

Dinosaurs and Other Extinct Saurians: A Historical Perspective

Edited by

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The discovery of dinosaurs and other large extinct 'saurians'—a term under which the Victorians commonly lumped ichthyosaurs, plesiosaurs, pterosaurs and their kin—makes exciting reading and has caught the attention of palaeontologists, historians of science and the general public alike. The papers in this collection go beyond the familiar tales about famous 'fossil hunters' and focus on relatively little-known episodes in the discovery and interpretation (from both a scientific and an artistic point of view) of dinosaurs and other inhabitants of the Mesozoic world. They cover a long time span, from the beginnings of 'modern' scientific palaeontology in the 1700s to the present, and deal with many parts of the world, from the Yorkshire coast to Central India, from Bavaria to the Sahara. The characters in these stories include professional palaeontologists and geologists (some of them well-known, others quite obscure), explorers, amateur fossil collectors, and artists, linked together by their interest in Mesozoic creatures.

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ISBN 978-1-86239-311-0



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Cover illustration:

'Ideal landscape of the Cretaceous in Europe' from *Illustrierte Geologie und Paläontologie* (E. Rolle 1886) showing various dinosaurs, a pterosaur and, swimming in the background, a plesiosaur and a mosasaur. This picture illustrates a transitional stage in palaeontological reconstruction: the quadrupedal *Megalosaurus*, *Iguanodon* and *Hylaeosaurus* are clearly based on the Crystal Palace life-size models by Richard Owen and Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins (1854), whereas the more modern-looking bipedal *Laelaps* and the marine reptiles are based on an engraving published by Edward Drinker Cope in 1869.