

Brazil's biggest dinosaur found after passing 60 years in cupboard

7 October 2016, by Sebastian Smith



A staff member shows the location of the fossil collected in 1953 by the Brazilian paleontologist Llewellyn Ivor Price on its real scale restoration image

The remains of what has been named "Austroposeidon magnificus", and pronounced Brazil's biggest dinosaur, went on general public view for the first time Thursday.

A nearly complete spinal vertebra—about the size of a microwave oven and entirely petrified—and numerous fragments of other vertebrae lie on a black cloth in an upper room of the museum.

Nearby hangs an enormous artist's rendition, done to scale, of what "Austroposeidon magnificus" might have looked like: a small head, long neck, enormous body and long tail. A patch of the reptile's skin is shown pulled back to reveal where the prize vertebra would have slotted in.

Brazil just found its biggest ever dinosaur—in a storage cupboard.

In its prime, more than 66 million years ago, this long necked herbivore was 25 meters (82 feet) long—longer than an articulated bus—and could chomp through trees at a terrifying rate.

By the time the creature was found by renowned Brazilian paleontologist Llewellyn Ivor Price in 1953, only a few hefty, fossilized bits of the spine remained.

Researchers knew immediately they'd stumbled on something big.

They didn't have the staff or resources to figure out how big, however, so the dinosaur pieces languished the next six decades in storage at Rio's ornate Museum of Earth Sciences.

Until now.

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