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AN ANTERIOR SAUROPOD CAUDAL FROM THE PETERBOROUGH OXFORD CLAY: WHOSE TAIL IS IT ANYWAY?

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The Callovian Oxford Clay of England has yielded a rich and diverse marine fauna, mainly discovered and described by Alfred Leeds. However, occasionally it also brought forth terrestrial fossils, including four isolated cases of sauropod remains, one of a stegosaurid, and another of a dryosaurid. Thus far, only *Cetiosaurus oxoniensis* and *Cetiosauriscus stewarti* are confirmed sauropod taxa from these beds.

Here, we describe an isolated sauropod anterior caudal vertebra from the Oxford Clay near Peterborough. Incomplete, it has been immersed in seawater post-mortem, indicated by the adhesion of molluscs, but some characters can nevertheless be used for diagnosis and comparisons.

The anterior articular surface is round, whereas the posterior articular surface is heart-shaped, as in many eusauropods, including *Cetiosaurus*. Interestingly, the ventral surface shows a keel-like structure; a character shared with neosauropods (e.g. *Barosaurus*) but also with an as yet unnamed Middle Jurassic sauropod caudal from York, UK.

The posterior side of the neural canal is teardrop-shaped, a character shared with most basal eusauropods. Below the posterior neural canal, a lip-like structure seems to be present; a character which is shared with *Cetiosaurus*. However, the anterior caudal transverse process (ACTP) complex is similar to, although more pronounced than *Cetiosauriscus*, being more similar to more derived sauropods (Neosauropoda).

Thus, an incomplete isolated element may help elucidate sauropod species diversity and dispersal in the Middle Jurassic.
of England.

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