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Archaeologist Announces New Species

Associated Press – Tanzania

Archaeologist Louis Leakey has announced the discovery of a new **species** of **hominid**. The discovery was made in the Olduvai Gorge region of Tanzania, an area that has also yielded the **fossil** remains of another early hominid, **Australopithecine**. According to Leakey, this new species has many striking differences from previous hominids. First and foremost, Leakey's team not only uncovered the fossil remains, but they also found evidence of stone tools. This is why Leakey named this new hominid **Homo habilis**, or "handy-man". Moreover, the braincase of *Homo habilis* is larger than that of other early hominids, suggesting that the development of stone tool technology may be a direct link to larger brain size. Leakey also emphasized that, "while the fossil remains suggest that *Homo habilis* probably walked up-right more than *Australopithecines*, they were not fully **bi-pedal** yet". Leakey also explained that *Homo habilis* also shares some similarities with *Australopithecines*. "We still see that *Homo habilis* has large **canine incisors**, which suggests along with a lack of archaeological evidence, that these individuals did not have knowledge of fire", Leakey said. Preliminary tests have put the fossil remains at about 2.3 to 1.5 million years old. Leakey's team will publish their full report on *Homo habilis* in the spring of next year.

Vocabulary Word Bank

Archaeologist: scientist who studies the past through the things people leave behind.

Species: a class of living things with similar characteristics.

Hominid: early human ancestors.

Fossil: the remains of something that was once alive.

Australopithecines: group of early hominids.

Homo habilis: early hominids that were more advanced than *Australopithecines*.

Bi-pedal: walking up-right on two feet.

Canine Incisors: sharp pointed teeth used for tearing flesh (meat).



Use the area below to take notes about *Homo habilis*: