DAVID AARON

The Harrods Triceratops Skull

Triceratops prorsus□Maastrichtian, Late Cretaceous Period□68-66 million years ago□Discovered: Hell Creek Formation, Montana□Fossilised organic bone material□Length of skull: 190cm Width: 118cm

An extraordinarily complete skull of a Triceratops prorsus, one of the two species of Triceratops known to have roamed the plains of what is now North America around 68-66 million years ago. It was the most numerous of the horned cretaceous dinosaurs as well as the largest ceratopsian, and one of the last to become extinct in the mass extinction event approximately 66 million years ago.□□One of the most famous species of dinosaur, its flaring bony frill, pointed beak and three-horned head make the Triceratops instantly recognisable. Today two species of Triceratops are accepted; the earlier T. horridus, which is characterised by a smaller nose horn and long beak, and the later evolution of T. prorsus, with its longer nose horn and shorter beak, of which this skull is a fine example.□□The first specimen of Triceratops found was a pair of horns discovered in 1887 in Colorado and initially mistaken for a Pliocene bison. American palaeontologist Othniel Charles Marsh realised the mistake and catalogued the two species of horridus and prorsus in 1889 and 1890 respectively. The first mounted skeleton was displayed by the Smithsonian in 1905 (and is still on display).

Exhibitions

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Literature:

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