

Published April 1st, 2020

Could new fossil discovery lead to a Jurassic Canyon?

By Vera Kochan



Prehistoric fossil imprint of three claws/talons (left) and heel imprint (middle right) Photo provided

expedition. "Anytime we go on hikes, Laura can't help but investigate odd shapes in the rocks," said Blague. "She always wants to be the one to make a discovery that'll rock the archeology community's world - pardon the pun."

Scherzo may just have gotten her wish. It was during their hike that she made a discovery of a lifetime - a fossil, approximately two feet long, with what appears to be either three claws or talons at one end and a flat heel at the other. After taking numerous photos of the fossil, marking the immediate area and noting their coordinates, the hikers all but ran back to their car, several miles away, to begin Scherzo's quest for scientific notoriety.

Recalling a guest lecturer at UCLA, Kaman I. Gotcha, Ph.D., Scherzo was quick to contact the expert paleontologist and member of the American Paleontological Research Institute League.

"We are still undergoing extensive testing of the fossil itself along with the surrounding area," replied Gotcha, "but it appears that the imprint could date as far back as the Cretaceous period, nearly 66 million years ago."

The discovery of dinosaurs in California is extremely rare which is what makes this find such a boon to scientists like Gotcha. "Given the fact that the surrounding area was once part of the Pacific Ocean, to make an encounter such as this helps us to understand what the topography was like while these creatures roamed our planet. For instance, could this hill have been a small island of refuge?"

Additional assistance at the site comes from team members of Fossils Organisms and Osteology Liaison. Lead scientist Jeeime Kiddin, MSc., has a preliminary theory as to what creature Scherzo's fossil may have belonged to. "I would hazard a guess that this could very well belong in the mosasaur family which was a marine reptile-like predator of other marine species ranging in length of 40-ft long and 5-tons in weight." Kiddin added, "However, we cannot rule out that it could also be a member of the tractorus amphibicus family, not unlike the more popularly known pterodactylus, that could have flown into the area." Time and tests will tell.

At any rate, it would seem that Scherzo's "imprint" on the archeological community has made its mark. The scientific world is in agreement that the discovery couldn't be in better hands than those of APRIL and FOOL.

Reach the reporter at: vera@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA