

Dinosaur Time Periods

AKA The Mesozoic Era

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The Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous periods were marked out by geologists to distinguish among various types of geologic strata (chalk, limestone, etc.) laid down tens of millions of years ago. Since dinosaur fossils are usually found embedded in rock, paleontologists associate dinosaurs with the geologic period in which they lived—for example, "the sauropods of the late Jurassic."

TRIASSIC

237–201 million years ago

At the start of the Triassic period, 250 million years ago, the Earth was just recovering from the Permian/Triassic Extinction, which witnessed the demise of over two-thirds of all land-dwelling species and a whopping 95 percent of ocean-dwelling species.

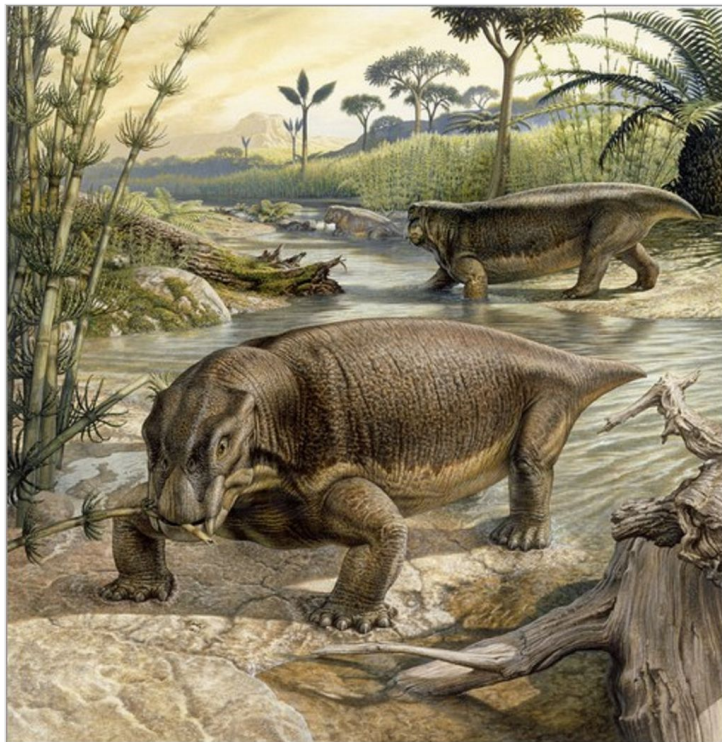
Archosaurs

Sometimes called "ruling reptiles," this group of ancient animals included dinosaurs and pterosaurs (flying reptiles)



Therapsids

A group of ancient reptiles that later evolved to become mammals



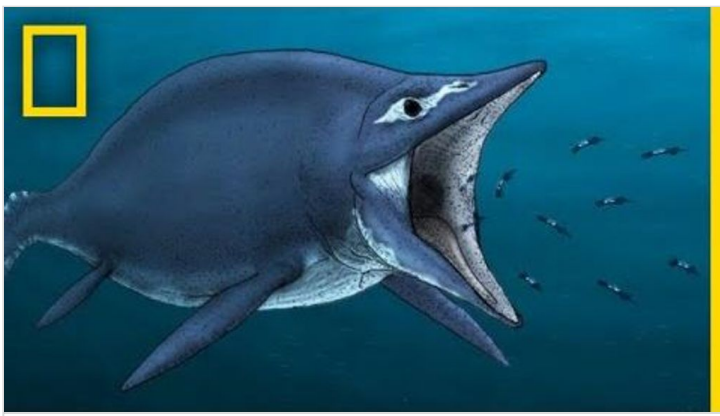
Plesiosaurs

Long-necked marine animals (often described as similar to the Loch Ness monster)



Ichthyosaur

Ichthyosaurs are large extinct marine reptiles. Ichthyosaurs belong to the order known as Ichthyosauria or Ichthyopterygia.



Ichthyosaurs 101 | National Geographic

Autor: National Geographic

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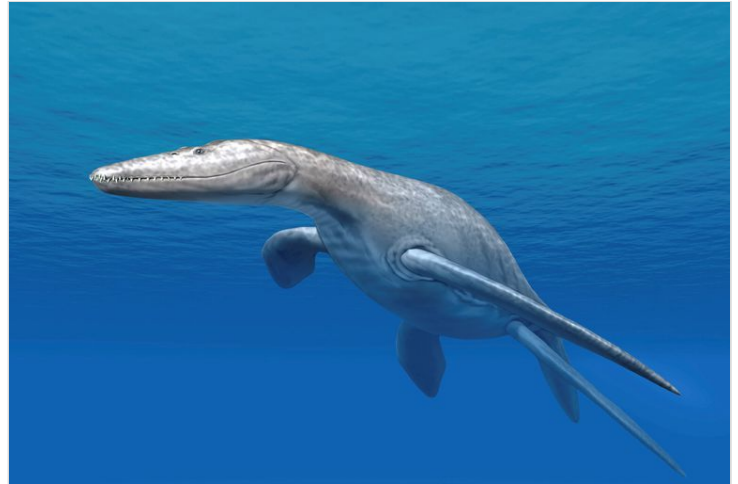
Plesiosaurs

The Plesiosauria or plesiosaurs are an order or clade of extinct Mesozoic marine reptiles, belonging to the Sauropterygia. Plesiosaurs first appeared in the latest Triassic Period, possibly in the Rhaetian stage, about 203 million years ago.

JURASSIC

201-145 million years ago

Thanks to the movie Jurassic Park, people identify the Jurassic period, more than any other geological time span, with the age of dinosaurs. The Jurassic is when the first gigantic sauropod and theropod dinosaurs appeared on Earth, a far cry from their slender, man-sized ancestors of the preceding Triassic period. But the fact is that dinosaur diversity reached its peak in the ensuing Cretaceous period.



Sauropods

Huge long-necked, long-tailed vegetarian dinosaurs (such as the Apatosaur)



Theropods

Two-legged carnivorous dinosaurs, including raptors and Tyrannosaurus Rex

Pterosaurs

Winged flying reptiles that ranged from the size of a sparrow to the 36-foot-long Quetzalcoatlus



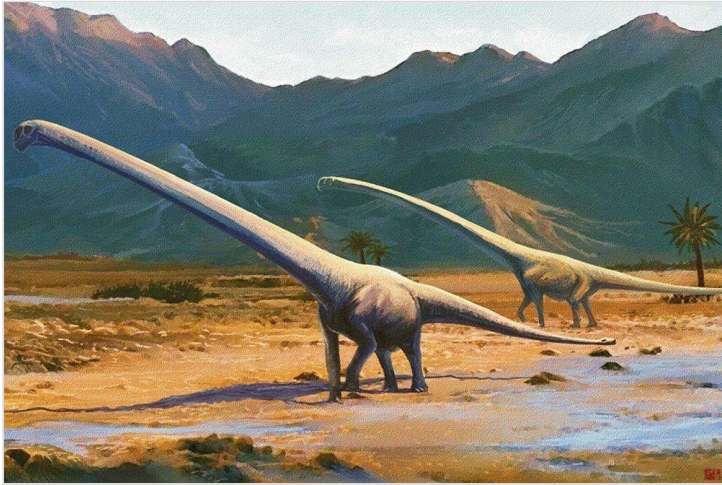
CRETACEOUS

145-66 million years ago

The Cretaceous period is when dinosaurs attained their maximum diversity, as ornithischian and saurischian families branched off into a bewildering array of armored, raptor-clawed, thick-skulled, and/or long-toothed and long-tailed meat- and plant-eaters.

Sauropods

Huge long-necked, long-tailed vegetarian dinosaurs (such as the Apatosaur)



Ceratopsians

Ceratopsia or Ceratopia is a group of herbivorous, beaked dinosaurs that thrived in what are now North America, Europe, and Asia, during the Cretaceous Period, although ancestral forms lived earlier, in the Jurassic.



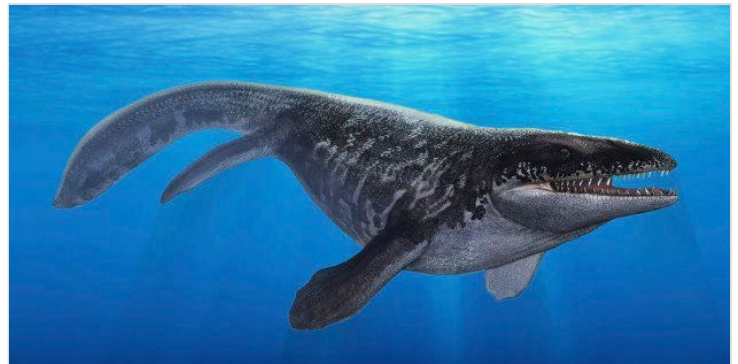
Raptors

Velociraptor is a genus of dromaeosaurid theropod dinosaur that lived approximately 75 to 71 million years ago during the latter part of the Cretaceous Period. Two species are currently recognized, although others have been assigned in the past.



Mosasaurus

Mosasaurus comprise a group of extinct, large marine reptiles containing 38 genera in total. Their first fossil remains were discovered in a limestone quarry at Maastricht on the Meuse in 1764.



Hadrosaurs

Hadrosaurids, or duck-billed dinosaurs, are members of the ornithischian family Hadrosauridae. This group is known as the duck-billed dinosaurs for the flat duck-bill appearance of the bones in their snouts.



Pterosaurs

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