

## A new early dinosaur (Sauropodomorpha) from the Caturrita Formation (Late Triassic), Paraná Basin, Brazil

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### Abstract

A new early dinosaur, *Unaysaurus tolentinoi* gen. et sp. nov., from the continental Late Triassic red beds of the Caturrita Formation (Carnian-Norian, c. 225 million years old) of southern Brazil is described. *U. tolentinoi* is represented by a semi-articulated skeleton comprising an almost complete skull, lower jaw and postcranial elements. It differs from all other dinosaurs by several cranial (e.g. developed laterodorsally oriented process formed by frontal and parietal; deep ventral depression on the basisphenoid) and postcranial (presence of a conspicuous blunt ridge running on the lateral surface of the deltopectoral crest of humerus) characters. *Unaysaurus* represents the first 'prosauropod' grade dinosaur from Brazil and a preliminary phylogenetic analysis indicates it to be closely related to the European *Plateosaurus* (Plateosauridae). The relationships of the 'Prosauropoda', however, are still controversial and more comprehensive studies are needed before a clear picture of the evolution and paleobiogeographic distributions of these dinosaurs can be presented.

**Key words:** Dinosauria, Sauropodomorpha, Prosauropoda, Brazil, Upper Triassic, Caturrita Formation

### Introduction

Dinosaurs constitute rare faunal elements in Middle to Late Triassic terrestrial biotas, which were dominated by synapsids (dicynodonts, early cynodonts) and primitive reptiles (e.g. rhynchosaurs, rauisuchids, phytosaurs) (e.g. Benton 1983). Among the few deposits with early dinosaurs are the Triassic layers of the Paraná Basin, southern Brazil. Those