

May 28, 2020

## Royal BC Museum's dinosaur expert wins prestigious grant

VICTORIA, BC—Dr. Victoria Arbour, curator of paleontology at the Royal BC Museum, has received a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) Discovery Grant through her adjunct appointment in the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences at the University of Victoria (UVic).

**“Dr. Arbour’s work is of enormous importance to all who wish to gain a better understanding of life in the Cretaceous, a time of great geological upheaval,”** said Prof. Jack Lohman, CEO of the Royal BC Museum. **“This grant will facilitate and accelerate her research, fieldwork and collections projects at the Royal BC Museum on her specialty, Cretaceous vertebrates.”**

In her role as an adjunct professor at UVic, Dr. Arbour will use the NSERC Discovery Grant funding, of \$31,849 per year for five years, to support the research of students under her supervision. Additionally, her one-time Discovery Launch Supplement of \$12,500 will support student research, training and travel related to major transitions in Cretaceous vertebrate paleo-communities of western North America.

One of the major mutual benefits of the funding is that UVic students will have **considerable, consistent access to the Royal BC Museum’s paleontology collections**, working alongside a world-renowned expert in the field who will play a role in training the next generation of scientists.

In 2019, Dr. Arbour announced the recognition of an entirely new species of dinosaur named *Ferrisaurus sustutensis* —the first dinosaur species unique to BC. Dr. Arbour published her findings with David Evans from the Royal Ontario Museum in the **article, “A new leptoceratopsid dinosaur from Maastrichtian-aged deposits of the Sustut Basin, northern British Columbia, Canada”**, in the peer-reviewed scientific journal [PeerJ - the Journal of Life and Environmental Sciences](#).

In 2017, Dr. Arbour led an expedition to the Sustut River to relocate the site where *Ferrisaurus* was discovered in 1971, and found new fossils, including **plants and part of a turtle, that are now part of the Royal BC Museum’s collection**.

In the summer of 2019, Dr. Arbour led an expedition to Northern BC. Though the work was cut short by unusually snowy weather, the team identified a new, seemingly productive dinosaur fossil location in unusual and challenging terrain.

Dr. Arbour will continue to search for dinosaur fossils in the high alpine plateaus of northern British Columbia in the summer of 2021, during field work:



annual research that many Royal BC Museum curatorial and collections staff members undertake throughout BC.

More information about the NSERC Discovery Grant program is available at [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/professors-professeurs/grants-subs/dgigp-psigp\\_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/professors-professeurs/grants-subs/dgigp-psigp_eng.asp).

### **About the Royal BC Museum**

**The Royal BC Museum explores the province's human history and natural history, advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and histories, telling the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Located in Victoria on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen (Songhees and Xwsepsum Nations), we are a hub of community connections in BC—onsite, offsite and online—taking pride in our collective histories.**

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