

First published in 2005 by Orpheus Books Ltd.,  
2 Church Green, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 4AW

Copyright © 2005 Orpheus Books Ltd.

**Created and produced by** Rachel Coombs,  
Nicholas Harris, Sarah Harrison, Sarah Hartley,  
Emma Helbrough, Orpheus Books Ltd.

**Text** Nicholas Harris

**Consultant** Professor Michael Benton, Department of  
Geology, Bristol University

**Illustrated by** Inklink Firenze, Nicki Palin,  
Gary Hincks, Peter Dennis

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be  
reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted  
in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical,  
photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior  
written permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN 1 901323 XX X

A CIP record for this book is available from the  
British Library.

Printed and bound in Singapore



# CONTENTS

## 4 HOW THE EARTH BEGAN

## 6 THE FIRST LIVING THINGS

## 8 THE FIRST FISH

## 10 COAL SWAMPS

## 12 THE FIRST DINOSAURS



## 14 JURASSIC DINOSAURS

## 16 PLANT-EATING DINOSAURS

## 18 FLESH-EATING DINOSAURS

## 20 DUCKBILLED DINOSAURS



## 22 CRETACEOUS DINOSAURS

## 24 THE END OF THE DINOSAURS

## 26 PREHISTORIC BIRDS AND MAMMALS

## 28 THE FIRST HUMANS

## 30 DINOSAUR FOSSILS

## 32 INDEX



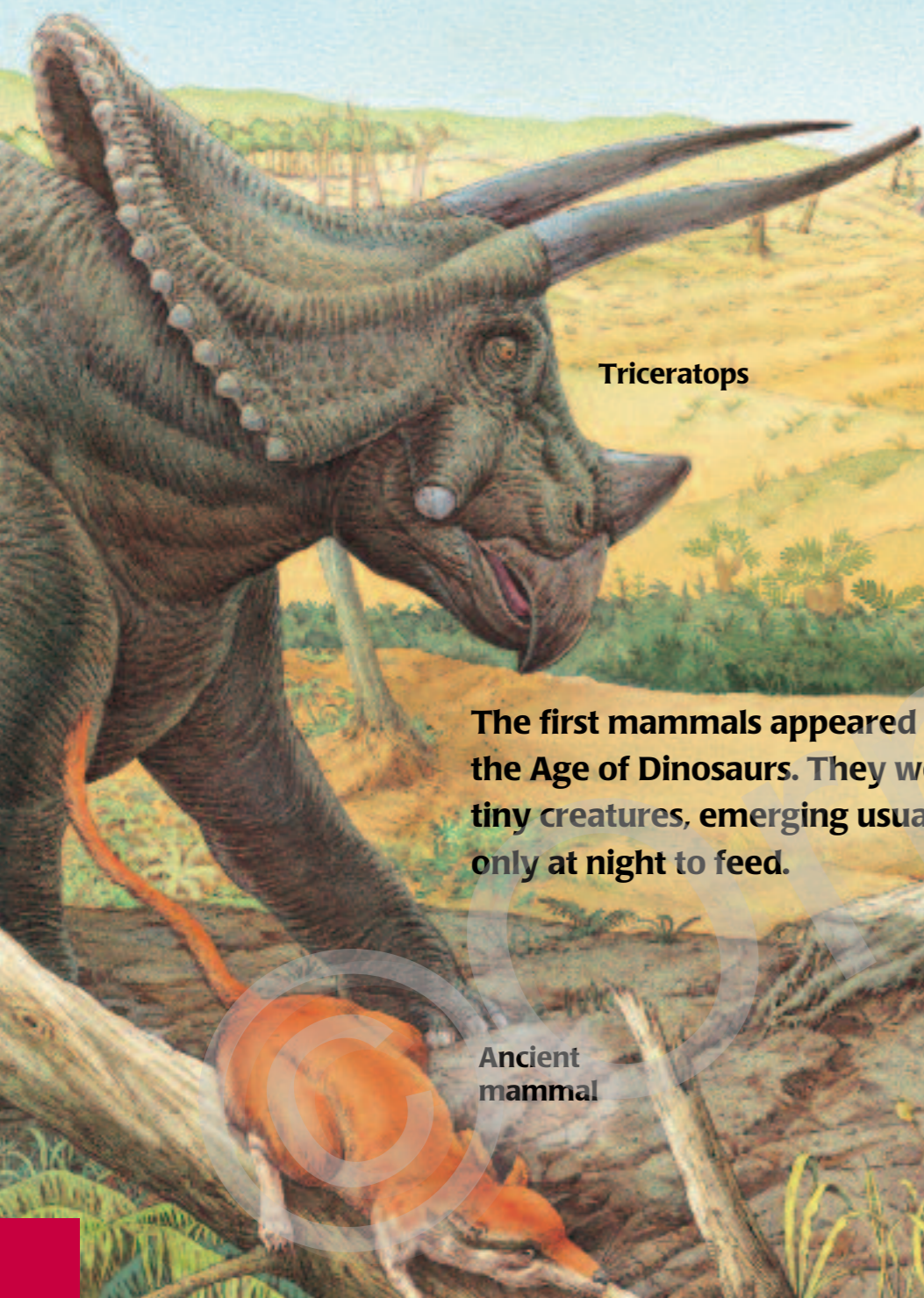
# INTRODUCTION

**E**ARTH is 4600 million years old. Life on our planet probably began about 3800 million years ago. The first life forms were microscopic things, neither animals nor plants. It took another 3600 million years before a certain kind of reptile appeared. Some of these reptiles were the largest and fiercest creatures the world has ever seen. They were the dinosaurs.

