



CANADA'S DINOSAURS

Text by Chelsea Donaldson
Illustrations by John Bindon

 **SCHOLASTIC**

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藏书章

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Canada's Dinosaurs



● Canada's Dinosaurs—Dig Sites



Canada



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Welcome to Prehistoric Canada!

For about 200 million years, dinosaurs were among the biggest, fiercest creatures on Earth. Then, about 65 million years ago, they disappeared. What happened? No one knows for sure.

We know dinosaurs once lived on Earth because we have found their bones. Over time, minerals filled the bones and they became rocklike. These “rocks” are called fossils. Fossils can also come from impressions in the ground, made by things like footprints, skin or poop.

Although dinosaurs lived all over the world, some spots are better for finding fossils. In Canada, Alberta has the most dinosaur bones. In fact, it is one of the best places in the world to hunt for dinosaurs! Dinosaur remains have also been found in British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Nunavut and Saskatchewan. Let's find out more about Canada's dreadful dinos!



Chapter 1

Anchisaurus

(AN-kee-SORE-us)

Anchisaurus bones were the first dinosaur fossils found in North America. In 1818, no one knew about dinosaurs. They figured the strange bones were from ancient humans.

How could anyone mistake a dinosaur for a human? Well, for one thing, the bones were very old and broken up. For another, Anchisaurus was only about the size of a small pony, or a very large human.



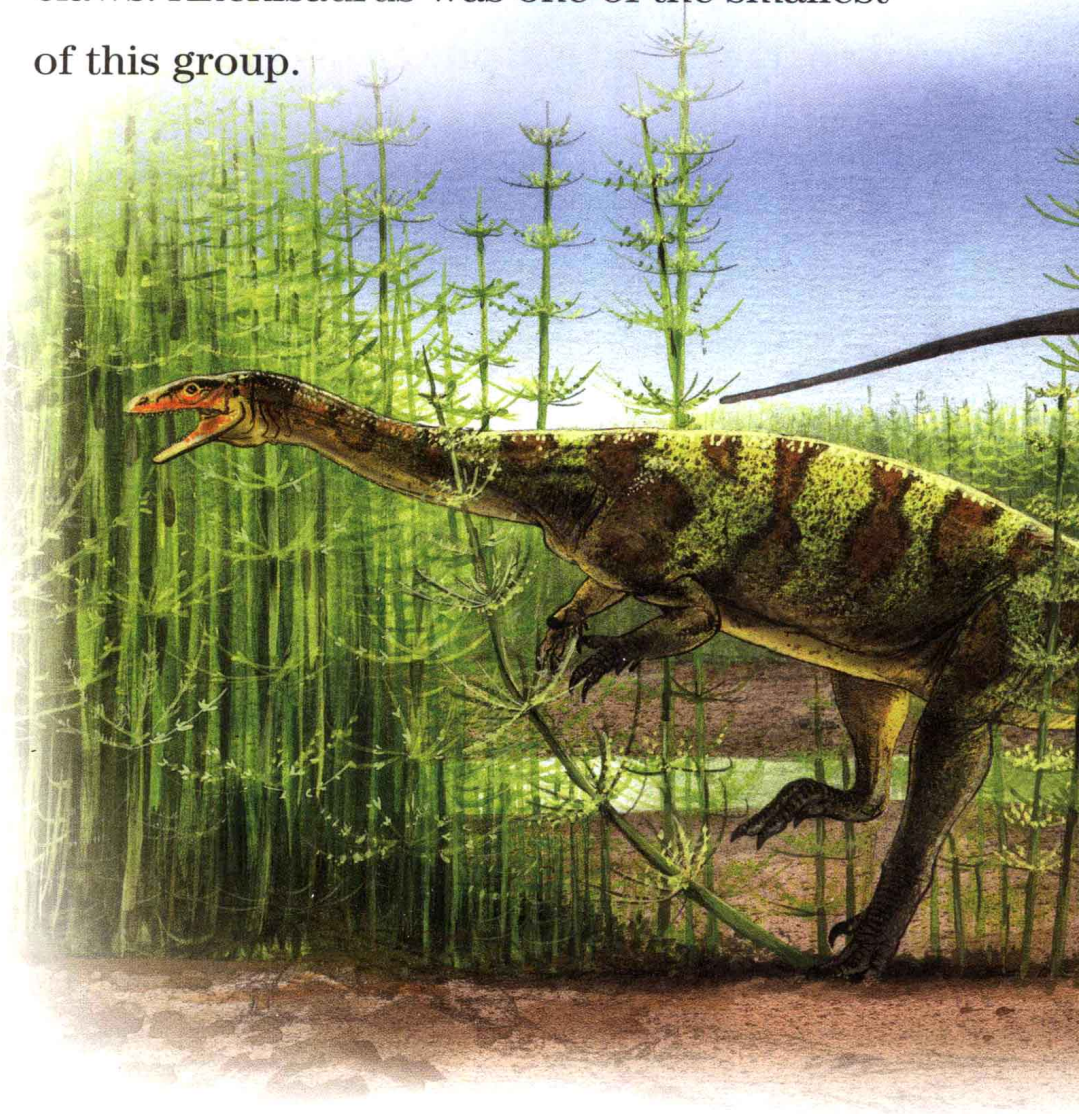
Besides, if you didn't already know that dinosaurs existed, how could you possibly dream them up?

