

Dragon Oculudentavis Species, Smallest Dinosaur of All Time

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(<https://www.harapanakyat.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Spesies-Oculudentavis-Naga-Dinosaurus-Terkecil-Sepanjang-Masa.jpg>)

Ilustrasi Spesies Oculudentavis Naga. Photo: Ist / Net

The Oculudentavis species of dragon in the form of the skull of a small bird is the latest discovery. The team of scientists preserved it in 100 million year old Myanmar amber. According to a paper published in the renowned scientific journal Nature, the findings date back to the Cretaceous period.

Scientists Discover Oculudentavis Dragon Species

The skull is 14 millimeters long, making it smaller than the bee hummingbird, the smallest living bird. So Oculudentavis khaungraae became the newest species of the smallest dinosaur.

Citing chinadaily.com.cn, the fossil skull is well preserved. Then the species Oculudentavis dragon has a row of nearly 100 teeth extending under its large eyes. In addition, the scleral ring or eye bone is supported by a unique structure.

The unusually large number of teeth and unique eye shapes are very difficult for paleontologists. In terms of classifying specimens that earned the nickname Teenie

...paleontologist in terms of classifying specimens that earned the nickname 'weenie'.

Paleontologist at China University of Geosciences, Xing Lida is the leader of this research. He was amazed when he first saw the picture in 2016.

The Oculudentavis species of dragon was too strange, like a small arrow with a long beak and big eyes. Only birds have such characteristics. However, the fossil has too many teeth. Generally more numerous than early chalk birds.

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Smallest Specimen

Oculudentavis is actually a new, uncertain specimen. New interpretations and phylogenetic placements highlight a rare case of convergent evolution in cranial proportions. However, it does not appear to be in morphological character.

Seen fossil species Oculudentavis dragon has a maxillary process that has a long squamous process from the postorbital. Then the braincase is relatively smaller. The pterygoid basi process is short and extends distally.

Scientists speculate that about 100 million years ago this bird lived in the tropical Hukawng Valley. It is a humid area in northern Myanmar, where amber is mined.

But unfortunately, the animals were trapped by the clumps of resin that had fallen from the tree. So leave it and be preserved in amber.

The most interesting thing about the specimen is its very small size. Paleontologists noted that these tiny animals had to face new problems. Like when adjusting the sensory organs contained in the very small head.

In addition, how to maintain body heat. This process, often called miniaturization, occurs in isolated environments such as islands. Animals will usually lose teeth and enlarged eyes during miniaturization.

Despite its small size, the Oculudentavis dragon species has more teeth than any other fossil bird. The large number of teeth indicates that the animal is a predator.

Then another strange thing is found in the eyes that are 4 mm in diameter. To help support the eyes, this bird has a bone ring. A morphology previously absent in some living lizards.

The feature is very confusing in this specimen. Previously no living animal had used this type of visual system. So it is difficult to understand how the eyes of the dragon species Oculudentavis will function.

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Skull Characteristics

Because the fossil is only a skull, it is not yet clear how to relate it to other birds. The researchers said the skull had a shape only in birds and some dinosaurs. There is no specific skull morphology that defines it, it could be a dinosaur or some other animal.

The Oculudentavis species of dragon in fact has several characteristics. Birds and even other dinosaurs didn't have it. However, the team currently thinks that the most likely conclusion when looking at the characteristics of the skull is that of a dinosaur or a bird.

Because for paleontologists birds are dinosaurs. This specimen would likely represent the lowest body size limit during the time of the dinosaurs.

Analysis showed that the little bird was very primitive. Oculudentavis probably had a long tail, like non-avian dinosaurs.


In honor of the collector who discovered it, Kahung Ra, the bird's name is Oculudentavis khaungraae. The greatest advantage of amber is in the preservation of the high quality of the fine details of the skull.


For example, soft tissue features that have not been preserved from other specimens, such as small bumps on the head. In addition, it is like a ring of bone that supports the eye.

The discovery of the Oculudentavis species of dragon is useful for studying small vertebrates from the time of the dinosaurs. Such specimens may represent small size classes in fossil deposits. But the animal was too small to be preserved as a fossil for identification purposes. (R10/HR Online)

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