A TIMELINE OF THE DINOSAURS

THE ‘TERRIBLE LIZARDS’

251 MILLION YEARS AGO
THE TRIASSIC PERIOD STARTS
Dinosaurs begin to evolve. They are small, with a mouth extended from ear to ear and sharp serrated teeth. There is one super-continent and only two oceans. Molluscs are the dominant invertebrates and ammonites are abundant.

225 MILLION YEARS AGO
LATE TRIASSIC PERIOD

The first flying reptiles—the pterosaurs—appear. They have long jointed tails, no feathers, and can (probably) only fly by soaring. The first dinosaur fossils appear: Herrerasaurus and Eoraptor.

200 MILLION YEARS AGO
THE JURASSIC PERIOD STARTS

145 MILLION YEARS AGO
THE CRETACEOUS PERIOD STARTS

125 MILLION YEARS AGO

Africa detaches from South America and a seaway between the North and South Atlantic oceans opens up.

65 MILLION YEARS AGO
MASS EXTINCTION

A giant meteorite hits earth, causing a mass extinction, known as the Alvarez event. A possible impact crater, roughly 160 km wide, has been found in Mexico.

565 MILLION YEARS AGO

A giant seaweed and the first true feathered dinosaur and the bridge between dinosaur and birds.

355 MILLION YEARS AGO

Some dinosaurs roaming at this time:

-Apatosaurus (aka Brontosaurus): a giant quadruped weighing up to 30 tonnes with a long neck that could reach over 22 metres.

56 MILLION YEARS AGO

The first true birds are evolving from the theropod family of dinosaurs. Some dinosaurs roaming at this time:

-Brachiosaurus: a herbivore who walked on four legs, growing to over 26 metres long.

150 MILLION YEARS AGO

LATE JURASSIC PERIOD

Mammals now share the earth with dinosaurs.

These facts, and more, can be found on Oxford Reference in the following articles:


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