

## Greek researchers discover 4-metre mastodon tusks in 'fossilised zoo'

June 21 2005

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ATHENS, June 21, 2005 (AFP) - Greek geologists have discovered a three million year old 'fossilised zoo' containing the remains of prehistoric rhinos, mastodons, gazelles and carnivorous mammals near the northwestern town of Grevena, a Greek daily reported on Tuesday.

The finds included the 4.39-metre (14.4 feet), mostly intact tusks of a mastodon, a species that predated modern elephants, which may well be the longest ever unearthed, a senior researcher from Aristotelio University in Thessaloniki told Ta Nea daily.

"All the evidence we examined suggests that these tusks are the longest found in Europe," assistant geology professor Evangelia Tsoukala said.

"We have contacted the Guinness Book of Records, and are expecting an answer by the end of summer. We are confident that the Grevena mastodon will occupy the place it deserves in the book of records," she said.

The Greek team also sought to compare their mastodon find with discoveries made on the American continent. The largest fossilised tusks ever discovered there are probably 3.9 metres (12.8 feet) long, Ta Nea said.

The Grevena mastodon was 4.5 metres tall and weighed at least 12 tonnes, the university said.

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Citation: Greek researchers discover 4-metre mastodon tusks in 'fossilised zoo' (2005, June 21)  
retrieved 19 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2005-06-greek-metre-mastodon-tusks-fossilised.html>

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