

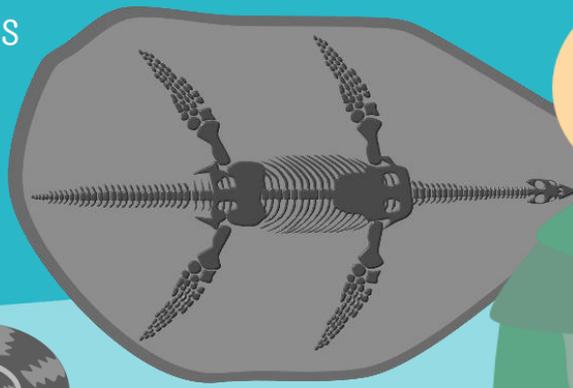
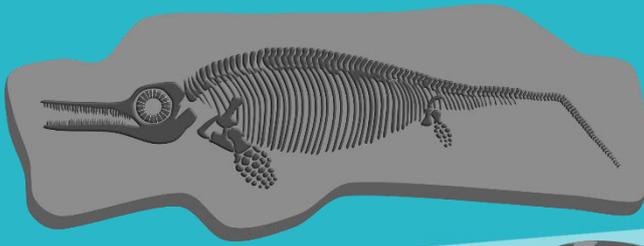
MARY ANNING

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Mary Anning was a famous fossil hunter and collector from the 19th century. Over the course of her life she made many incredible discoveries in her home town of Lyme Regis and became famous throughout the scientific world. Today, Mary is remembered as one of the greatest fossil hunters to have ever lived.

Mary Anning was from a very poor family. She could not afford to go to school, so she learnt to read and write at a church Sunday School.

Mary was very interested in learning about **geology**, the science of how the Earth works, and **anatomy**, the structure of animal bodies.

When she was a child, Mary would hunt for **fossils** on the sea shore with her father. They would often sell their finds in her father's shop. Unfortunately, Mary's father died when she was 10 years old and left the family in a lot of debt.

After her father's death, Mary continued to hunt for fossils in Lyme Regis with her dog Tray. She particularly liked to go out after big storms when the wind and waves would break up the rocks and expose new fossils.

In **1811** when Mary was 12 years old, she was fossil hunting with her older brother Joseph when he found something strange sticking out of the cliff that looked a bit like a crocodile skull...



Name:
Mary Anning

Date of Birth:
21 May 1799

Place Lived:
Lyme Regis,
Dorset

Job: Collecting & hunting
fossils (palaeontologist)

Famous for: incredible
Jurassic fossil discoveries!



