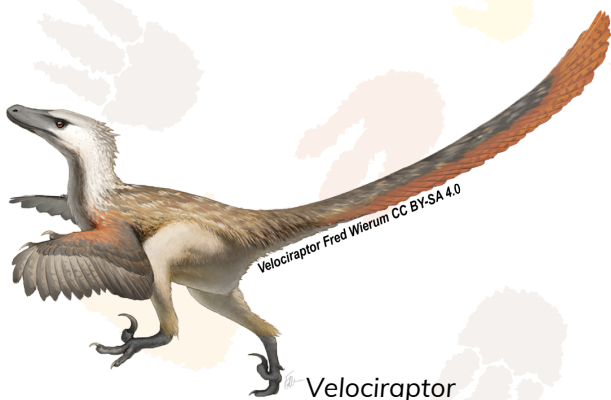


What is Archosaur April Absurdity?

After the success of the past two years' Archosaur April Absurdity, we'll be holding a second tournament of prehistoric creatures! Throughout April and May, we'll once again be holding a series of matches between different dinosaurs in four different size categories, as shown in the bracket. Some dinosaurs might be familiar to you, while others might be species you've never heard of before!

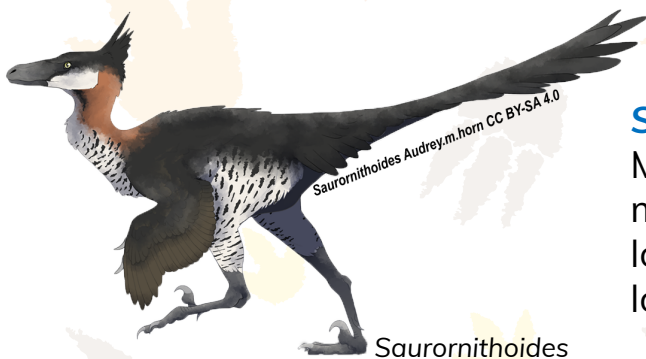
To play along, choose the dinosaur you think would be the winner in each match-up. Just like in basketball, contestants are seeded. Dinosaurs with the smallest numbers beside their names are the highest-seeded, and stand a better chance of winning. We will be posting a play-by-play of each match on Twitter, Instagram and our website, written by museum staff. Follow along with the Archosaur April Absurdity and see how well your favourite fossil creatures do!

Division 1: Small Carnivores



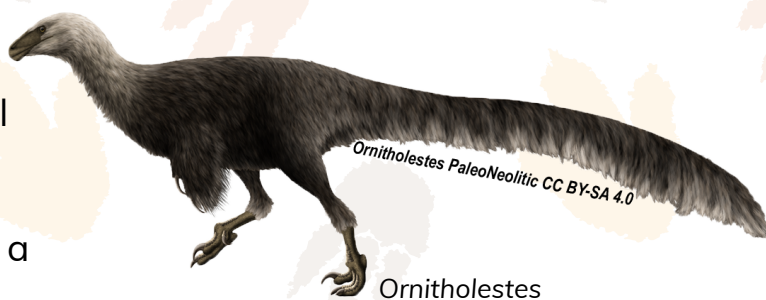
Velociraptor: (Ve-los-ore-raptor) Mid-sized dromaeosaur from Asia. 2 meters long, 0.5 meters tall. Roughly the size of a border collie. Common small predator from late Cretaceous Mongolia. Captured small to mid-sized prey with large, hooked claws. At least one instance of predatory behaviour on Protoceratops preserved in fossil record.

Shuvuuia: (Shoe-voo-ee-aa) Small, 60 cm long alvarezsaurid from late Cretaceous Mongolia. Enlarged thumb claw on hands likely for digging up prey like insects and small mammals, snatching them in its long, probing jaws. Excellent sense of sight and sound, possibly nocturnal.



Saurornithoides: (Sore-orn-ith-o-lest-ees) Mid-sized troodontid from Mongolia, 1.75 meters long. Birdlike shape with feathers, long skull, large eyes/braincase. Fast with long legs and hooked killing claws.