Since then, we've learned more about *Anchisaurus*. For example, we know it was one of the earliest dinosaurs. It lived 195 million years ago.

Back then, Earth had just one giant continent. Later, it broke apart and the pieces drifted off to form the continents we know today. That explains why *Anchisaurus* fossils have been found in places as far apart as Nova Scotia and South Africa. They used to be right next door to each other!



We also know that *Anchisaurus* was probably one of the first prosauropods (pro-SAW-ro-pods). Prosauropods were plant-eating dinos with long necks, small heads, short forelimbs and very large thumb claws. *Anchisaurus* was one of the smallest of this group.

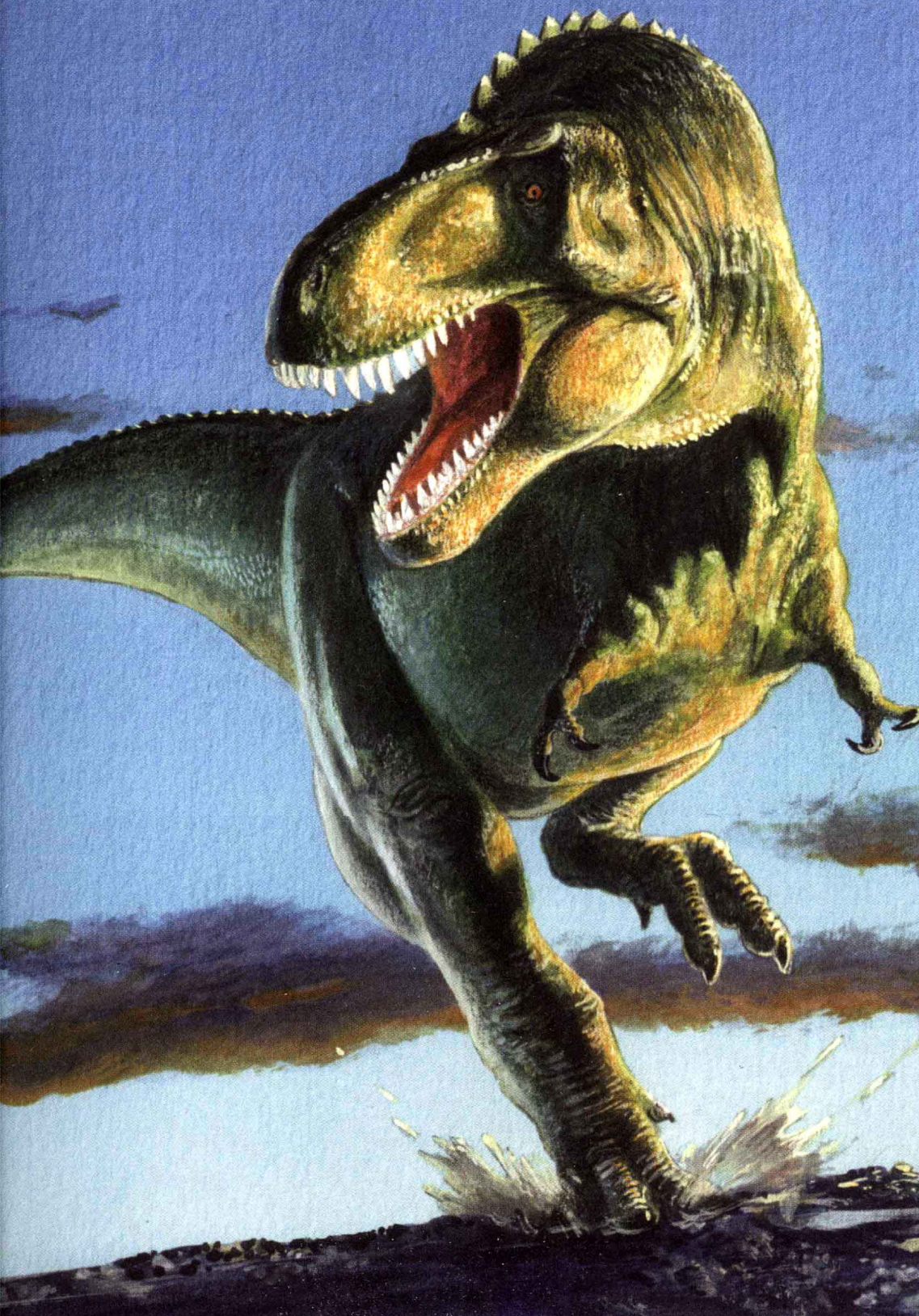


The teeth of Anchisaurus were small and spoon-shaped, good for tearing off plants. It had a big belly to help it digest tough, stringy vegetation. It is possible that it ate meat as well, but we don't know for sure.

Most of the time, Anchisaurus probably moved slowly on all fours, keeping its head close to the ground.

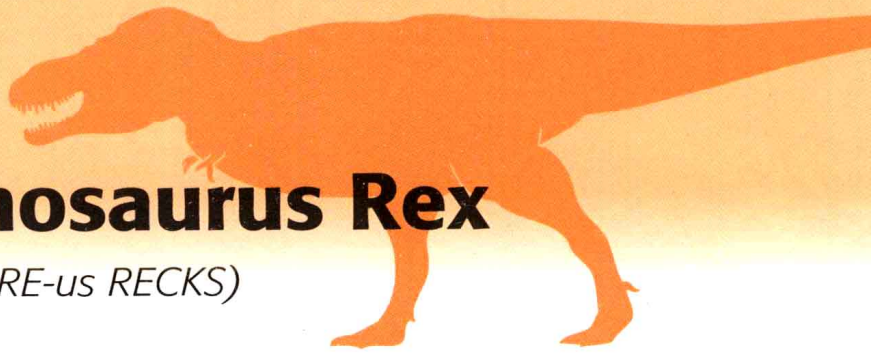
But when danger threatened, it may have been able to lift up on its hind legs and run. There's nothing like a giant meat-eating lizard chasing after you to keep you on your toes!





