

Embryology, reproductive behaviour, parental care, and growth in Early Jurassic Dinosaurs from China and South Africa



Prof. Robert Reisz

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The oldest known eggs and embryos are those of dinosaurs, laid more than 110 million years after vertebrates ventured for the first time onto land. Dinosaur embryos are known from the Early Jurassic (195 Ma) of China in a so-called bonebed as a concentration of disarticulated bones, and in South Africa inside eggs in a nesting site. These embryonic remains belong to the sauropodomorph dinosaurs *Lufengosaurus* and *Massospondylus*, animals that reached 6-10m in length and were the precursors of the giant sauropods. The combination of embryos, eggs, nests, hatchlings, and adults of these two closely related dinosaurs allows us to reconstruct in great detail their embryonic and hatchling life, as well as their growth to adulthood. Interesting facts about these early dinosaurs will be revealed during my talk, including how they grew inside their eggs, what they did after they hatched, and how we were able to uncover these secrets from the dawn of the age of dinosaurs.

Dr. Reisz is currently Vice-Dean Graduate, and Distinguished Professor of Paleontology at the University of Toronto Mississauga. He also holds research associate positions in 6 major natural history museums, distinguished professorships in other universities, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. Robert Reisz is a leading authority on the initial stages of terrestrial vertebrate evolution and the organisms that eventually gave rise to living mammals, reptiles, and birds. He has also explored other crucial events in vertebrate evolution, like the early stages of dinosaur evolution, and dinosaur embryology. His work has been widely featured in textbooks and scientific magazines for the specialist and lay public.



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