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Opening extract from

Dinosaur Cove: A Cretaceous Survival Guide

Written by

Rex Stone

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THE CRETACEOUS

- **WHEN:** 145.5–65.5 MILLION YEARS AGO
- **CLIMATE:** WARM AND WET, VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS

WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH

During the Cretaceous period, dinosaurs ruled the land, sea, and air. Herbivores such as triceratops were hunted by tyrannosaurus rex. In the sea, plesiosaurs crunched through the tough shells of ammonites with their powerful jaws. Pterosaurs soared through the Cretaceous skies.



There were other creatures, too. Small mammals ran through the undergrowth and insects that were similar to ants and butterflies developed. Sharks and rays lived in the sea.

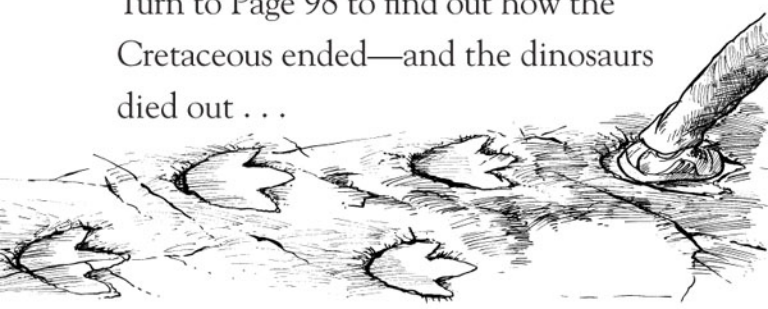
Plants started to have flowers and trees with soft leaves appeared.

CHALK

The Cretaceous period is named after the Latin word for chalk—creta. The chalky soil was especially good at preserving fossils.

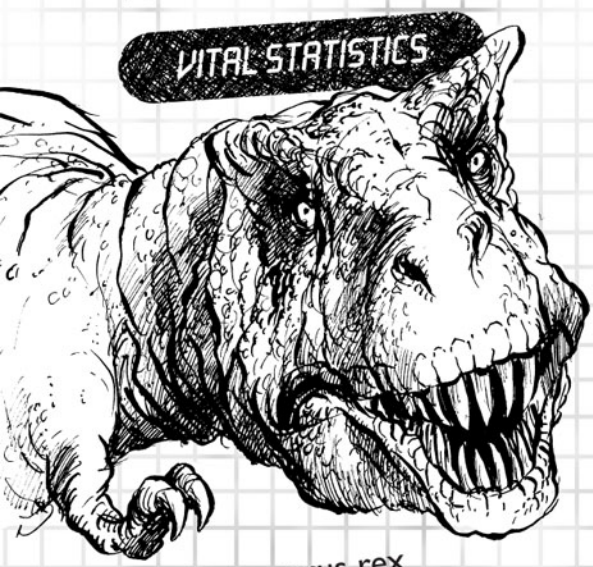
END OF AN ERA...

Turn to Page 98 to find out how the Cretaceous ended—and the dinosaurs died out . . .



TYRANNOSAURUS REX

VITAL STATISTICS



- Tyrannosaurus rex means tyrant lizard king
- Discovered in 1874 in Colorado, USA
- Lived in the part of the world that's now North America

- Its legs have three toes at the front and also a backwards facing one. It usually runs with its body horizontal to the ground, using its huge tail to balance

- Top speed is around 45 kph

- Only three Cretaceous dinosaurs were even bigger than the t-rex: the spinosaurus, the giganotosaurus, and the carcharodontosaurus

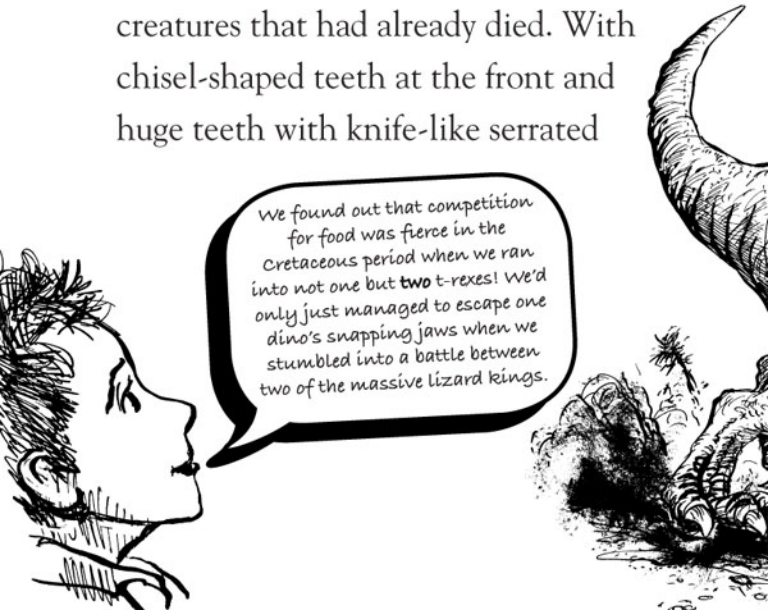
- Weighs 8,000 kg—the same as two killer whales

- Could eat 230 kg in a single bite—that's about as much as a whole pig!



T-REX: THE LIZARD KING

Tyrannosaurus Rex was a carnivore that ate all sorts of other creatures, from small dinosaurs like velociraptors to large ones like edmontosaurs. Palaeontologists think the t-rex was probably a scavenger as well as a hunter, eating up the remains of creatures that had already died. With chisel-shaped teeth at the front and huge teeth with knife-like serrated



edges filling the rest of its mouth, the t-rex was a fearsome predator. The biggest t-rex skull ever found is 150cm long and was discovered in the 1960s. The biggest and best preserved whole t-rex skeleton is in the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. Its name is FMNH PR 2081, but its nickname is Sue.

