Flying Reptiles

Have you ever seen a Komodo Dragon fly? Neither has anyone else. There were once flying reptiles. They were called pterosaurs. They became extinct 66 million years ago. Pterosaurs are the earliest vertebrates to have evolved with wings to fly. A fossil record is the total number of fossils that have been discovered, as well as to the information derived from them. These fossils from the fossil record reveal the diversity of pterosaurs.

Fossil one, named Tropegnathus mesenbrinus, is a fossil of a pterosaurs’ skull. It is a vast skull with a gigantic crest on the top and bottom of it’s mouth. The fossil reveals the eye socket and the pterosaurs’ teeth. The two crests helped this pterosaurs keep balance while going to get food in water. This pterosaurs feeds by water areas. This fossil is 120 million years old.

Fossil two, named Sordes pilosus, is a fossil of a pterosaurs’ body. This fossil has a smaller skull than fossil one. It has an eye socket and teeth. Also, this pterosaurs has a long neck. You can also see the pterosaurs’ right wing and his body. This fossil is 160 million years old and was found in Karabashau Formation, Kazzakhatan. It most likely used it’s broad wings and flaps to pump to give it power during flight.

Fossil three, named Ctenochasma elegans. It is the remains of a pterosaurs that lived 150 million years ago. It was discovered in Solnhoten Formation, Germany. This fossil has a long neck vertebrate. Also, it’s head is looking up and the rest of the body is bent. It shows minuscule fingers and toes. This fossil also has comb-like teeth and an eye-socket on it’s skull. This fossil used it’s comb-like teeth to strain out small organisms.
Fossil one is very different from the other fossils. It has two crests on its skull. The other fossils didn’t have any crests at all. Fossil three had the smallest teeth, that were used to strain out small organisms. The other fossils have bigger teeth because they don’t need to strain out organisms. Fossil two had broad wings and flaps that were used to give it power during flight. The other two fossils flew in a different way and didn’t have the same broad wings. These fossils all have complete skulls with an eye socket and teeth. Fossil two and three both had more body bones than fossil one. The fossil record of pterosaurs is very important in learning the diversity of these organisms.
My trip to The American Museum of Natural History.

Fossil-1. Tropeognathus mesembrinus
120 million years old.

Crest
Teeth
Eye socket

Fossil-2. Sarcopteryx pilosus
160 million years old
Eye socket
Skull
Right wing
Teeth

Fossil-3
Eye socket

150 million years old.
Ctenochasmatidae elegans
Teeth

Miniscule fingers and toes
Neck vertebrae