

Excavation of dinosaur fossils on Port Island completed

A spokesman for the Development Bureau (DEVB) said today (December 11) that, with the guidance and assistance of experts from the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology (IVPP) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and with the support of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), officers from the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) of the DEVB began excavation on Port Island in late October. About 30 rocks containing dinosaur bone fossils have been excavated. The actual quantity of dinosaur fossils can only be confirmed after the fossil preparation is completed. After thorough inspections by the IVPP experts and local palaeontologists at the fossil discovery site, it was confirmed that all exposed fossils have been removed. The team has completed the excavation of dinosaur bone fossils on Port Island.

The AMO and the AFCD, in collaboration with the IVPP, experts and research institutes in Hong Kong, the Mainland and other places, will continue to take forward the preparation of dinosaur fossils and relevant studies to identify the species of dinosaur found on Port Island and to explore the palaeoecology of Hong Kong.

Regarding display and public education, the temporary workshop in the courtyard of the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre will open on December 20. The AMO will make arrangements for the public to observe the preparation of fossil specimens. Dinosaur fossils prepared and other fossils discovered in Hong Kong, such as aquatic animals ostracod and ammonite, as well as ferns, will also be displayed. Details of the arrangements will be announced on the website of the AMO in due course. In addition, the AMO and the AFCD will continue to organise public lectures and palaeontology workshops to enhance public understanding and interest in palaeontology. The AFCD will also hold outreach science popularisation activities for primary and secondary schools. For details, please refer to the websites of the AMO (www.amo.gov.hk/en/visitor-centre/education-programmes/education-activities/special-event/index.html) and Hong Kong Geopark (www.geopark.gov.hk/en/education/educational_activity).

In view of the completion of the investigation and excavation on Port Island, the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation will lift the closure of the entire area of Port Island within Plover Cove (Extension) Country Park from tomorrow (December 12).

The spokesman stressed that all exposed dinosaur fossils have been removed from Port Island and reminded members of the public that the island is remote and lacks ancillary facilities for landing and sightseeing. Due to geographical and weather conditions that may pose risks for boat docking, members of the public are urged not to take risks to land on Port Island. Furthermore, pursuant to the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53),

no person other than the Authority and a designated person authorised by it shall excavate or search for antiquities. Any person who discovers or knows of the discovery of an antiquity or supposed antiquity must report the discovery to the AMO.