
Oldest Dinosaur on Record Found in Argentina

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The findings, presented in a published on Monday in the journal Nature Ecology and Evolution, introduces this dinosaur species as *Ingentia Prime* (First Immense) and is described as one of the first giant sauropods. Its kind lived between 201 and 237 million years ago, dating the animal to the Late Triassic period, and is 30 million years older than the oldest dinosaur ever found.

The team that found and studied the fossils was led by Cecilia Apaldetti from the National University of San Juan. She and her team discovered the remains in the San Juan province in 2015.

Not only is the discovery important because it becomes the oldest registered dinosaur, but hints at how sauropods - the dinosaur breed with a long neck, long tail, small heads, and four thick, pillar-like legs - got so big.

The scientists debunk the notion that the tendency toward a "giant body" occurred during the Jurassic but instead began to occur some 30 million years before the first modern sauropods appeared.

An improved respiratory system and modifications to the vertebral musculature and hind limbs were key factors to the giant growth spurt, theorize the researchers.

"These findings show that there is more than one way to 'create' a giant dinosaur and that the iconic sauropods have a long history of evolutionary innovation behind them," said the scientific paper.