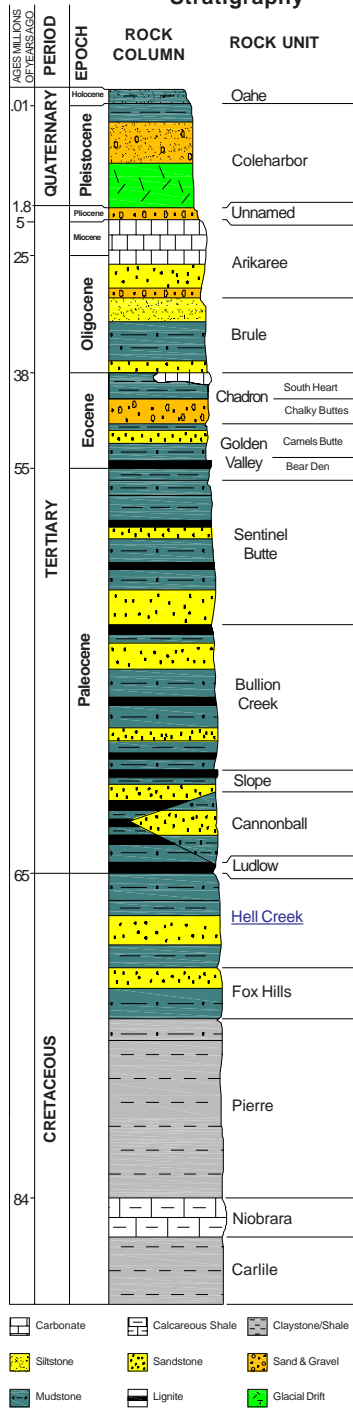


North Dakota Stratigraphy



Locations where fossils have been found

Edmontosaurus

Common Name:

Duckbilled dinosaur

Classification:

Class: Reptilia

Order: Ornithischia

Family: Hadrosauridae



Lower jaw of the duckbilled dinosaur, *Edmontosaurus*. Collected and donated by Tyler Lyson, Marmarth. Cretaceous [Hell Creek](#) Formation. Slope County. 460 mm wide. North Dakota State Fossil Collection.

Description:

Edmontosaurus was the most common duckbilled dinosaur (hadrosaur) that lived in North Dakota during the Cretaceous. The front of the face of hadrosaur was elongated into a broad, flattened snout with a toothless beak. This beak looked rather like the bill of a modern duck, hence the popular name “duckbilled dinosaur.” *Edmontosaurus* was a large, plant-eating animal that grew to lengths of 40 feet. It is one of the best known dinosaurs because many fossils of this species have been found and studied. They had large pillar-like legs, powerful ankles, and bony tendons in their backbone which helped support the animal as it walked on land. Each foot possessed three broad, widely spaced toes ending in hooflike nails. Unlike many duckbilled dinosaurs, *Edmontosaurus* did not have a crest on its skull. It did have strong lower jaws that contained batteries of hundreds of small teeth that formed grinding surfaces for eating coarse vegetation. These teeth acted like a rasping file and could pulverize tough plant food such as conifer needles, twigs, and cones. There were no teeth in the front of the mouth. Worn teeth were continually replaced by new ones throughout the life of the animal. *Edmontosaurus* skin impressions have been found indicating that it had a thin, leathery hide studded with horny tubercles. Many hadrosaurs lived in large herds and some may have cared for their young at nesting sites. Fossil evidence indicates that *Tyrannosaurus rex* preyed on the duckbilled dinosaurs.



Edmontosaurus. Painting courtesy of Simon and Schuster Publishing Company.