

Triceratops controversy continues

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Millions of years after its extinction, *Triceratops* is inciting controversy about how to classify the ancient animals. New analysis, published Feb. 29 in the open access journal *PLoS ONE*, suggests that the specimens in question should be classified into two separate groups, *Triceratops* and *Torosaurus*, and are not individuals of different ages from the same genus, as others have proposed.

The researchers, led by Nicholas Longrich of Yale University, performed detailed morphological and [computational analysis](#) of 35 specimens and found evidence that *Triceratops* and *Torosaurus* should be considered distinct. In particular, the researchers aged skulls by looking at the closing of sutures between skull bones. They found evidence that some *Torosaurus* skulls were immature, and some *Triceratops* skulls were adult, which was inconsistent with the idea that skulls assigned to *Torosaurus* represented adult [Triceratops](#).

This result is in contrast to a hypothesis from a different group that suggests they actually represent juvenile and adult specimens from the same genus.

More information: Longrich NR, Field DJ (2012) *Torosaurus* Is Not *Triceratops*: Ontogeny in Chasmosaurine Ceratopsids as a Case Study in Dinosaur Taxonomy. *PLoS ONE* 7(2): e32623.
[doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0032623](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0032623)

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