

# SKELETONS: Museum of Osteology

## Pathology

*Teacher Resource*

**Grade Levels: University**

### Program Overview:

The *Pathology* program introduces students to the world of forensic science. After a basic introduction, students will break-up into teams for hands on evaluation of the pathology of various specimens. Students will attempt to discover the possible cause of the abnormality, and the effect it would have had on the animal's life. After the analysis is completed, the team will report their discoveries to the class.

### Learning Objectives:

- Students will identify and compare a damaged bone versus its undamaged counterpart.
- Students will examine various pathological specimens, and attempt to determine how the trauma, disease, or infection would have impacted the animal's life.
- Students will work in teams and communicate their ideas with their peers.

### Background:

The pathology of a bone can tell you what may have caused an animal's death. Pathology is the study of damage that may be the result of trauma, disease or infection. These pathologic conditions might tell you if the animal was hit by a car, shot by a gun, died from a disease or was killed by another animal.

### Vocabulary:

**Cannon:** The fused (reduced) foot bones of deer, cows, etc. that connect the ankle to the toes

**Femur:** The upper hind leg bone

**Humerus:** The upper front leg bone (arm)

**Mandible:** The jaw bone

**Metatarsal:** The bones of the hind foot located between the ankle and toe bones

**Pathology:** Damage as a result of trauma, disease or infection

**Radius/Ulna:** The two bones that comprise the lower forearm (front leg) **Tibia:**  
The lower hind limb bone (shin)

**Reference:** visit the SKELETONS: Museum of Osteology Education web page at:

<http://skeletonmuseum.com/education>

### Recommended Reading:

Gilbert, B. Miles

1990 *Mammalian Osteology*. Missouri Archaeological Society, Columbia, MO.

Roest, Aryan I.

1991 *A Key Guide to Mammal Skulls and Lower Jaws*. Mad River Press, Inc., Eureka, CA.

Searfoss, Glen

1995 *Skulls and Bones*. Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA.

### **While at SKELETONS:**

- Visit the exhibit on pathology and have your students discuss the scientific process they would use to evaluate the pathology.
- Have student try and determine the possible cause(s) of a particular pathology.
- Visit the Pathology Exhibit and have your students discuss the scientific process they would use to evaluate pathologies.
- Locate the 6 Pack Turtle in the Pathology Exhibit and discuss how this injury would have impacted this animal's ability to survive.
- Have students try and determine the possible cause(s) of a particular pathology.
- Locate different healed and broken bones of animals throughout the museum.
- Find the reptile with the pathology in the Comparative Anatomy Exhibit.
- Find the pathologies in the Manatee Exhibit and discover what caused them.