# CRETACEOUS DINOSAURS

**T**WO of the best-known dinosaurs lived at the end of the Cretaceous Period. The plant-eater, Triceratops,

had three horns on its head and a large neck frill. Tyrannosaurus was one of the few predators powerful enough to attack it.



Triceratops

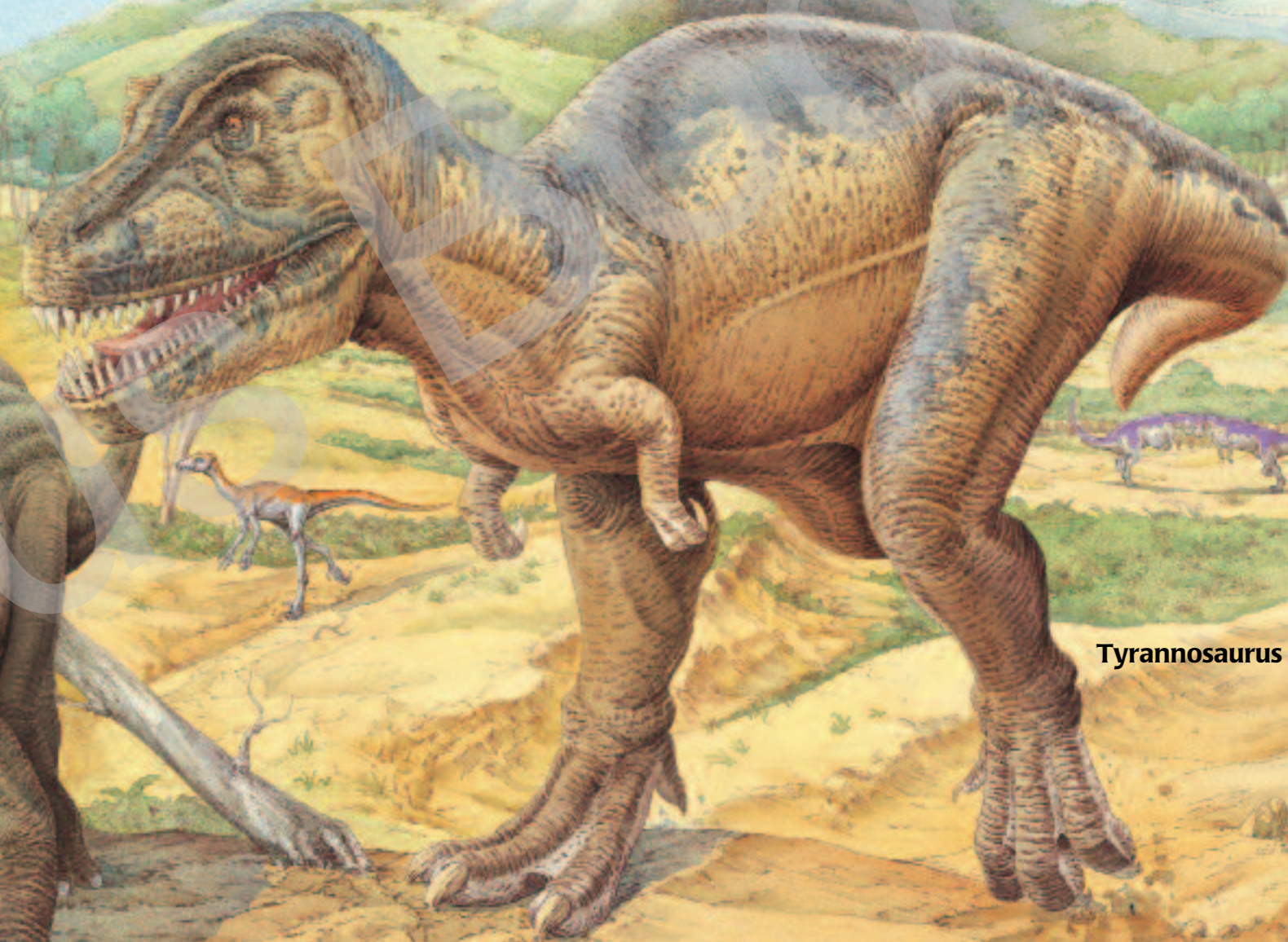
The first mammals appeared in the Age of Dinosaurs. They were tiny creatures, emerging usually only at night to feed.

Ancient mammal

Triceratops

While dinosaurs ruled on land, pterosaurs such as Pteranodon, flew in the skies. Sheets of skin between the fourth finger and body made up their wings. They used their beaks for seizing fish.

Pteranodon



Tyrannosaurus

## KING OF DINOSAURS

One of the largest flesh-eating dinosaurs, 12-metre-long Tyrannosaurus rex had massive,

powerful legs and teeth as sharp as steak knives. It would charge at its prey, bringing it down with the huge claws on its feet.