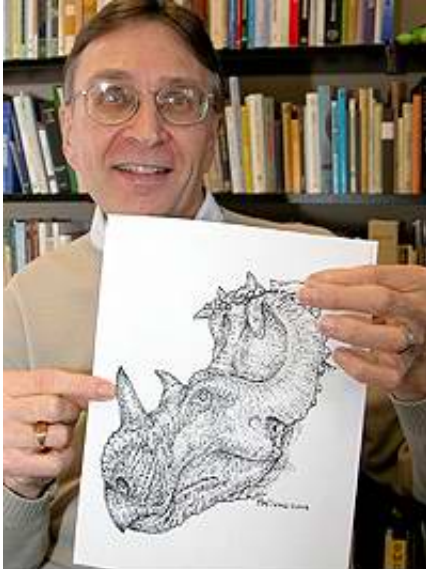


Dino-mite discovery

November 24 2005



Dr. Tony Russell points out the distinctive features that led him and Michael Ryan to identify *Centrosaurus brinkmani* as an unique species of dinosaur.
/ Photo by Ken Bendiktsen

A new species of horned dinosaur with distinctive spikes and a flashy shield around its head has been unveiled in a scholarly journal. *Centrosaurus brinkmani* was a docile vegetarian about the size of two-tonne truck that lived 76 million years ago, said Michael Ryan, who earned his PhD from the University of Calgary. Ryan co-wrote the article, in the *Canadian Journal of Earth Sciences*, with zoology professor Tony Russell.

“ We are the first describers of this new species, but this find is really built on the shoulders of hundreds of volunteers who helped us at the dig sites and cleaned fossils,” said Ryan, now the head of vertebrate paleontology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

The dinosaur, found in Alberta’s Dinosaur Provincial Park, was named in honour of Donald Brinkman, a paleontologist at the Royal Tyrrell Museum near Drumheller, Alta.

“ He’s been an excellent mentor for so many people in our field of work that it seemed like the right thing to do,” said Ryan.

The fossilized remains of *Centrosaurus brinkmani* were collected during the summers of 1995 and 1996.

Back in the lab, the painstaking examination of ancient evidence began.

Ryan said he thought in 1998 he might be on to a unique species.

The new dinosaur is a distant, smaller relative of the well-known triceratops, which lived about 10 million years later. While the triceratops had two large horns pointing forward, *brinkmani*’s comparable horns were much smaller and pointed sideways.

Another key to its uniqueness are the hooks or “”pikelets” that adorned the shield around its face. “It looks like someone stuck a bunch of long-spined sea anemones around the edge of the frill,” said Ryan.

For scientists, lending their names to a new species is a thrill.

“ It’s your connection with immortality. Once you’re gone, your name will always be there as part of this record of how science is done,” said Russell, who has a lizard from Burma named after him.

Source: University of Calgary

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