
Dinosaurs aboard new Noah's ark

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Noah took two of every living creature with him on his ark. And, according to Ken Ham, that included dinosaurs.

Ark Encounter – a mammoth replica of the animal-filled Biblical boat – opened Thursday in Kentucky. It includes the requisite humans, beasts and, oddly, pre-historic theropods not mentioned in the original Genesis story.

The 510-foot, \$100 million Creationism museum is the brainchild of Answers in Genesis, a ministry that believes the Earth is only 6,000 years old, and that Mankind once shared the planet with dinosaurs.

"The Bible tells us that God made the land animals on Day 6 of creation," Ark operator Ken Ham explains on [his group's website](#). "And who else was created on Day 6? Well, Adam and Eve. And how long ago was that? Well, when you add up all the dates in the Bible, about 6,000 years.

"So, taking God at his word in Genesis, dinosaurs lived beside people about 6,000 years ago," he continued.

Ham and his group have taken heat from scientists, including Bill Nye, who say human life emerged in Africa about two million years ago, roughly 63 million years after the last dinosaur.



Ark Encounter - a "life-sized" Noah's ark recreation - opened Thursday in Kentucky. (JIM LO SCALZO/EPA)

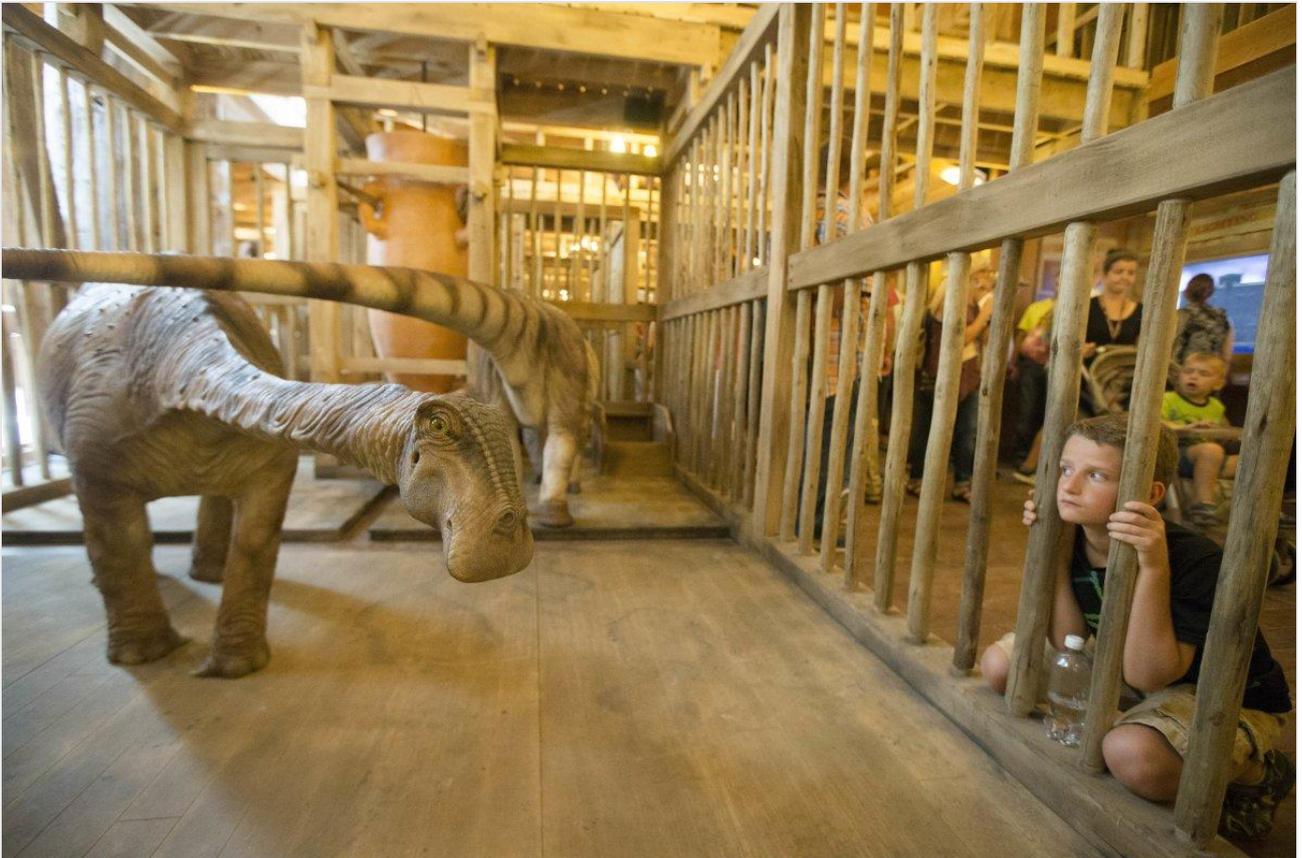
"Humans and ancient dinosaurs did not live at the same time," Nye, aka "The Science Guy," [said last month](#). "It's completely unreasonable."

Unreasonable, perhaps, but already popular.

"We've been encouraged by the attendance and response of people in this first week," spokesman A. Larry Ross said. The group expects to generate \$4 billion in economic activity — not an absurd claim given that single-day adult tickets are \$40 and hundreds of thousands of visitors are anticipated every year.

"I believe it's going to be one of the greatest Christian outreaches of this era in history," Ham told the Los Angeles Times this week.

The ark — believed to be the largest freestanding timber structure in the world — is a 45-minute drive from the affiliated Creation Museum.



Scientists believe that the last dinosaur walked the Earth more than 60 million years before the first human. Ken Ham believes they were created on the same day, only 6,000 years ago. (JOHN MINCHILLO/AP)

The ark is not only criticized by scientists. Two years ago, Tri-State Freethinkers argued that the project should not have received \$18 million in public tax subsidies on the grounds that it violates the separation of church and state. The ark was built "entirely with private funding," from about 43,000 donor families, Ross told the Daily News on Thursday.

In response to the ark's debut, the Freethinkers proposed the opening of a "genocide and incest park," claiming that both are encouraged by the Biblical story.

For the first 40 days, and 40 nights, the ark is open from 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.

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