Tyrannosaurus Rex

(ty-RAN-o-SORE-us RECKS)

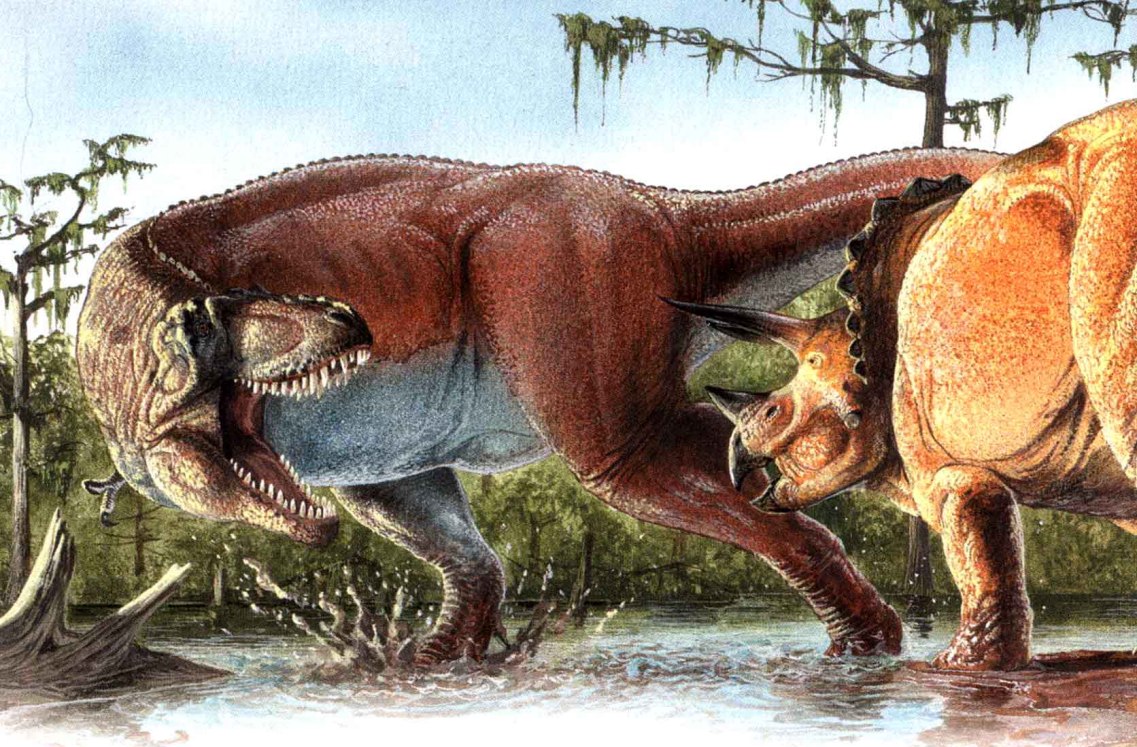


THUMP . . . THUMP . . . THUMP.

Can't you just hear the heart-stopping footsteps of this massive dinosaur? Watch out — it's Tyrannosaurus rex!

T. rex isn't the largest dinosaur ever found, but it is definitely one of the most famous — and the most terrifying! In fact, its name means “king of the terrible lizards.”

Its head was about as big as you are! It also had up to 60 sharp, pointy teeth, each one about as tall as this page. Those teeth sat in a hinged jaw that could open *very* wide — so wide that an adult human would have slid down its throat nice and easy! (Luckily, no humans were around when T. rex ruled the Earth.)