Ornitholestes: (Orn-ith-o-lest-ees) Small carnivore from late Jurassic of Wyoming. Estimated 2 meters long. Only one incomplete specimen known. Robust skull and teeth. Large eye sockets indicate it may have been nocturnal. Some have argued for a sickle-claw on each foot like a deinonychosaur.



Division 1: Small Carnivores cont.



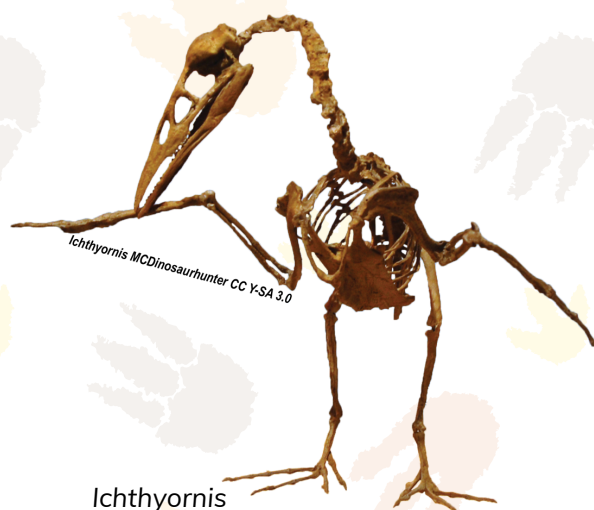
Hesperonychus

Hesperonychus: (Hesper-on-ee-cus) Small dromaeosaur from late Cretaceous Alberta, likely under 1 meter long. Related to famous Microraptor from China. Probably ate small lizards, mammals, and insects.

Flying/gliding abilities unknown.

Sinosauropteryx: (Cy-no-soar-op-tear-ix)

1 meter long compsognathid from early Cretaceous China. Short arms, extremely long tail. Covered in fur-like feathers, the first nonavian dinosaur found with feather remains. Studies on plumage coloration show it was counter shaded with a red-dish-orange back and pale underside. Tail had alternating dark and light bands.



Ichthyornis

Ichthyornis: (Ick-th-ee-orn-is)

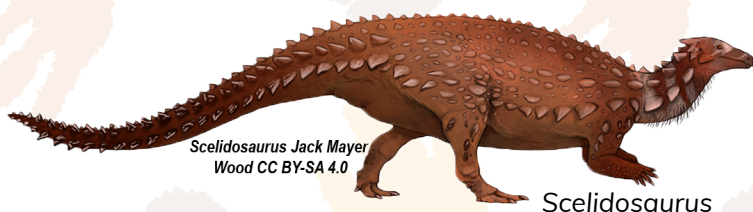
Pigeon-sized Cretaceous bird from western North America. Found in marine formations, may have lived somewhat like a modern seabird. Jaw tips were tipped with an albatross-like beak, with teeth back in the jaws. Brain was rather 'primitive', more like a reptile's than a modern bird.

Guanlong: (Gwan-long) Medium-sized tyrannosauroid from Late Jurassic of China. Roughly 3 meters long. Long arms with 3-fingered hands. Large, distinctive crest on head, likely a display structure.



Guanlong

Division 2: Small Herbivores



Scelidosaurus Jack Mayer
Wood CC BY-SA 4.0

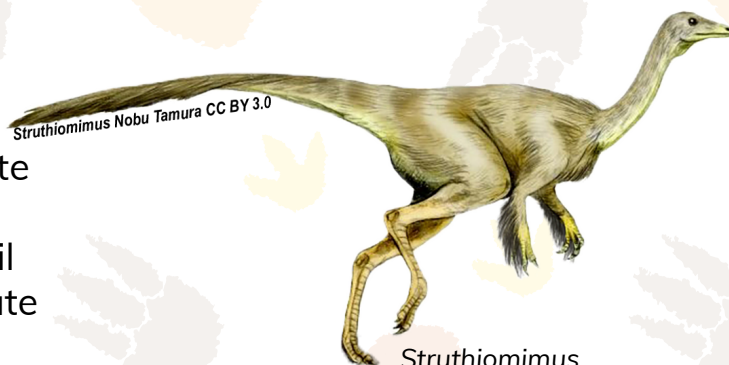
Scelidosaurus

Scelidosaurus: (Skel-ee-to-soar-us)

4-meter-long armored dinosaur from early Jurassic of Britain. Possibly bipedal, covered in small, bony knobs and spikes that formed protective armor covering.

