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Lifelike, but not a film story

Official pages marvel at the form the resin can keep — and stop short of a film plot.

The sticky resin "sometimes entrapped flying and crawling creatures." What surprises official pages is how well those creatures can still be seen.

The official story	Official wording
What can be kept	Plant matter, bacteria, fungi, worms, snails, insects, spiders, and "(more rarely) small vertebrates."
Fidelity	"Amazing life-like fidelity of preservation … occurs through rapid and thorough fixation and inert dehydration as well as other natural embalming properties of the resin that are still not understood."
What this is not	A claim that dinosaur DNA has been recovered from amber. Lifelike form is not a recovered genome.

A short quiz

1. Does official wording say amber can preserve plants as well as insects?
2. Are small vertebrates commonly or more rarely preserved?
3. Is lifelike preservation an official claim about dinosaur DNA?

Answers. Yes. More rarely. No.

Wording from the J. Paul Getty Museum, "What Is Amber?", and the American Museum of Natural History, Amber Collection, checked 18 November 2026. amber.fossils.im is independent of both museums. Typographic sheet: no photographs inside.