

Giant Prehistoric Whale Discovered in Peru

A new species of prehistoric whale, *Perucetus Colossus*, was discovered and reconstructed from fossilized vertebral and rib bones. The fossils were found near Paracas Peru.



[Link to YouTube Video](#)

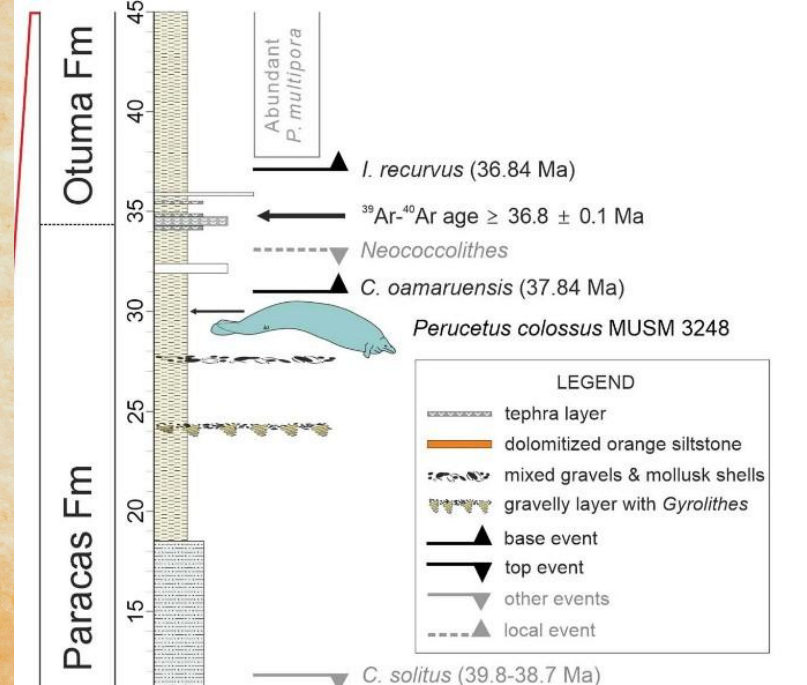
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[Link to Blog Post](#)

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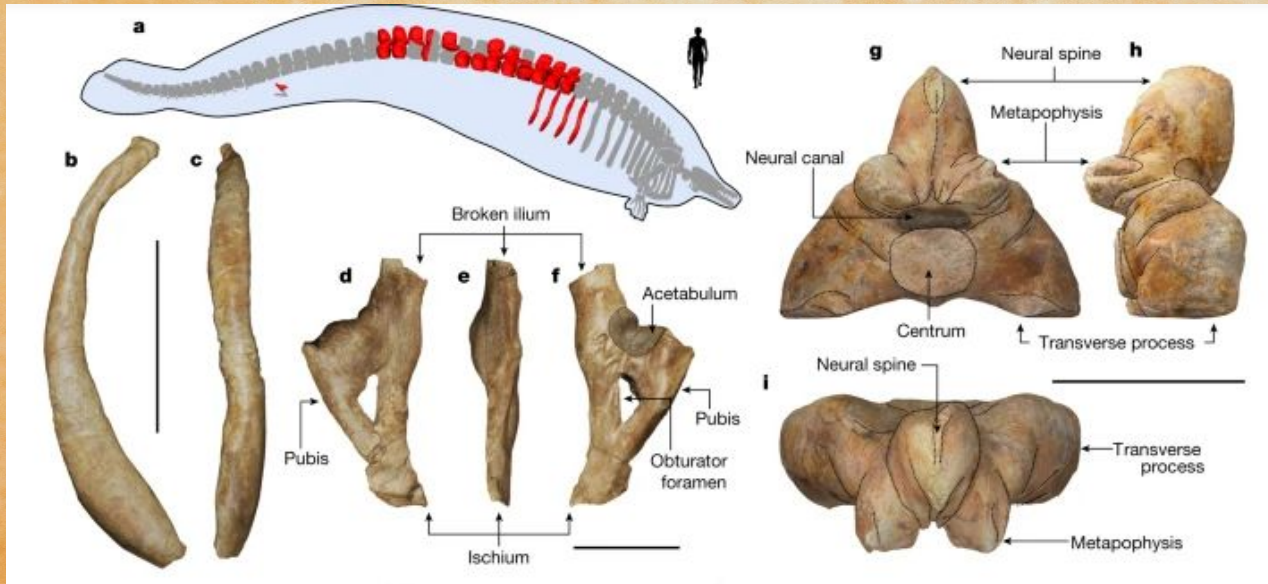
[Link to Research Paper](#)

