

A specimen-based phylogenetic analysis of Camarasaurus to clarify the systematic position of Europasaurus (additional support for Europe)

Initiative: Forschung in Museen

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Knowing the phylogenetic position of an organism is one of the most basic points for the understanding of its biology and evolution. *Europasaurus holgeri* Mateus et al., 2006 is a peculiar dwarfed form of sauropod dinosaurs, which otherwise constitute the largest land animals that ever lived on this planet. *Europasaurus* thus gives us the possibility to study major transitions in body size from truly gigantic animals like *Brachiosaurus* to such relatively small-sized forms as *Europasaurus* in geologically short time intervals. Thereby we learn how and why such changes may occur. A firm phylogenetic framework is however crucial, but agreement on the position of *Europasaurus* has not yet been reached. In recent phylogenetic analyses, the dwarfed sauropod has been switching position between *Brachiosauridae* or a position more close to the genus *Camarasaurus* from North America. The project provides a phylogenetic analysis of *Camarasaurus* and thereby clarifies the systematic position of *Europasaurus*.

Projektbeteiligte

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