

New species of dwarf buffalo is identified

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U.S. scientists have identified a new species of dwarf buffalo that lived about 100,000 years ago in what is now the Philippines.

The remains were identified at Chicago's Field Museum from two teeth, two vertebrae, arm bones, a foot bone and a pair of hooves brought to the museum by Chicago physician Hamilcar Intengan, a Philippines native, The Chicago Sun-Times reported.

Michael Armas, a mining engineer, was digging tunnels on the Philippine island of Cebu looking for phosphate about 50 years ago when he found the fossils.

For 40 years, Armas tried to identify them and then, about 10 years ago, asked Intengan, a family friend, to take the remains to the museum.

The species was likely about 2 1/2 feet tall and weighed approximately 350 pounds, Larry Heaney, curator of mammals at the museum, told the Sun-Times. He said by evolving over thousands of years into smaller versions, the animals -- now extinct -- could produce a maximum number of offspring, improving their chances of genetic survival.

Paleontologists, reporting in the Journal of Mammalogy, said they have named the new species *Bubalus cebuensis*.

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