

The Dodo Bird: Back from Extinction [A2]

Estinto da ben quattro secoli, questo pennuto dal nome divertente potrebbe resuscitare, secondo un progetto scientifico che sta sollevando qualche polemica.



The dodo was a **large plump** bird with a friendly temperament that through evolution had lost the ability to fly. According to historical **accounts**, it was bigger than a **turkey** and could reach a body weight of more than twenty kilograms. It had blue-grey plumage, a long **hooked beak** and **tiny** wings.

EXTINCTION

Dodos became extinct nearly four hundred years ago. They were once endemic to Mauritius, an island in the Indian Ocean where no natural predators **threatened** their existence. However, in the late 16th century **Dutch sailors** arrived on the island. They **hunted** the docile bird, and brought animals with them, including dogs, cats, pigs and monkeys as well as rats from the ships, which destroyed the **ground nests** and ate the eggs. By the late 17th century dodos were extinct.

BRINGING BACK THE DODO

This year the US startup Colossal Biosciences announced plans to bring back or 'de-extinct' the dodo. [So far](#), they have raised \$150 million to finance the project. The scientific team has already managed to sequence the DNA of a dodo, but once the genome is fully decoded, they must [figure out](#) a way to put the dodo genes into the embryo of a living animal. Some scientists think that the Nicobar [pigeon](#), the [closest](#) living [relative](#) of the dodo, could have its DNA modified to include some dodo DNA. This means that, hypothetically, when these [pigeon](#) eggs [hatch](#), a recreated version of the dodo will be born.

NOT 100 PER CENT DODO

Some years ago, Colossal Biosciences announced a similar project to revive both the [woolly mammoth](#) and the Tasmanian tiger, other lost species. However, the dodo is more [challenging](#) as less genomic research has been [performed](#) on birds than on [mammals](#). Will the revived dodo be identical to the original? We will never know.

ETHICAL QUESTIONS

In addition to the scientific challenge, the project [raises serious ethical questions](#). Do experiments such as this [channel](#) money and attention away from efforts to save the world's living [endangered](#) species? Why [focus](#) on certain charismatic animals over others? [Moreover](#), where would these revived species live? How could they adapt to today's [environment](#)? Who could teach a de-extinct dodo to live and [behave](#) like its [long lost](#) ancestors?

Glossary

- **closest** = più vicino
- **relative** = parente
- **mammals** = mammiferi
- **channel** = convogliare
- **endangered** = a rischio di estinzione
- **sailors** = marinai
- **pigeon** = piccione
- **raises serious ethical questions** = sollevare una questione
- **environment** = ambiente
- **behave** = comportarsi
- **Dutch** = olandesi
- **ground nests** = nidi a terra
- **long lost** = scomparsi da tempo
- **beak** = becco
- **focus** = concentrarsi
- **threatened** = minacciare
- **So far** = finora
- **figure out** = escogitare
- **hatch** = schiudersi
- **woolly mammoth** = mammut lanoso
- **performed** = eseguire
- **accounts** = testimonianze
- **tiny** = piccole, minuscole
- **Moreover** = inoltre
- **turkey** = tacchino
- **hooked** = a uncino
- **plump** = paffuto
- **challenging** = impegnativo
- **large** = grande
- **hunted** = cacciare