Struthiomimus: (Stru-thee-o-mime-us)

Emu-sized plant-eating theropod from late Cretaceous Alberta. 4.3 meters long. Ostrich-like build but heavier, with a long tail and arms. Long leg and foot bones indicate it was relatively fast.



Struthiomimus Nobu Tamura CC BY 3.0

Struthiomimus



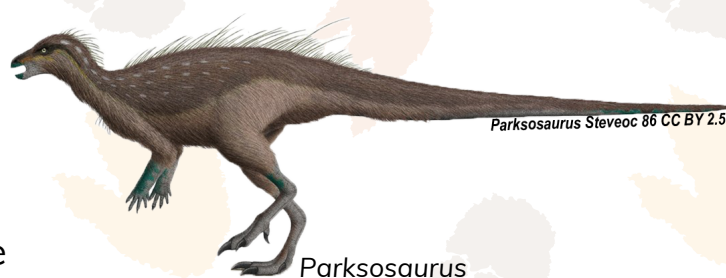
Protoceratops AntoninJury CC BY-SA 4.0

Protoceratops

Protoceratops: (Pro-to-sera-tops)

Pig-sized ceratopsian from late Cretaceous Mongolia, 1.8 meters long. Had a frill but lacked fully developed horns on its head. Strong, sharp beak and jaws for cropping vegetation.

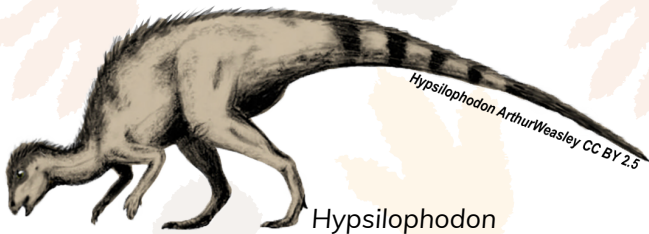
Parksosaurus: (Park-so-soar-us) Roughly 2.5-meter-long bipedal herbivore from late Cretaceous Alberta. Long leg, foot, and toe bones may indicate adaptations for walking or wading through muddy or swampy areas. Robust forelimbs may have been adapted for digging plant roots.



Parksosaurus Steveoc 86 CC BY 2.5

Parksosaurus

Division 2: Small Herbivores cont.

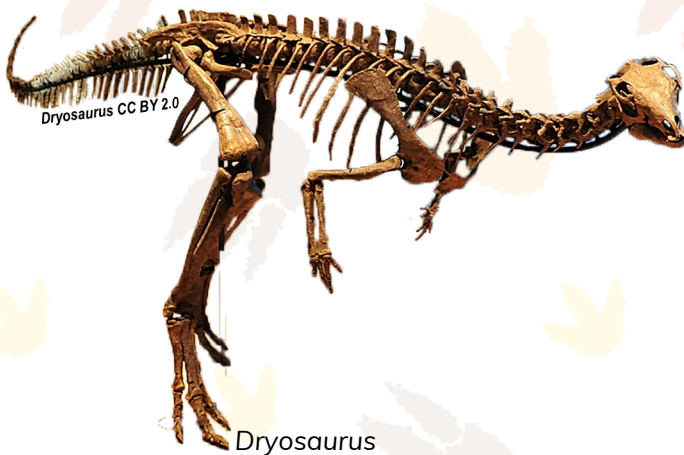
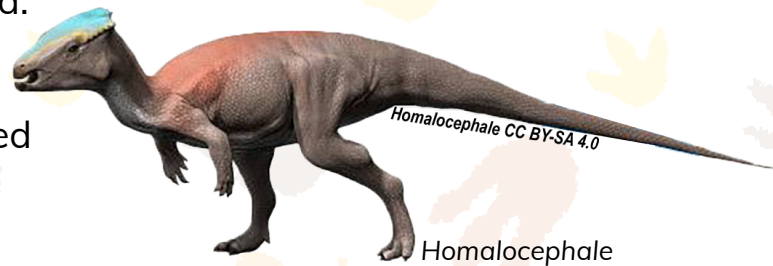


Hypsilophodon: (Hip-so-lo-foe-don)

2-meter-long bipedal herbivore from early Cretaceous Britain. Long legs and low build may have made it a decent runner. Skull was short but large.

