erth's DINOSAUR FACT SHEET

Get the facts on some of Erth's amazing dinosaurs!

Which ones do you know?

BABY MINMI PARAVERTEBRA

Early Cretaceous: 110 –115 million years ago

Fossils of Minmi Paravertebra were first discovered near Roma, Queensland in 1964. In 1990 an almost complete specimen was discovered on Marathon Station, Queensland.

A small armoured dinosaur (ankylosaur) that was a quadruped. This herbivore had horizontal plates of bones that ran along the sides of its vertebrae called "scutes" and even the underside was protected by small bony scutes imbedded in the skin. Minmi grew to about 3 metres long and was approximately 1-metre tall to the top of the shoulder.

BABY DRYOSAUR

Order: Ornithischia
Suborder: Ornithopoda
Dryosaur means: "Oak Reptile" or Tree Lizard
Late Jurassic: 145 –161 million years ago

Fossils have been found in the western United States, Tanzania and also in New Zealand. Dryosaurs were herbivores, using their hard beak to cut leaves and plants, and the Oak shaped teeth at the back of the mouth to grind them up. Dryosaurs had powerful back legs and was probably a fast runner. The stiff tail balanced the body while standing or moving. Dryosaurs grew to approximately 3 to 4 meters long.

TYRANNOSAUR

Pronunciation: tye-RAN-uh-SAWR
Meaning: "tyrant lizard"

The Tyrannosaur is any of a group of predatory dinosaurs that lived from the late Jurassic Period (approx. 150 million years ago) to the latest Cretaceous Period (about 65 million years ago), at which time they reached their greatest dominance. Most were large predators with very large, high skulls of approximately 1 metre in length. They had up to 60 teeth - those of the juveniles being serrated front and back and could easily bite through skulls, pelvises and limbs of other dinosaurs. A fossil found at Dinosaur Cove, Victoria in 1989 has led paleontologist Tom Rich to suggest that Tyrannosaurids were not only restricted to the northern hemisphere.

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MEGANEURA

Pronunciation: meg-a-NEW-ra

Meganeura was a gigantic primitive dragonfly with a 70 cm wingspan. It flew to hunt flying insects above tropical forests and had swiveling multi-faceted eyes like headlamps which were quick to spot movement and sharp enough to allow it to pounce on flying prey.

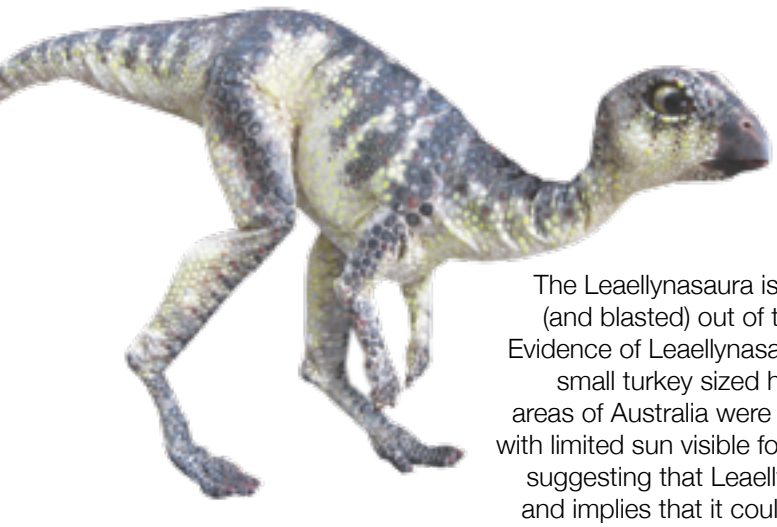
Meganeura flew by beating 2 pairs of wings stiffened by “veins”. It dashed to and fro in forests, changing speed and direction almost instantly, grabbing insects with its legs and bringing them up to the mouth to feed. Meganeura itself were around in the late Carboniferous period (355-295 million years ago), but not in either the Jurassic or the Cretaceous period. However, there were still large dragonflies in both these periods. The present day dragonflies are descended from these.

DWARF ALLOSAUR

Pronunciation: ALL-o-saw
Meaning: “strange lizard’ on account of its light vertebrae

There are limited recordings of this animal in Australia. It appears to have been a more robust form of the giant Allosaurs of the northern hemisphere, thought to have adapted to survive in Australia after the Ice Age. The Dwarf Allosaur grew to about 6 metres in length and could probably rear to about 2.2 metres. It weighed just over half a tonne.

It was a general carnivore and scavenger. It was the largest predator in Gondwana. Existed in the early Cretaceous period (104 -112 million years ago).



LEAELLYNASAURA

Pronunciation: lee-EL-in-a-SAW-rah
104 to 112 million years ago
Period: Early Cretaceous

The Leaellynasaura is one of many dinosaurs whose partial remains have been dug (and blasted) out of the solid rocks of Dinosaur Cove in the south east of Australia. Evidence of Leaellynasaura is known from a well-preserved skull. This dinosaur was a small turkey sized herbivorous Ornithopod. In early Cretaceous times the residing areas of Australia were well within the Antarctic Circle where the climate was extreme with limited sun visible for months of the year. Its skull has unusually large eye-sockets suggesting that Leaellynasaura adapted to the long winter darkness of the Antarctic and implies that it could withstand low, perhaps even sub-zero, temperatures. To do this, it would have needed some way of generating body heat, which some people have taken as evidence that dinosaurs were in fact warm-blooded.

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AUSTRALOVENATOR WINTONENSIS

Meaning: "Winton's Southern Hunter"
Early Cretaceous 100 - 98 mya

Found near Winton, Queensland 2006.

5 m long. 500 kg. Giant slashing claws on powerful arms and razor sharp teeth.

The cheetah of it's time. For speed, Australia's answer to the velciraptor.

ADULT MINMI PARAVERTABRA

Early Cretaceous 115 - 95 mya

Named after Minmi Crossing, near Roma, Queensland where it was discovered in 1964. Primitive Ankylosaur.

Sturdy four legs - longer than most of it's kind and could possibly run at speed. Herbivore 2 - 3m long

It's defensive body armour was made up of bony plates and protrusions called scutes. Unlike other dinosaurs, it even had scutes on it's belly.

TITANOSAUR

Cretaceous period 90 - 65 mya.

The last of the giant herbivores.

The name refers to a group of dinosaurs comprising of up to 50 species.

Some of them were the heaviest creatures to have walked the earth - up to 100 tonnes. Queensland specimens reported to be 25 metres long.

Typified by small heads on long neck and long tails. Quadraped. Widespread, lived on every continent on Earth including Antartica.

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