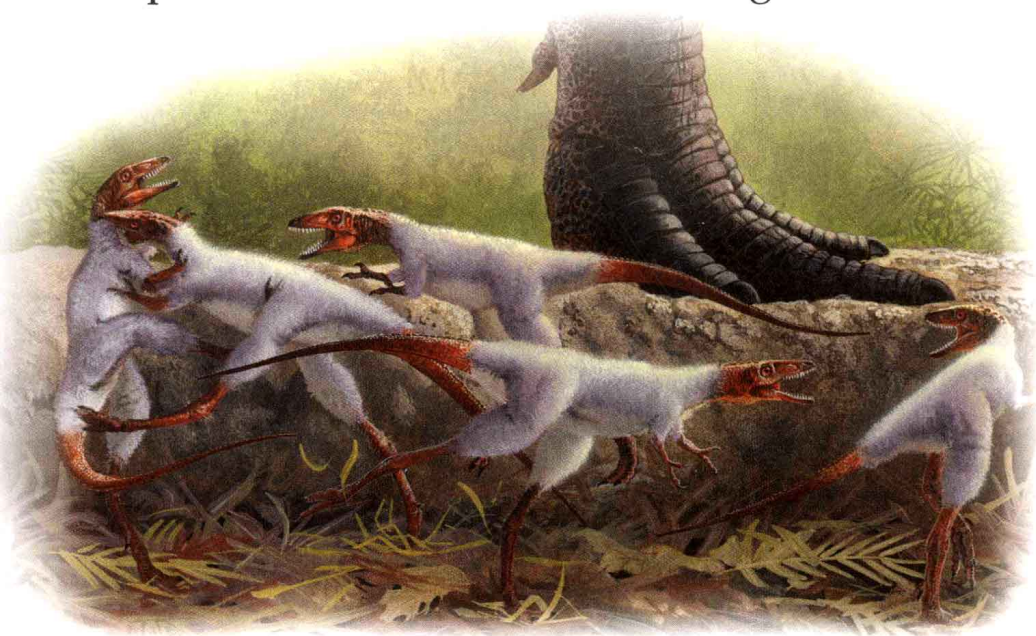


Its jaw and neck muscles were so strong, it could have picked up a cow — if it could have found one! T. rex had no trouble crunching through bones.

As with most dinos, there is still a lot we don't know about Tyrannosaurus. For one thing, how did it get its food? Some scientists think it was a hunter. They point to its strong neck and jaws, which could have held on tightly to a struggling animal. But others suggest that T. rex was a scavenger. Scavengers eat the remains of creatures caught by other animals.

Perhaps both groups are right. Perhaps these giant creatures hunted *and* scavenged, grabbing food any way they could.

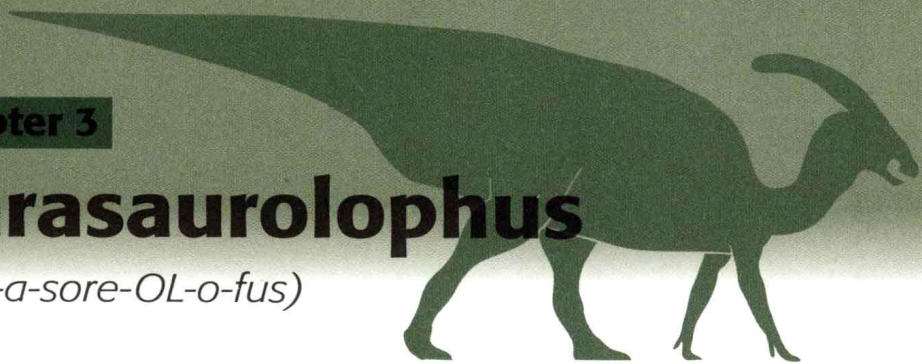
We also don't know much about young Tyrannosaurus. So far, only a few fossils of T. rex babies have been found. One was from a dinosaur that was around two years old when it died and about the size of a large dog. It had teeth shaped for biting into flesh. It's likely that a young T. rex hunted small prey on its own. It was very well adapted for hunting because it was quick and small but still had a big bite!



