TECHNICAL COMMENT ABSTRACTS

COMMENT ON “Ascent of Dinosaurs Linked to an Iridium Anomaly at the Triassic-Jurassic Boundary”

T. Thulborn

Olsen et al. (Reports, 17 May 2002, p. 1305) suggested that predatory dinosaurs of the suborder Theropoda did not attain large size until the Early Jurassic, in the wake of mass extinction at the Triassic-Jurassic boundary (~202 My). Fossil footprints, however, reveal that theropods bigger than Allosaurus inhabited East Gondwana some 20 million years before the close of the Triassic.

Full text at
www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/301/5630/169b

RESPONSE TO COMMENT ON “Ascent of Dinosaurs Linked to an Iridium Anomaly at the Triassic-Jurassic Boundary”


Thulborn’s only salient point is the extraordinary claim that very large theropod dinosaurs were present about 20 million years before the Triassic-Jurassic boundary. However, the only extant paleontological evidence is a plaster cast of a footprint that is not convincingly theropod in origin, and skeletal evidence is completely lacking.

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