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Discovery of Two New Horned Dinosaurs

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Lukas Panzarin's reconstruction of the *Kosmocerotops richardsoni*

Scientists recently discovered two new species of horned dinosaurs in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM), a 1.9 million acre land tract in Utah. *Utahceratops gettyi* and *Kosmocerotops richardsoni* are predicted to have lived over 76 million years ago in Laramidia, a land mass formed when water flooded the central region of North America and isolated the eastern (Appalachia) and western (Laramidia) portions of the continent.

The bigger of the two dinosaurs, *Utahceratops gettyi*, stood 18 to 22 feet tall and weighed between 6600 to 8800 pounds. It had a skull 7 feet long, a large horn over the nose, and short, blunt eye horns that projected to the side. The second new species, *Kosmocerotops richardsoni*, stood 15 feet tall, weighed 5500 pounds, and had 15 horns, making it the most ornate-headed dinosaur known. While there is speculation about the purpose of the horns, it is likely that they were used to enhance reproductive success by intimidating members of the same sex while attracting the opposite sex.

This finding shrinks a large scientific gap that existed regarding dinosaurs of the area. Little crossover occurred between species in the northern and southern parts of Laramidia; however, scientists were unable to theorize reasons for this due to a lack of fossils from the GSENM. The discovery of these two new species will allow paleontologists to finally piece together an explanation for this isolation.

Source: Time Magazine