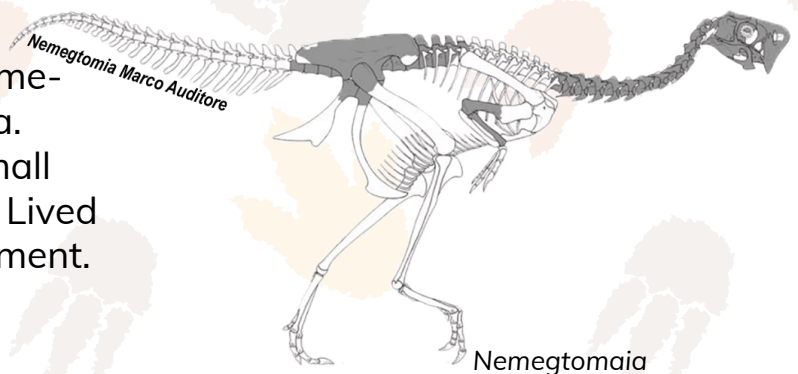
Homalocephale: (Ho-ma-lo-sef-a-lee)

Small pachycephalosaur (dome-headed dinosaur) from late Cretaceous Mongolia. 1.8 meters long. Unlike most pachycephalosaurus, the skull roof was broad and flat, yet still made of thickened bone.

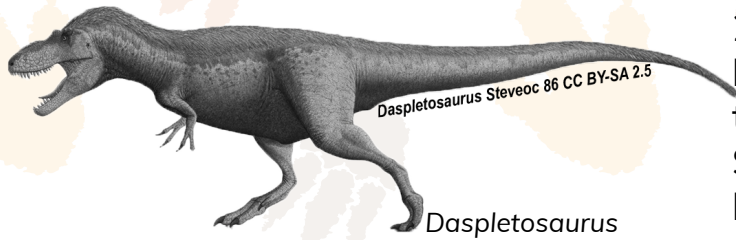


Dryosaurus: (Dry-o-soar-us) Roughly 3-meter-long browser from late Jurassic western USA. Long stiff tail and legs likely allowed it to outrun predators.

Nemegtomaia: (Nem-ig-to-my-a) 2-meter-long oviraptorosaur from Mongolia. Built like a flightless bird, skull was small with a toothless beak and bony crest. Lived in a lush, tropical inland delta environment. May have been a fruit specialist.



Division 3: Big Carnivores

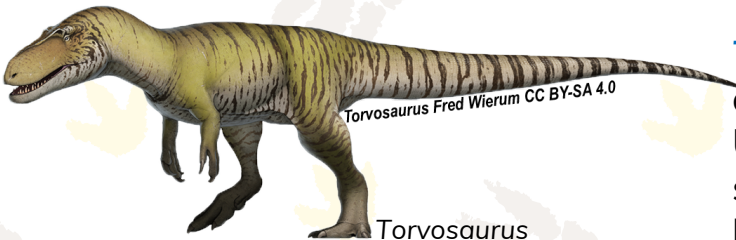
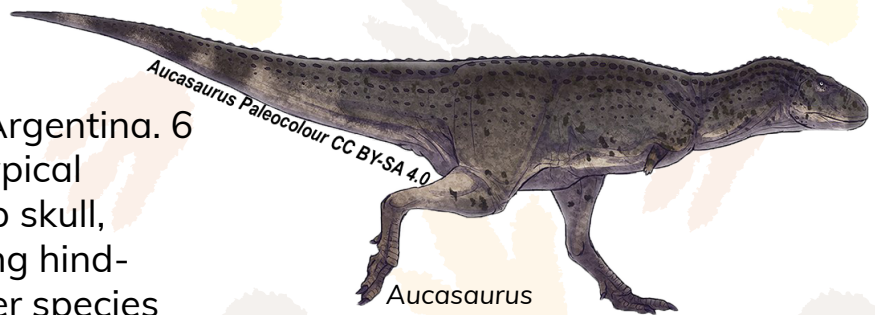


