

Cranial anatomy of the iguanodontoid ornithopod *Jinzhousaurus yangi* from the Lower Cretaceous Yixian Formation of China

Paul M. Barrett, Richard J. Butler, Wang Xiao–Lin, and Xu Xing

Acta Palaeontologica Polonica 54 (1), 2009: 35–48 doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.4202/app.2009.0105>

The Yixian Formation (Lower Cretaceous) of Liaoning Province, China, is justifiably famous for its exceptionally preserved fauna, which includes a remarkable diversity of non–avian dinosaurs. Here, we provide the first detailed description of the cranial skeleton of the iguanodontian ornithopod *Jinzhousaurus yangi*. Many previously unrecorded features have been recognised, permitting a new and more robust diagnosis for this taxon, which is based on a suite of autapomorphic features. *Jinzhousaurus* and an unnamed sauropod represent the largest, but some of the least abundant, animals in the Jehol Biota, a situation that contrasts with many other Lower Cretaceous faunas in which large dinosaurs are common faunal components. This rarity may be due to either palaeoenvironmental constraints or taphonomic bias, although it is not possible to choose between these alternatives on the basis of current data.

Key words: Dinosauria, Ornithopoda, Iguanodontia; Jehol Biota; Aptian, Liaoning Province, China.

Paul M. Barrett [p.barrett@nhm.ac.uk] and Richard J. Butler [r.butler@nhm.ac.uk], Department of Palaeontology, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, UK; Wang Xiao–Lin [xlinwang@263.net] and Xu Xing [xu.xing@pa.ivpp.ac.cn], Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, PO Box 163, Beijing 100044, People’s Republic of China.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (for details please see creativecommons.org), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

