



FIGURE 9.10.

---

*Triceratops calicornis*. The skull of a ceratopsian dinosaur found in strata dating from the late Cretaceous period near Chalk Butte, Montana. (Courtesy Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago.)

---

relatives. Larger size was not a permanent advantage. Various waves of extinction wiped out the larger forms, but the smaller reptiles that survived would in turn give rise to new giants.

The name *dinosaur* means "terrible lizard" and some of them were terrible indeed. Although some were about the size of a chicken, others grew to great size, larger than elephants of today. The plant-eating *Brontosaurus* (now called *Apatosaurus*) is thought to have weighed more than thirty tons. It belonged to the small-skulled, long-necked, long-tailed group of dinosaurs known as the *sauropods* (see figure 9.9).

The group known as *theropods* were carnivorous and preyed on their plant-eating relatives. They walked erect on their hind legs. *Tyrannosaurus rex*, the largest of this carnivorous group, was characterized by two stout hind legs for running and short forelimbs for seizing prey. Its short neck and huge head with menacing teeth must have made it the terror of the dinosaur world.

Dinosaurs appeared in weird and extravagant body forms. The *stegosaurus* had large diamond-shaped plates staggered along their backbone. These may have been used for some type of temperature regulation. It appears they had sharp spikes on the end of the tail that could have been deadly weapons against their enemies (see figure 9.11).

Another curious body form that appeared late in the Age of Dinosaurs is exhibited by the horned group known as the *ceratopsians*. Like the *stegosaurus*, their teeth indicate they were vegetarians. One of this group, the tank-like *triceratops*, is shown in Figure 9.10. This huge, horned dinosaur weighed about nine tons and carried three horns on its immense skull. The two, long, spear-shaped horns above its eyes together with the rhinoceros-like horn on its nose