

How smart was Velociraptor?

Nowhere near as smart as a chimpanzee, no matter what you might have read in Jurassic Park!

Of course, we can't make Velociraptor run through a maze like a white rat, so we have to infer its intelligence from the size of its brain. To compare the brain sizes of different birds and dinosaurs, we calculate their EQ, or encephalization quotient, which is:

$$\text{Brain weight} / [0.12(\text{body weight})^{0.66}]$$



The exponent compensates for the fact that large animals tend to have proportionately smaller brains than small animals, regardless of intelligence. Velociraptor had an EQ of less than 0.20, which is at the low end of the range of large, modern, ground-running birds. It's a reasonable guess that Velociraptor was roughly comparable in intelligence to an ostrich.

