

New giant dinosaur species discovered in Chile

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Credit: Universidad de Chile/AFP

Chilean paleontologists announced Monday the discovery of a new species of giant dinosaurs called *Arackar licanantay*.

The dinosaur belongs to the titanosaur dinosaur family tree but is unique in the world due to features on its dorsal vertebrae.

The Arackar licanantay—a Kunza indigenous language name that means "Atacameño bones"—lived in what is now the Atacama Region, during the end of the Cretaceous period, 80 to 66 million years ago.

The fossil specimen belongs to a large, quadruped, herbivore measuring some 6.3 meters (20'8") in length but scientists determined the remains are that of a juvenile.

Adults are estimated to have grown to reach 8 meters in length (26').

The bones—a femur, humerus, ischium and vertebral elements of the neck and back—were initially discovered in the 1990's by geologist Carlos Arévalo.

Arévalo excavated the specimen with experts from Chile's National Geology and Mining Service, during a dig 75 kilometers (46 miles) south of the city of Copiapó, in the Atacama Region.

David Rubilar, the Head of the Paleontology Department at Chile's National Museum of Natural History (MNHN) led the team responsible for making the discovery made up of experts from Chile's National Museum of Natural History, the University of Chile's Paleontological Network, and the Laboratory of Dinosaurs of Argentina's National University, in Cuyo, Argentina.

The discovery of a new species of dinosaur was formally announced in an article published in the journal *Cretaceous Research*.

More information: David Rubilar-Rogers et al. Arackar licanantay gen. et sp. nov. a new lithostrotian (Dinosauria, Sauropoda) from the Upper Cretaceous of the Atacama Region, northern Chile, *Cretaceous Research* (2021). [DOI: 10.1016/j.cretres.2021.104802](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cretres.2021.104802)

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