DRYOSAURID ORNITHOPODS FROM THE LATE JURASSIC OF PORTUGAL: AN OVERVIEW

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The Late Jurassic beds of the Lourinhã Formation have yielded a diverse vertebrate fauna, including fishes, squamates, mammals, turtles, crocodyliforms, plesiosaurs, pterosaurs and dinosaurs. Ornithopod dinosaurs are represented by the camptosaurid Draconyx loureroi and the dryosaurid Euosdryosaurus nanohallucis. Despite the paucity of species recognized so far, isolated material belonging to Ornithopoda has been recovered from the Lourinhã Formation, especially from the Praia Azul Member. Most of this material is ascribed to Dryosauridae, a highly successful family of ornithopods, ranging from the Middle Jurassic to the Early Cretaceous.

Here we report undescribed material from the Museu da Lourinhã collection. Most remarkably we report the first dryosaurid cranial material to date from Portugal, including a fragment of a right dentary with erupting teeth (ML 768), and a small parietal (ML 1851), probably belonging to an immature individual. Isolated dentary teeth are tentatively identified as dryosaurids on the basis of the arrangement of the main ridges.

Furthermore, we report isolated limb-bones, such as an associated tibia and femur (ML 2055), an isolated tibia (ML 505), and an isolated femur (ML 563). We suggest ontogenetic variation is the main responsible for the high degree of variation present in the sample, based on the intraspecific variability observed in other dryosaurids , such as Dryosaurus and Dysalotosaurus. Two isolated cervical neural arches and an isolated centrum are the only dryosaurid axial skeleton elements in the collection. The new material, although fragmentary, improves our knowledge of the osteology of Portuguese dryosaurids, including the previously unknown cranial anatomy.