~32 Million Year Old Fossils



Fossils were discovered on the Southeastern Coast of Peru, in a layer corresponding to around 30 million years ago, placing it in the late Eocene Epoch.

Only a Partial Skeleton Was Found



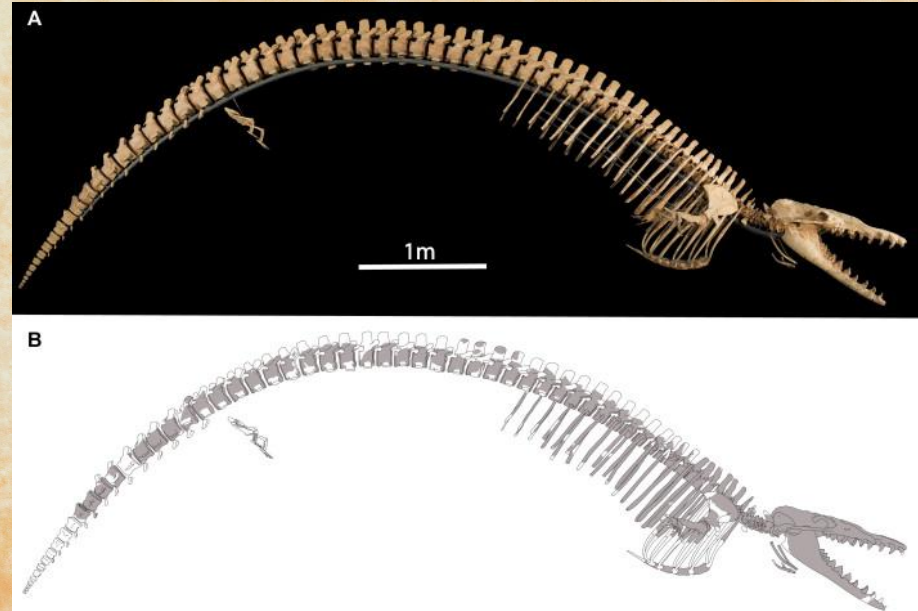
Fossils discovered included 13 vertebrae, four ribs, and a portion of the right innominate

“Heaviest Skeleton of Any Known Mammal or Aquatic Vertebrate”

- The bones were extremely dense, with the highest bone mass increase ever discovered
- High skeletal density serves two purposes
 - Dense, rigid ribs hold the lungs open, allowing them to retain more air for increased buoyancy
 - Heavier skeletons allow the animal to carry more blubber and be more massive in general, keeping them more stable in strong waves
- This indicates the creature lived in shallow, coastal water, like [sea cows](#)
- Estimated skeletal weight 5.3 to 7.6 tons, at least double that of a 80-foot long [Blue Whale](#)

Creature of Immense Size

- Researchers estimate the total mass to be between 85 and 340 tons. Blue whales have a mass range of 50 to 165 tons.
- The body size and shape was estimated by scaling up Cynthiacetus Peruvianus



Mystery Diet

- No cranial bones or teeth were discovered
- The head shape and diet are a mystery, but it had to eat a lot
- The only known mammals with similar bone density are Sea Cows, a group that includes manatees
- My conjecture is that most similar body shape and behavior is probably manatees. That's what I prefer to believe, at least.



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