

MEDIA ALERT: Age of Homo naledi Revealed: 236,000 to 335,000 Years Old

Spokespeople, Images and Video Available Media packet, including visuals, available [here](#).
Embeddable video available [here](#) and [here](#).

Almost a year and a half since a trove of hominin remains, including a new member of the human family tree, [was first discovered](#) by two cavers exploring South Africa's Rising Star cave system, [Homo naledi's age has been confirmed](#). In papers published Tuesday in *eLife*, the team—led by National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence [Lee Berger](#)—provides an age range for the [remains first reported in 2015](#): **between 236,000 and 335,000 years old**. The team also describes a second chamber within Rising Star that contains yet-undated *H. naledi* remains. *If these dates hold, it could mean that while our own species was evolving from other, large-brained ancestors, a tiny-brained primitive shadow lineage was lingering on from a much earlier period, perhaps two million years ago or more.* The proposed age range for the fossils also overlaps with the early Middle Stone Age, fueling a provocative, though unproven, possibility: that the stone-tool record in South Africa from that time wasn't just the handiwork of anatomically modern humans. **Read more about this announcement** [here](#). Additionally, [ALMOST HUMAN: The Astonishing Tale of Homo naledi and the Discovery That Changed Our Human Story](#), Lee Berger's incredible first-person account of that discovery—written with co-author and collaborator **John Hawks**—and a behind-the-scenes look at Berger's life's work, is being released today. [Lee Berger](#), National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence, is available for interviews out of South Africa. [John Hawks](#), Professor of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and co-author of *ALMOST HUMAN*, is available for interviews out of South Africa. [Michael Greshko](#), National Geographic natural history and science reporter, is available for interviews out of Washington, D.C.

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