

Dinosaurs Enjoyed Nightlife, Too

1. Small dinosaurs once lived in the desert in today's Mongolia and northern China. Their great night vision and strong hearing made them deadly **predators** during the nighttime.

predator – *n.* an animal that lives by killing and eating other animals, an animal that preys on other animals

they asked police for extra night-time patrols

2. Scientists said Thursday they have found a circle of bones around the eye of a dinosaur called Shuvuuia Deserti. The bones were inside the **skull**, which holds the hearing organ. Scientists say the dinosaur had hearing and sight abilities much like an **owl**, meaning it could hunt in the dark.
3. Their study was published in the journal, *Science*. The research showed that most **predatory** dinosaurs had good hearing, but their sight worked best **during the daytime**. The Shuvuuia, however, loved nightlife.

predatory – *adj.*

4. The two-legged dinosaur was the size of a large bird and weighed about as much as a house cat. It had many small teeth, like pieces of rice. It was **lightweight** and lived during the Cretaceous Period, about 75 million to 81 million years ago.

Lightweight - *adj*

5. Roger Benson is a **paleontologist** from the University of Oxford who helped write the study. "It's such a strange animal that paleontologists have long wondered what it was actually doing," he said.

Paleontologist – *noun*

Paleontology – *noun* - the branch of science concerned with fossil animals and plants.

6. Its mid-length neck, small head, and very long legs, made it look like an unusual chicken. But unlike birds, it had short, strong arms with a large **claw** on the end, which was useful for digging.

Claw – *noun* - a sharp curved part on the toe of an animal

7. Jonah Choiniere is a paleontologist at Wits University in South Africa and the study's **lead author**.
8. "Shuvuuia might have run across the desert floor under cover of night, using its **incredible** hearing and night **vision** to track small **prey** such as nocturnal mammals, lizards and insects," he said.

Incredible – *adj* – impossible to believe, extremely good, great, or large – SYN: **Extraordinary**

Vision – *noun* - **sight**, the ability to see

Prey – *noun* - an animal that is hunted and killed by another animal for food

Nocturnal – *adj* – active at night

most owls are nocturnal.