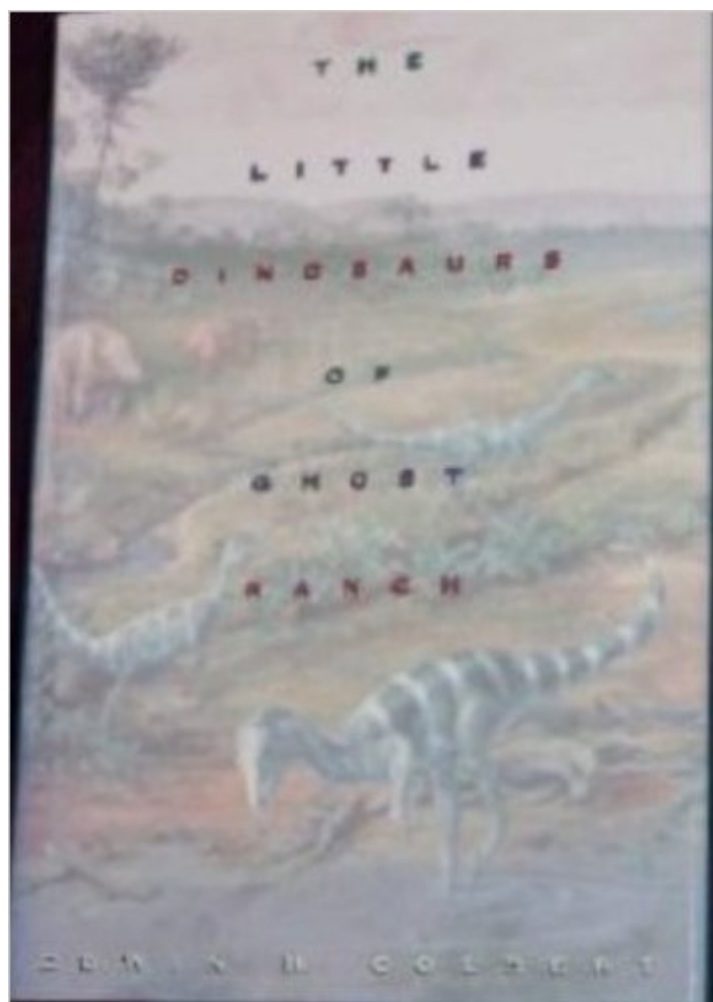


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The Little Dinosaurs Of Ghost Ranch



Synopsis

One of the great mysteries of the ancient past lies within a small quarry in the American southwest, and concerns a carnivorous dinosaur, *Coelophysis*, that was no bigger than a large dog. More than a thousand fossilized remains have been found, and evidence suggests that ten times that amount may still be buried. Why are there so many of these little dinosaurs in one small area? The author of this work discusses the 40-year-old history of the excavations at Ghost Ranch, the quarry in Northern Arizona where these remains were discovered, and the million-year-old prehistory of *Coelophysis*. A series of photographs and illustrations, accompanied by George Colbert's detailed maps, chronicle the search for the truth about *Coelophysis*. A colour insert features the panoramic paintings of Margaret Colbert, giving readers a visual approximation of the prehistoric world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Little Dinosaurs of Ghost Ranch by Edwin H. Colbert is a delightful, well-illustrated, and informative book written by the man most responsible for what we know about Coelophysis bauri, an important early dinosaur. Writing that one can view this book as a "paleontological case history," Colbert recounted not only the discovery and excavation of the famed mass burial of these little dinosaurs in New Mexico but also what is known of their anatomy, physiology, environment, and what the study of these animals has revealed about dinosaurs in general. Originally on his way to prospect for fossils in Petrified Forest National Park in June of 1947, George Whitaker and the author (both working for the American Museum of Natural History in New York) and Tom Ierardi decided to investigate a promising fossil deposit on some privately owned land in New Mexico

known as Ghost Ranch. The area was known to have produced phytosaur fossils and they only expected to spend a few days there. What instead happened was the beginning of decades of work as Colbert and others over the years came to work on a mass concentration of not "the huge bones of the giant dinosaurs of song and story" but instead the tiny bones of "ancestral dinosaurs." Colbert described in detail the excavation of these 200 million year old fossils in the "colorful rounded badlands" that so entranced famous painter Georgia O'Keefe (who by the way lived nearby and befriended the scientists). The fossils were "exceedingly fragile," not only because the bones were very small and slender and the leg bones and vertebrae hollow, but because of the nature of their fossilization. They could disintegrate easily into tiny fragments if mishandled.

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