

Fossil of Cretaceous-era squid found in Peru

January 20 2011



A fossilized squid is seen in this image from the Meyer-Honninger Museum after being found near the Marañon river, in the northeastern Peruvian Amazon region. The fossil is believed to date back some 85 million years. AFP PHOTO/Meyer-Honninger Museum

Paleontologists said Thursday they discovered the 85-million-year-old fossil of a previously unknown squid species from the Cretaceous era in the high jungle region of northeastern Peru.

"It is a new species of [squid](#), totally new, that has not been seen in other parts of the world," paleontologist Klaus Honninger told AFP.

Honninger, director of the Meyer-Honninger Paleontology Museum in the northern city of Chiclayo, said the fossil was a large [cephalopod](#) of the extinct Baculite species, known for their long straight shells.

The specimen is 32 centimeters (12.6 inches) long and five centimeters (two inches) in diameter, and has unusual diagonal rings in the lower section.

The rare [fossil](#) was discovered on January 6 in the Marañon River basin at a site some 4,100 meters (13,450 feet) above the sea level.

Honniger did not give a specific location, only saying it was found in Peru's north-eastern Amazonas region.

"At the site, a sort of saltwater lake had formed that allowed these creatures to evolve independently," Honniger said.

The Cretaceous era was a geological period lasting from around 144 to 65 million years ago. It was the last period of the age of dinosaurs.

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