Mary Anning



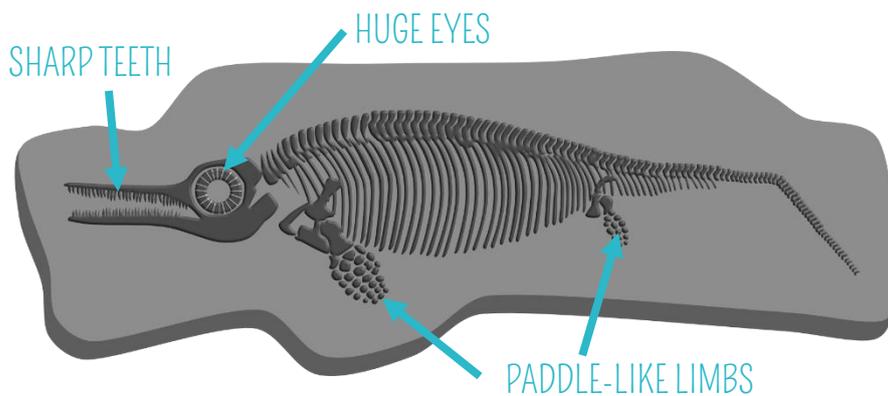
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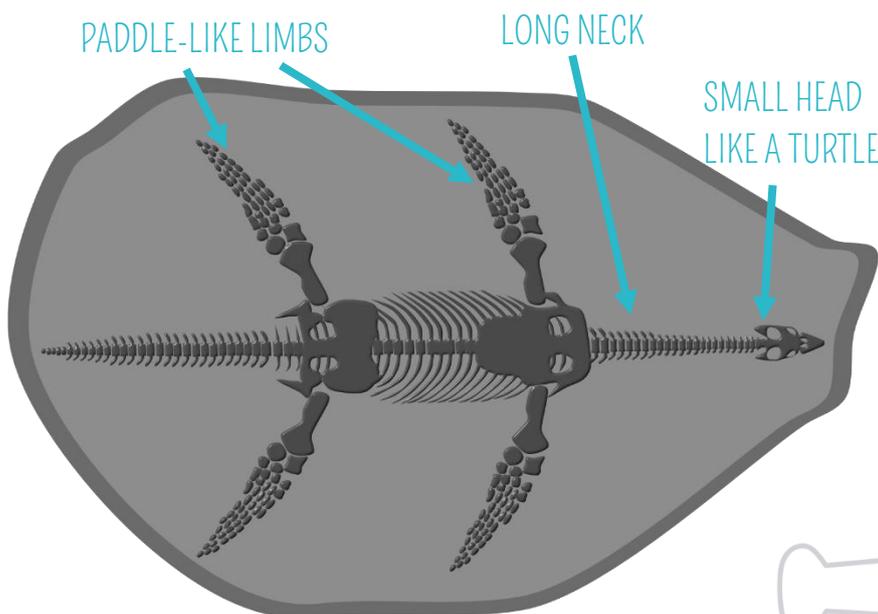
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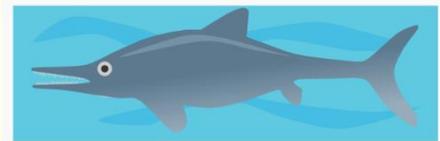
What they had discovered was the skull of an ancient type of marine **reptile** called an **ichthyosaur**. Over the next year, Mary was able to dig out the rest of 5m long **skeleton** from the cliff. This was the first complete skeleton of an ichthyosaur ever found and made Mary famous with the scientists at the time.

In **1823** Mary discovered another remarkable fossil...



Throughout her life Mary Anning made lots of other important fossil discoveries. She found the first **pterosaur** (flying reptile) fossil in the UK, many important **Jurassic** fish fossils as well as more complete ichthyosaur fossils. She discovered that that squid-like animals called **belemnites** had ink sacs just like modern squids and she worked out that oddly shaped fossils full of fish bones were **coprolites** or fossilised poo!

Mary's work was extremely important to **palaeontology**, the scientific study of ancient life. By the time she died in 1847 she had gained a lot of respect from the scientific community. However, because Mary was a woman and from a working-class background she unfortunately couldn't join the Geological Society and whilst she was alive she didn't ever receive the full recognition she deserved.



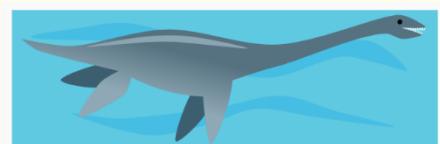
Name: Ichthyosaur meaning 'fish lizard' in Greek

Time period: Triassic, Jurassic & Cretaceous (240 - 90 million years ago)

Habitat: Ocean. Large eyes mean they may have hunted at night or deep in the ocean

Diet: Ate mostly squid-like animals but sometimes fish and other ichthyosaurs!

It was the first ever **plesiosaur**, another type of marine reptile from the Jurassic period. Mary's plesiosaur is now on display at the Natural History Museum in London.



Name: Plesiosaur meaning 'near lizard' in Greek

Time period: Late Triassic, Jurassic & Cretaceous (200 - 66 million years ago)

Habitat: Ocean. Plesiosaurs may have used their long necks to sneak up on prey from a distance

Diet: Ate mostly fish and squid-like animals.