

What is Pterosaur?

November 26, 2024 • vajiramandravi.com



About Pterosaurs:

- Pterosaurs were highly successful **flying reptiles** that flourished during all periods (Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous) of the **Mesozoic Era** (252.2 million to 66 million years ago).
- Pterosaurs were not only the **first reptiles capable of flight**; they were also the **first vertebrates to fly**, a feat they accomplished by using strong forelegs to launch their bodies into the air.
- Although pterosaurs are **not dinosaurs**, **both are archosaurs**, or “**ruling reptiles**,” a group to which birds and crocodiles also belong.
- It included the **largest vertebrate ever known to fly**: the **late Cretaceous Quetzalcoatlus**.
- **Features:**
 - Pterosaurs are **not closely related to** either **birds or bats** and thus provide a **classic example of convergent evolution**.
 - Their **wings** were **formed by a membrane of skin** that was **connected to the hand by an elongated fourth finger**, not unlike the fleshy wings of bats.
 - Earlier species had long, fully-toothed jaws and long tails, while later forms had a highly reduced tail and some lacked teeth.

- They **often had long necks**, which sometimes had throat **pouches** similar to pelicans' for catching fish.
 - The pterosaurs went **extinct at the end of the Cretaceous period**, around 65.5 million years ago, **during** the mass extinction known as the **Cretaceous-Tertiary extinction event** (K-T extinction event).
 - When the pterosaurs disappeared, **their role** as the dominant vertebrates in the skies was **taken over by the birds**, which are considered to be of dinosaur ancestry.
-

Q1: What is convergent evolution?

Convergent evolution occurs when organisms that aren't closely related evolve similar features or behaviors, often as solutions to the same problems. The process can result in matching body shapes, color patterns or abilities.

News: [New Pterosaur Species Discovered in Japan](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/pterosaur/>

© Vajiram & Ravi. For personal use only.