

Trivia time: Tom Turkey, T. rex related

November 21 2007

The modern-day turkey on American tables and the extinct Tyrannosaurus rex have one thing in common: their wishbone.

The one-piece wishbone, or furcula, is formed by the two collarbones fusing at the sternum, which is important for a bird's flight mechanics, LiveScience reported.

Scientists believe the furcula is a key component to the theory that modern birds descended from dinosaurs but once thought the wishbone was unique to birds, the journal said.

Now, however, paleontologists say the bone dates back more than 150 million years to two-legged, meat-eating, earth-bound dinosaurs such as the Tyrannosaurus and Velociraptor, the New York science publication reported. Instead of being a flight aid, their wishbones likely supported the flesh-eating dinosaurs as they held their prey.

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