

Die sogenaamde stinkkliere by stinkbesies is spesiale kliere wat gifgas uitskei en wat deur die besie vir verdediging gebruik word. Hulle openinge is by die nimfe (onvolwassenes) geleë op drie of vier knoppies op die dorsale deel van die agterlyf. By volwassenes, waar die agterlyf deur vlerke bedek word, is die kliere in die bors (thoraks) geleë met openinge (osteole) aan die sykante net voor die agterpote. Die stinkkliersekresie word met 'n sterk spuitaksie tot 300 mm ver uitgespuit. Dit brand die vel en oëen kan volgens oorlewing tydelike blindheid by die

mens veroorsaak. Die stinkklier produseer 'n vlugtige mengsel wat tot 18 chemiese stowwe kan bevat en wat by inaseming deur voornemende predatore die senuweestelsel kan verlam. Dit neem etlike dae vir die sekresie om weer in die klier te vorm.



BIBLIOGRAFIE

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SPECIAL "LIVE EXHIBIT" OF FOSSIL PREPARATION

Many people who visit museums have seen bones and skeletons of dinosaurs and other weird prehistoric creatures on display, but very few are aware of the tremendous amount of technical work which has to be undertaken before a fossil bone is "fit to be displayed".

In most cases the presence of a fossilized skull or skeleton in a rocky outcrop in the field is recognisable only to someone who is an experienced fossil collector. Although there are exceptions, a fossil is usually only exposed as a few small bones protruding from a rock. Such fossil-bearing rocks are then taken back to a palaeontological laboratory where the bones are carefully and painstakingly removed from the rock by skilled palaeontological technicians with the aid of fine air-driven engravers and dental drills. This laborious process is extremely slow and a single skull may take several months to prepare.

In January visitors to the National Museum were given a "behind the scenes" look at how fossils are removed from the rock. Rocks with pieces of bone protruding from them as they were found in the field were on display, as well as fully prepared skeletons and skulls of the National Museum's most prized and valuable fossils. As this 'working' exhibit was a great success and served to attract numerous visitors, similar exhibits are planned at the National Museum during the school holidays later this year.



Mrs Zubi Gregorowski and Mr Christian Nyaphuli demonstrating how the rock is carefully chipped from an ancient dinosaur bone.

(photo: Die Volksblad)