

## Dinosaurs and plants

The Isle of Wight is one of the most important dinosaur discovery and excavation sites in the world. More than twenty types have now been found, all within a few miles of Ventnor Botanic Garden.

In early Cretaceous times when dinosaurs ruled, plant life was abundant but very different from now. Just a few 'dinosaur plants' have survived.

Ventnor Botanic Garden is fortunate to house some of the most important 'living fossils' that covered the Earth during the time of the dinosaurs.



*The Isle of Wight in the Early Cretaceous period 125 million years ago*

### DAWN REDWOOD – *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*

The discovery of this conifer in Szechuan in 1947 created a horticultural sensation. It was recognised as a descendant of trees from the Carboniferous period, which means it dates back to a time before even the dinosaurs had evolved.



### CYCADS – *Cycas revolute*

Cycads were the most frequent plants in a dinosaur landscape. Fossils of their distinctive cones – like pineapples, to which they are related – are found on the Island. Though no longer widespread, many species of Cycad thrive in warmer climates. There is a Cycad with in the garden that is flowering—this is the first flowering Cycad in 250 MILLION

years! Can you find it?

### MAGNOLIA – *Magnolia spp*

This ancient and beautiful group of plants evolved towards the end of the dinosaur age, and is one of the very first flowering plants. Amazingly, it predates the evolution of bees and was likely have been pollinated by beetles.

### MONKEY PUZZLE TREE – *Araucaria araucana*

Found in fossil beds on the Isle of Wight, the Monkey Puzzle is now a native of Chile and Argentina and has been classified as an endangered species since 2013. Presumably —from its name—it was a bit of a puzzle for dinosaurs to climb too!

### WHERE TO SEE DINOSAURS ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT

- ◆ Dinosaur Isle dinosaur museum in Sandown
- ◆ Dinosaur Expeditions Centre at Dinosaur Farm near Brighstone
- ◆ The animatronic dinosaurs at Blackgang Chine
- ◆ Go on a guided fossil and dinosaur walk

See all these at [Visitisleofwight.com](http://Visitisleofwight.com)

### GINKGO TREES – *Ginkgo biloba*

The Ginkgo tree has remained the same over 240 million years and its distinctive leaf shape is instantly recognisable in ancient fossils. There is now only one species left, and every Ginkgo tree across the world is descended from preserved and cultivated trees in China.

### THE WOLLEMI PINE - *Wollemia nobilis*

This tree was believed to be extinct and was known only from fossil records of 200 million years ago. In 1994 a park ranger found living plants in a remote canyon in New South Wales, Australia.

### TREE FERNS – *Dicksonia antarctica*

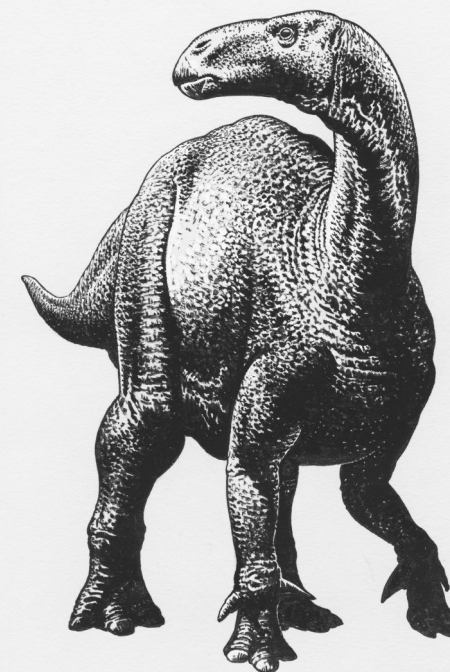
Plants as big - or bigger - than our present-day forest trees dominated the Earth 360 million years ago and left behind



their remains in vast coal measures. There is an entire grove of tree ferns at VBG, recreating a lost dinosaur environment!



## Ventnor Botanic Garden



**Walking with dinosaur plants!**

Tel: 01983 855397  
[www.botanic.co.uk](http://www.botanic.co.uk)



Ventnor Botanic Garden



@hottestgarden



# WALK WITH DINOSAUR PLANTS TRAIL



- 1 Ginkgo Tree
- 2 Wollemi Pine
- 3 Tree Ferns
- 4 Dawn Redwood

- 5 Cycad
- 6 Monkey Puzzle
- 7 Magnolia

- ! VIP Lounge (Volunteer Information Point)
- Wheelchair Friendly Route
- View Point
- Toilets
- Dining

