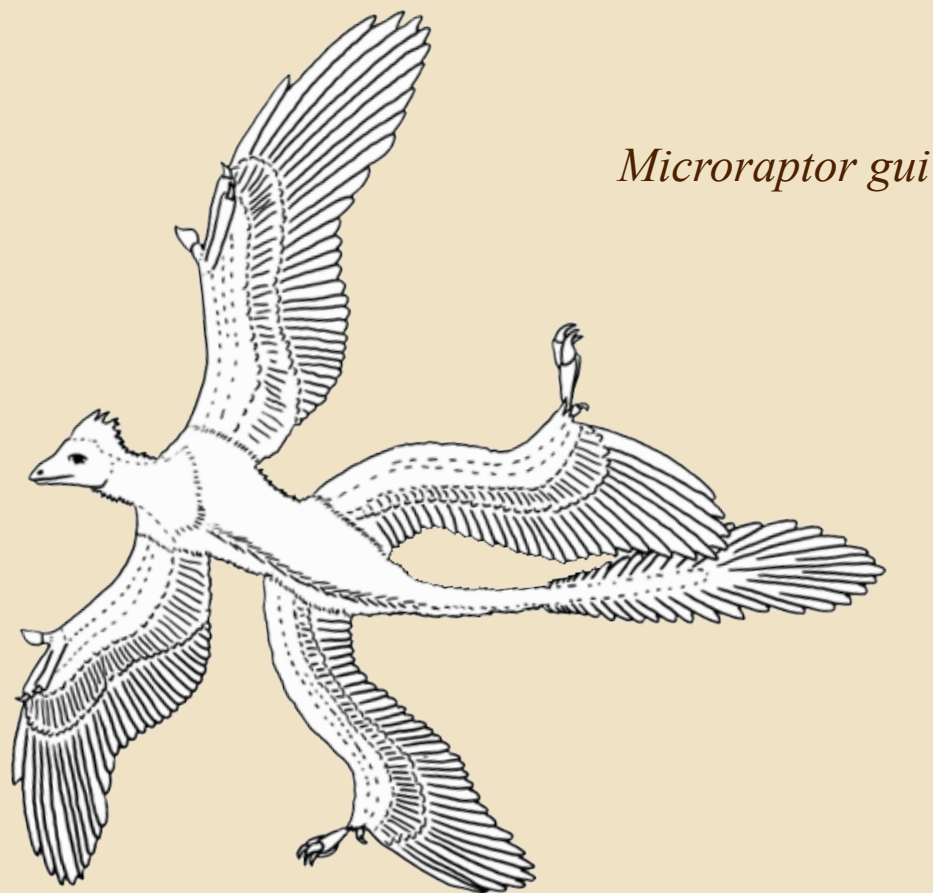


Birds Are Living Dinosaurs

In the scientific community, it is widely accepted that birds are avian dinosaurs. In 1868, Thomas Henry Huxley, a supporter of Darwin, saw similarities between birds and theropod dinosaurs. Theropods (meaning beast footed), were fast moving, bipedal carnivores that lived from the mid-Triassic period until the end of the Cretaceous period, 248 million years ago to 65 million years ago. Similarities between the two include the number of openings in the skull, leg and foot structure, up-right stance, and oviparous (egg laying) birth.

In January 2003, National Geographic reported that six fossils of feathered dinosaurs, *Microraptor gui*, were found near Yianxin in Liaoning Province China. They had fully developed, modern feathers on both the forelimbs and hind limbs. They are thought to be the early ancestors of today's modern birds and probably used the feathered limbs and long feathered fringe tail to glide from tree to tree. The specimens found date back between 128 to 124 million years old.



Microraptor gui



Maraboa Stork (*Leptoptilos crumeniferus*)