Daspletosaurus: (Da-splee-to-soar-us)

Large tyrannosaurid from late Cretaceous Alberta and Montana. Up to 9 meters long, 2 or more tons in weight. Proportionally the longest forelimbs of any tyrannosaur, thought still short compared to body size. Several species are known, one seems to have coexisted with another tyrannosaur, Gorgosaurus, in the Dinosaur Park Formation of Alberta. May have been a horned dinosaur/armored dinosaur prey specialist.

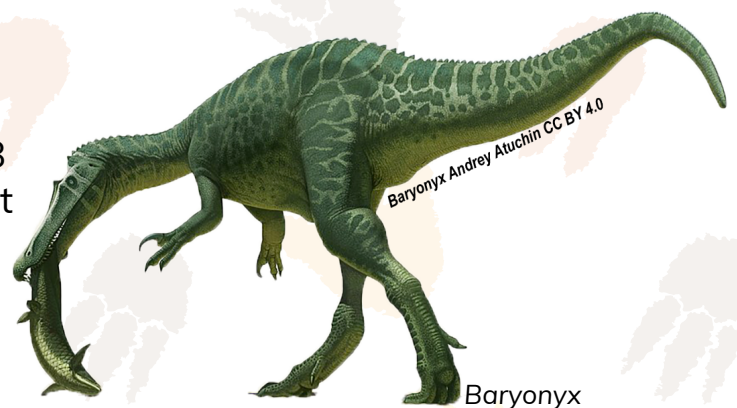
Aucasaurus: (Auk-o-saar-us)

Medium-sized abelisaurid from Argentina. 6 meters long. Late Cretaceous. Typical abelisaurid build with short, deep skull, highly reduced forelimbs, and long hindlimbs, but not as extreme as other species like Carnotaurus.

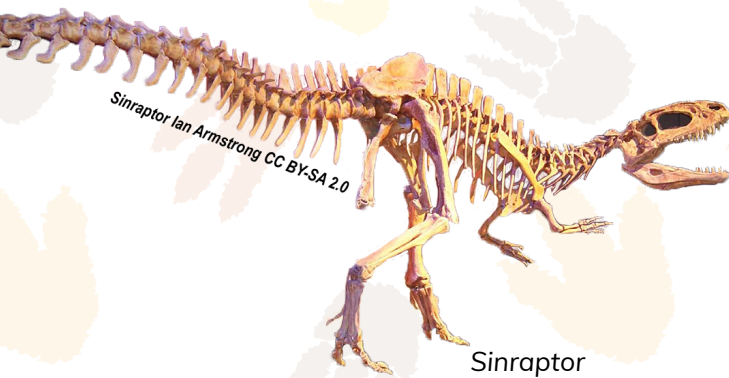


Torvosaurus: (Tor-vo-soar-us) Large megalosaurid from late Jurassic of western USA. 10 meters long. Robust build. Large, square-shaped jaws and powerful front limbs.

Baryonyx: (Berry-on-ix) A spinosaurid from early Cretaceous Britain. Roughly 8 meters long. Slender, crocodile-like snout and large claws on forelimbs. Likely a fish-catching specialist. Curved, slightly conical teeth.

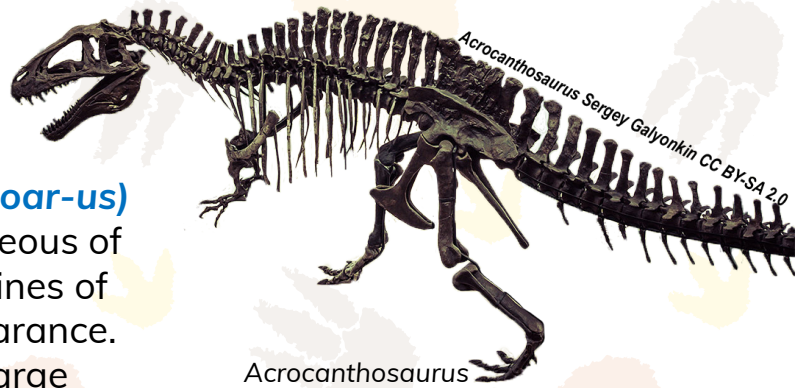


Division 3: Big Carnivores cont.



