur that lived 160 million years ago had drumstick-shaped legs much like living birds, according to paleontologists.

…

“In this study, what we’ve done is we’ve used high-powered lasers to reveal unseen soft tissues preserved alongside the bones of a feathered dinosaur called *Anchiornis*,” said [Michael Pittman of the University of Hong Kong]. The research could give insights into the origins of flight, which is thought to have evolved more than 150 million years ago.

…

The research team used laser-stimulated fluorescence imaging, a technique that reveals soft tissue details that are unseen under visible light.



The fossilized wing of the Anchiornis dinosaur. Credit: BBC.

Dr Stephen Brusatte of the University of Edinburgh, who was not connected with the research, said the study produced striking evidence of just how bird-like these dinosaurs were.

“This study uses high-powered lasers to generate the single best look at the wings and body outline of a dinosaur ever…The laser images show that this non-bird dinosaur had wings that were remarkably similar to those of living birds, down to the soft tissues,” he said.

[The study can be found here.]

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: ‘Best ever’ view of what a dinosaur really looked like