Chapter 3

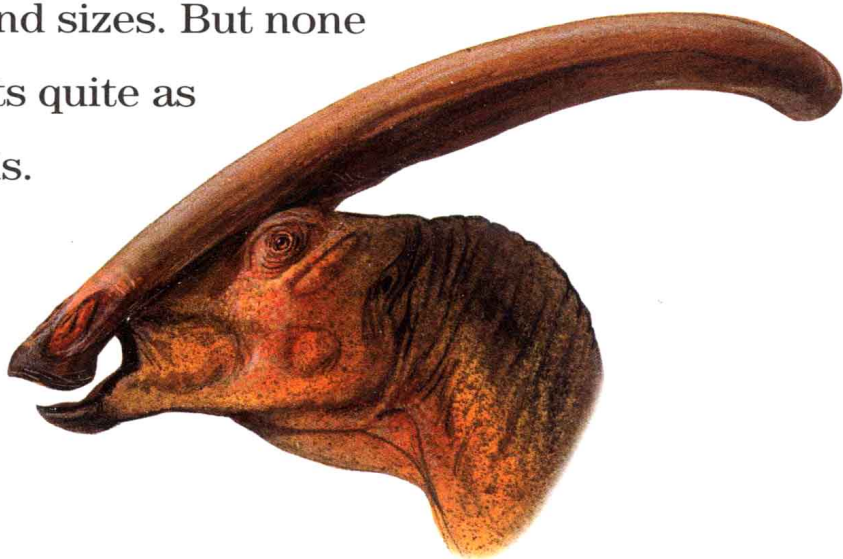
Parasaurolophus

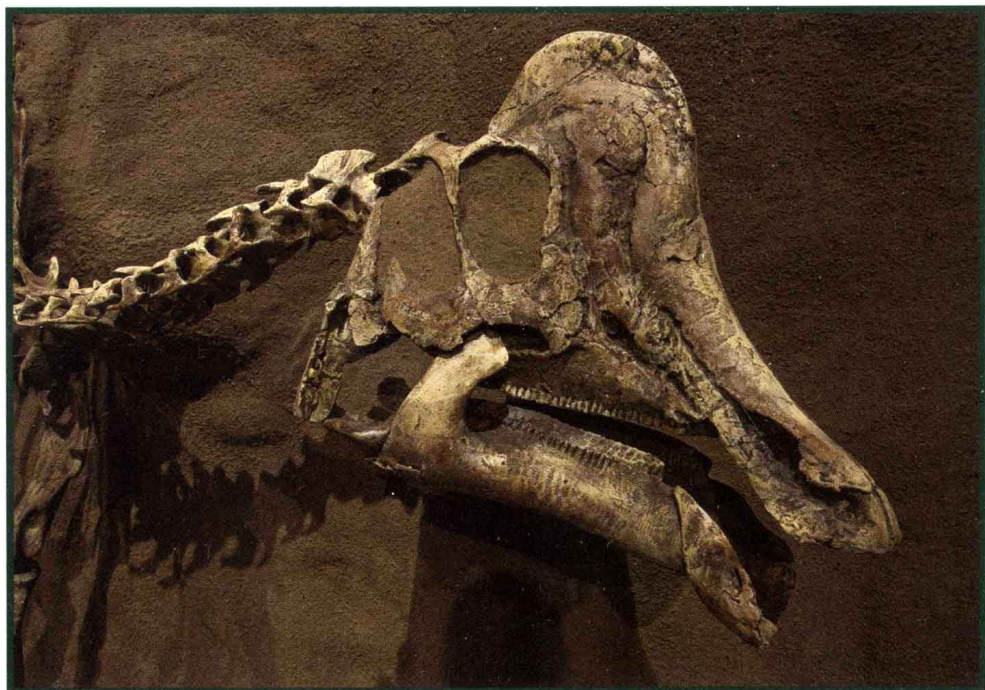
(PAR-a-sore-OL-o-fus)



Parasaurolophus is one of the oddest-looking dinos you'll ever see. What on earth is that long thing sticking out of the back of its head? It looks a bit like an elephant's trunk that got put on backwards.

Parasaurolophus belongs to a group of dinosaurs called the duckbills. Many duckbill dinos had odd-shaped heads, with bony crests of various shapes and sizes. But none had crests quite as big as this.





Duckbills were one of the last dinosaur groups to appear. They first showed up around 100 million years ago. They are called duckbills because they had hard, flat, beak-like mouths with no teeth in front — a bit like those of ducks.

Parasaurolophus's beak acted like a weed whacker for cutting off tough plant stems. Then specially shaped teeth in the side of the mouth went to work, grinding and chopping up the hard, stringy food.