Sinraptor

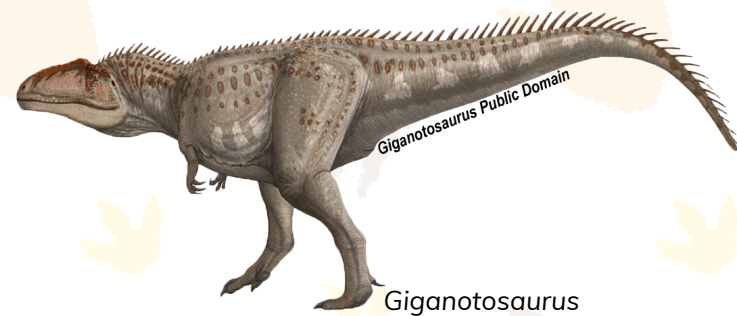
Sinraptor: (Sin-rap-tor): 7.6-meter-long carnivore from Late Jurassic of China. Part of the metriacanthosaurid family. Blade-like teeth similar to those of allosaurs.



Acrocanthosaurus

Acrocanthosaurus: (Ack-ro-can-tho-soar-us)

Very large carnosaur from early Cretaceous of western USA. 11.5 meters long. Tall spines of vertebrae gave it a ridge-backed appearance. Possible trackways suggest it hunted large sauropods.

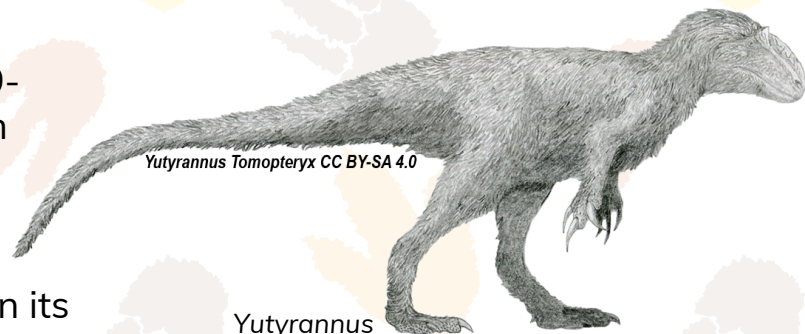


Giganotosaurus

Giganotosaurus: (Gig-a-noto-soar-us)

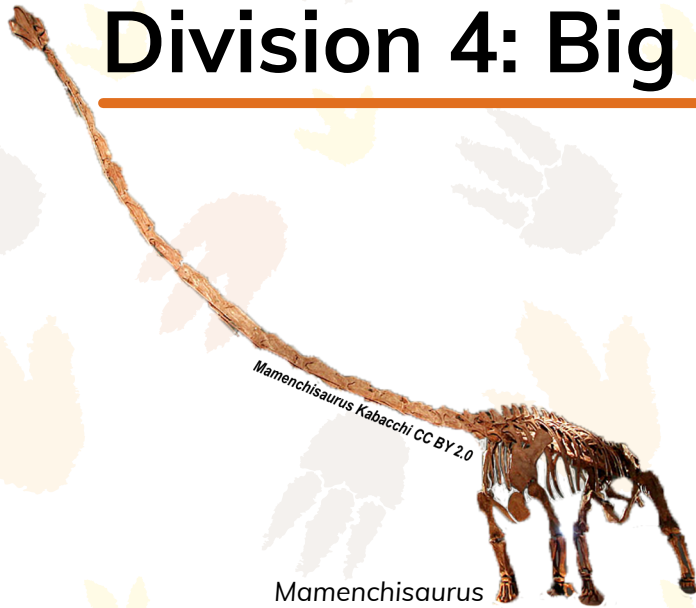
Huge carnosaur from mid-Cretaceous Argentina. One of the largest predatory dinosaurs, may have reached up to 13 meters long. Big triangular skull with slicing teeth. Small, weak forelimbs.

