

# MonkeyDactyl

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**In News:** The new pterosaur nicknamed Monkeydactyl fossil was discovered in the Tiaojishan Formation of Liaoning, China, and is believed to be 160 million years old.

## About MonkeyDactyl

- The pterosaur species were reptiles, close cousins of dinosaurs and the first animals after insects to evolve powered flight.
- They evolved into various species; while some were as large as an F-16 fighter jet, others were as small as paper airplanes.
- The new pterosaur fossil was discovered in the Tiaojishan Formation of Liaoning, China, and is thought to be 160 million years old.
- It has now been described by an international team of researchers from China, Brazil, UK, Denmark and Japan, and has been named *Kunpengopterus antipollicatus*, also dubbed “Monkeydactyl”.

## What researchers found?

- *Antipollicatus* in ancient Greek means opposite thumbs, and it was attached to the name because the researchers' findings could be the first discovery of a pterosaur with an opposed thumb.
- By studying its forelimb morphology and musculature, suggest that *K. antipollicatus* could have used its hand for grasping, which is likely an adaptation for arboreal life.
- The recently found pterosaur fossil is far older than the one identified in 2019. Paleontologists had identified that species as a pterosaur that lived over 77 million years ago in what is Western Canada.
- Named *Cryodrakon boreas*, it was believed to be one of

the largest flying animals, which “flew over the heads of dinosaurs”, with a wingspan of over 10 metres.