



PALEONTOLOGIST

**François Therrien, 33
Drumheller, Alberta**

Therrien spends the field season poking about Alberta's Badlands in search of fossils. The rest of the time he works indoors at Drumheller's Royal Tyrrell Museum, which is where he proved that T-Rex really was the

HOW IT RATES

37

ADVENTURE THRILLS	5/10
LONGEVITY	10/10
PAY	10/10
OUTDOOR TIME	6/10
FREEDOM	6/10

meanest mother of all dinos, by studying how the extinct killer dispatched lesser prey. "Like a cross between a crocodile and a hyena,"

Therrien enthusiastically concludes. His study also proved that T-Rex had a bite force three to five times greater than any other theropod. Take that, Gigantosaurus.

WHAT HE LOVES ABOUT HIS JOB

Being out there. "The Badlands are one of the most amazing topographic features," he says. Plus, it's a huge rush when he finds old dinosaur bits and pieces.

WHAT HE DOESN'T LOVE ABOUT HIS JOB

"The heat." It doesn't matter if the thermometer is pushing

40 degrees. A paleontologist, along with mad dogs and the rest, must go out in the blazing midday sun. They can't work in the rain.

BEST MOMENT

Discovering dinosaur embryos. Last year, Therrien was investigating Devil's Coulee, one of the only known dinosaur nesting sites in the world, and the only one in Canada, when he hit the jack-

pot. "We saw tiny eggshell fragments and started digging," he explains. "And there were embryos in a nest still preserved in the egg." Wow factor? Off the scale.

RIGHT STUFF REQUIRED

Brain power. You won't be able to go fossil-hunting with the likes of Therrien without your Ph.D.—at the very least. Most paleontologists are post-docs. You also need a passion for the work and a scientific curiosity—qualities, one would hope, that go along with that Ph.D.

SHOW ME THE MONEY

Museum positions like Therrien's range from \$50,000 to \$80,000 a year, depending on experience. Academic postings to universities pay more, with professors earning up to \$120,000.

—KB