Yutyrannus: (You-tie-ran-us) Large 9-meter-long basal tyrannosauroid from early Cretaceous of China. Largest carnivorous dinosaur to bear direct evidence of feathers, which may have helped it thrive during cooler months in its temperate environment.



Yutyrannus

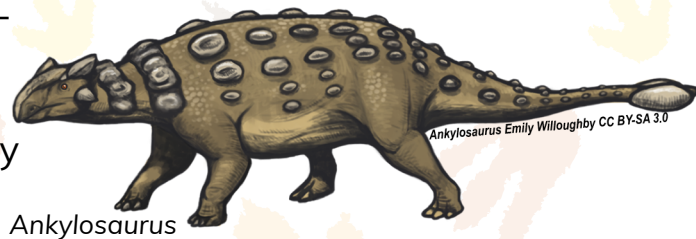
Division 4: Big Herbivores



Mamenchisaurus: (Mam-en-ka-soar-us)

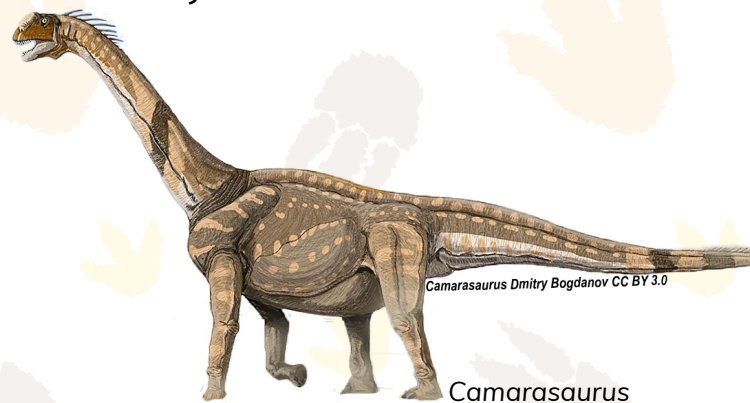
Medium to gigantic-sized sauropod from Late Jurassic – early Cretaceous China. Different species ranged from roughly 15-26 meters to perhaps 35 meters in length, one of the largest known dinosaurs. Neck was remarkably long even for a sauropod, with a small, round skull.

Ankylosaurus: (An-kye-lo-soar-us) Very large armored dinosaur from end of the Cretaceous period of western North America. 8 meters long, similar weight to an elephant. Broad, robust body covered in stud-like bony armor plates. Long, stiff tail tipped with a bony club.

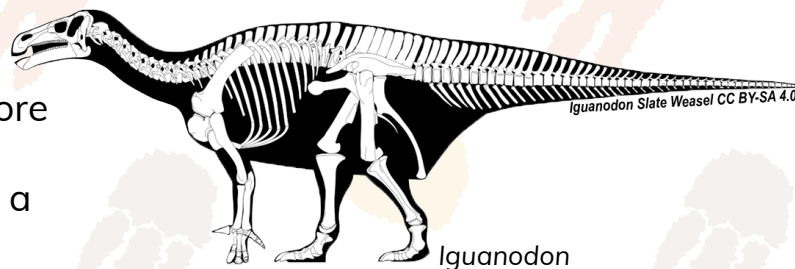


Camarasaurus: (Cam-air-o-soar-us)

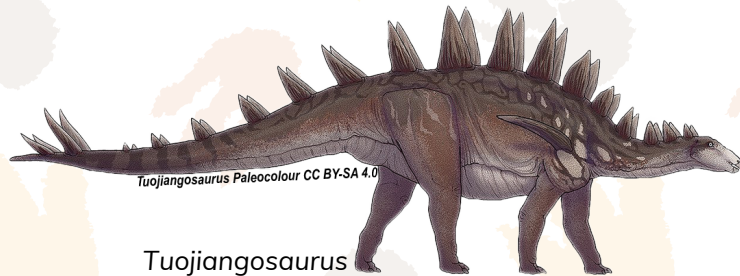
Common large sauropod from Late Jurassic western USA. Different species ranged from 15 to 23 meters long. Blunt, square-shaped skull with arched nasal openings on a modestly long neck. Teeth were chisel-shaped for cropping coarse plant material.



