

Complete crocodile fossil unearthed

Fossils of a complete crocodile and bones belonging to at least six different dinosaurs from the Cretaceous Period, 145 to 66 million years ago, have been excavated in northeast China's Jilin Province.

After a year of preparation, paleontologists from Chinese Academy of Sciences and a local fossil center began the excavation in late May, following the discovery of dinosaur fossils at Longshan Mountain in the city of Yanji in May 2016.

A 1.5-meter-long crocodile fossil was unearthed on June 1. The fossil was well preserved from head to tail, with clear skin, which is quite rare among Cretaceous strata findings in China.

"Crocodiles and dinosaurs lived together, which means there are probably more fossils buried underneath," said Jin Changzhu, a research fellow at the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology.

In addition, archeologists also discovered a large amount of teeth, arm, pelvis and rib bones that belonged to at least six different dinosaurs including camosaurs, iguanodons and ceratopsians, most of which were in good condition. Cretaceous turtle fossils and petrified wood were also unearthed.

According to Sun Ge, curator of Paleontological Museum of Liaoning, Yanji has been identified as the easternmost site of Cretaceous dinosaur fossils in China, and the recent findings have enriched the understanding and research of its fossil resources.