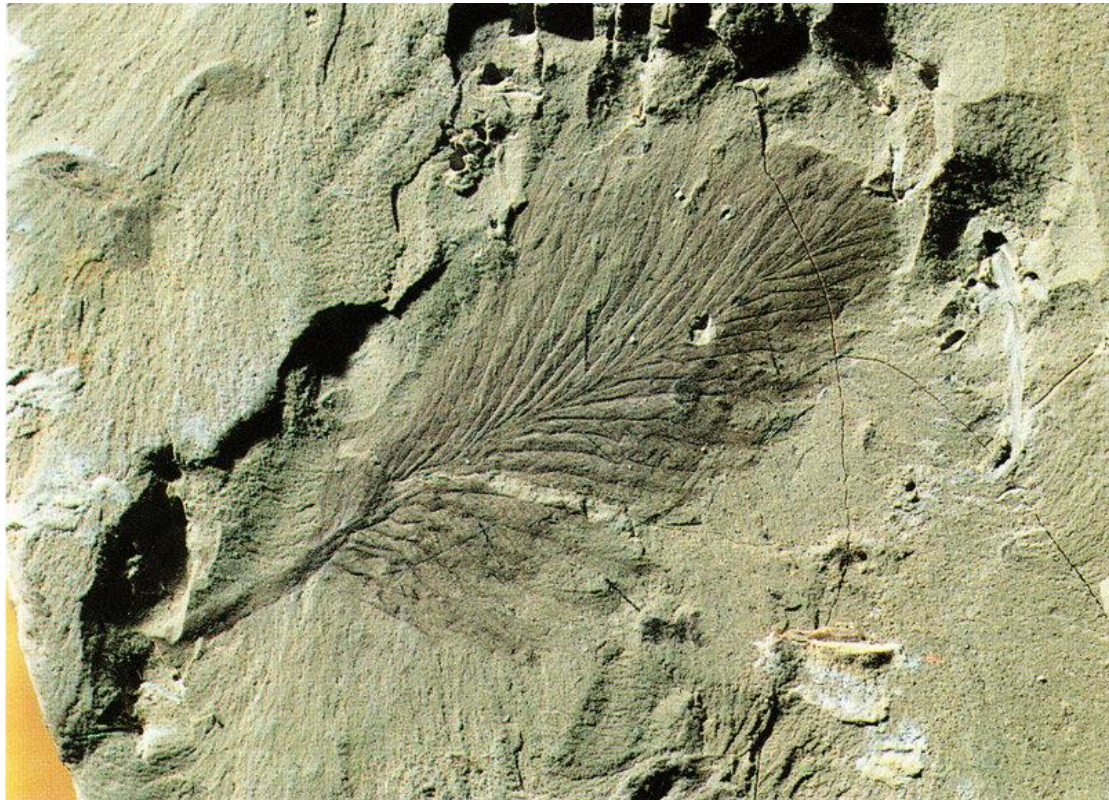


Birds

Impressions of small feathers, assumed to be from birds, have been found from rocks laid down originally in a lake, inland at Koonwarra, but no skeletal remains have been found. Bird bones are very rare in the fossil assemblage as they are hollow and very fragile, so tend not to preserve well. In 1997 a bird wish bone (furcula) was discovered at the Early Cretaceous Flat Rocks locality, near Inverloch. It took 12 years of research, comparing the tiny bone with the furculae of other birds and dinosaurs (some dinosaurs also had wish bones) before the researcher, Roger Close, was confident that it belonged to a bird. His paper entitled "Earliest Gondwanan Bird from the Cretaceous of Southeastern Australia" appeared in the Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology Vol.29 (2) 616-619 2009.



**Impression of small bird feather from Koonwarra.
Photographer F. Coffa, Museum Victoria.**



Prehistoric bird impression by Peter Trussler.