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Scientists discover rare ancient fossil fruit
科学家发现罕见果实植物化石

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一个有 5200 万年历史的果实化石在南美被发现。这枚远古时期的浆果所属的植物种类包括现在人们喜欢吃的土豆、西红柿和辣椒。科学家们说，这个化石的发现说明茄科植物的起源比人类先前想象的要早了好几千万年。请听 Helen Briggs 的报道。

Scientists at Pennsylvania State University say the small fruit **resembles** the **modern day** ground cherry or **Physalis** and tomatillo.

Little is known about how these plants evolved, as until now, only a few **fossilised** seeds have been found. The plant is part of the **nightshade** family, a group of more than 2000 different species. They include **crops** such as potatoes, peppers and tomatoes, the **tobacco** plant, plants used for medicines and flowers grown in gardens such as petunia. The discovery **pushes back** the **origins** of this plant family by tens of millions of years.

Scientists believe many more fossil plants are waiting to be discovered in South America, adding to our knowledge of how some of the world's most valuable crops **evolved** and **flourished**.

词汇表

resembles	像…，类似于
modern day	现代的
Physalis	酸浆属（植物物种名称）
fossilised	变成化石
nightshade	茄科植物
crops	农作物
tobacco	烟草
petunia	矮牵牛花
pushes back	向后推延
origins	起源，由来
evolved	进化
flourished	蓬勃发展，越来越茂盛

测验

请听报道并回答下列问题。

1. Where was the fossil discovered?

2. The fossilised plant belongs to which plant family?

3. True or false? *The discovery of this fossil fruit shows the origin of this plant family is more recent than previously thought.*

4. Which word in the text means 'very important or extremely useful'?

答案

1. Where was the fossil discovered?
South America.

2. The fossilised plant belongs to which plant family?
It belongs to a plant family called nightshade, which has over 2000 different species.

3. True or false? *The discovery of this fossil fruit shows the origin of this plant family is more recent than previously thought.*
False. According to the text, the discovery of the fossil fruit shows the origin of this plant family is much older than previously thought, by tens of millions of years.

4. Which word in the text means 'very important or extremely useful'?
Valuable.