Iguanodon: (Ig-wan-o-don) Earlier relative of the duck-billed hadrosaurs, found in early Cretaceous western Europe. 10 meters long. Bulky, four-legged herbivore that could rear up when needed. Tall, narrow skull. 'Thumb' was formed into a defensive spike on the hand. Cropping beak and small chewing teeth in jaws.



Division 4: Big Herbivores cont.

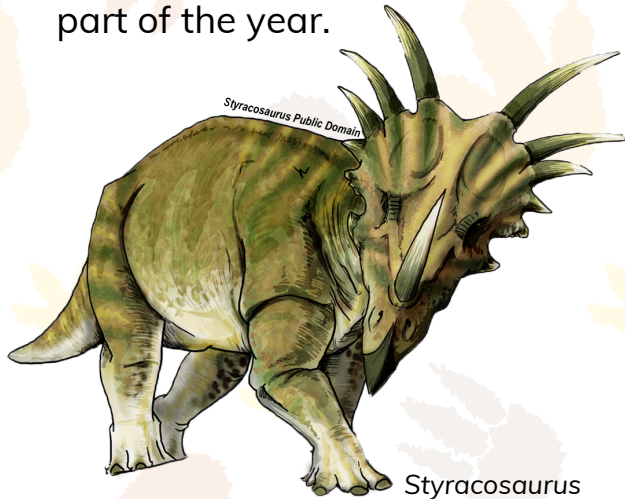
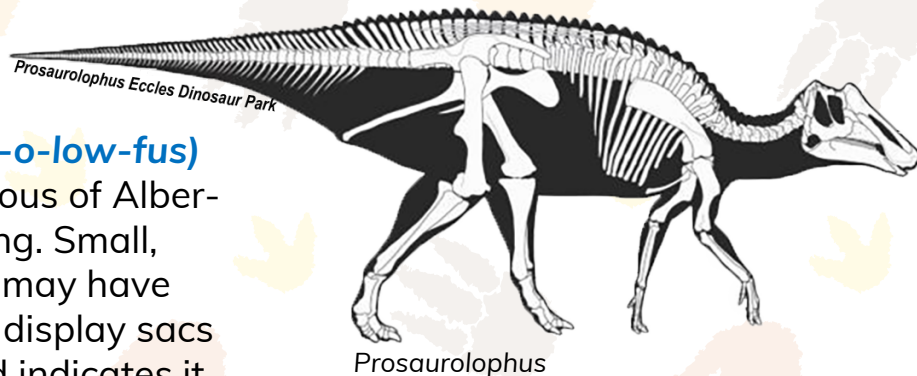


Tuojiangosaurus: (Too-j-yang-go-soar-us)

Medium-sized stegosaurid from late Jurassic of China. Blade-like dorsal plates turned into defensive spikes from mid-back down along the tail.

Prosaurolophus: (Pro-to-soar-o-low-fus)

Hadrosaurid from late Cretaceous of Alberta and Montana. 8.5 meters long. Small, solid bony crest between eyes may have anchored inflatable soft tissue display sacs over the nasal region. Bonebed indicates it may have lived in social groups for at least part of the year.



Styracosaurus: (Sty-rack-o-soar-us)

Ceratopsid from late Cretaceous Alberta and Montana. 5.5 meters long. Bore a large, pointed horn over the nose, with a row of prominent spikes on the edge of the frill. Likely display was the primary function of these. Hooked, parrot-like beak with powerful jaw closing muscles.

Chasmosaurus: (Caz-mo-soar-us)

Ceratopsid from late Cretaceous Alberta. Roughly 5 meters long. Unusually small horns over nose and eyes. Frill was long and rectangular, probably the main visual display structure.

