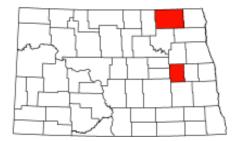
#### North Dakota Stratigraphy AGES MILIONS OF YEARS AGO PERIOD ROCK EPOCH ROCK UNIT COLUMN QUATERNARY Oahe .01-Pleistocene Coleharboi Unnamed 25 Arikaree Oligo Brule 38-South Hear Chadron Eocene Chalky But Golden Carnels Butte Valley Bear De 55 TERTIARY Sentinel Butte Paleocene Bullion Creek Slope Cannonball Ludlow 65 Hell Creek Fox Hills CRETACEOUS Pierre 84 Niobrara Carlile ₽c≉ Claystone/Sh Carbonate



Lignite

Sand & Grave

S S

Locations where fossils have been found

# Hesperornis regalis

#### **Common Name:**

Cretaceous seabird

## **Classification:**

Class: Aves Order: Hesperornithiformes Family: Hesperornithidae



Tarso-metatarsal of the seabird *Hesperornis*. Collected from the Cretaceous Pierre Shale by Mike Hanson and Dennis Halvorson, near Cooperstown, Griggs County. Donated by Bev and Orville Tranby. On display at the North Dakota Heritage Center. 85 mm long. North Dakota State Fossil Collection ND95-40.1.



*Hesperornis* skeleton showing position of tarso-metatarsal.

### **Description:**

*Hesperornis* was a large, flightless seabird, up to about five feet tall. Although it was incapable of flight, *Hesperornis* was a swift swimmer that could propel itself through the shallow coastal waters of the Pierre Sea with its powerful hind legs and webbed feet. It's webbed feet were similar to a grebe. It's jaws were equipped with sharp, pointed teeth adapted for preying on fish and squids.



The flightless seabird, *Hesperornis*, after catching prey while diving. Painting by, and courtesy of, Dan Varner.

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