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Dinosaur head crest function is determined

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ATHENS, Ohio, Oct. 16 (UPI) -- U.S. and Canadian scientists say they've determined the bony crests on the heads of duck-billed dinosaurs might have been used for communication.

Paleontologists have long debated the function of the strange, bony crests of the dinosaurs known as lambeosaurs.

Using computerized tomography, scientists at Ohio University, the University of Toronto and Montana State University have reconstructed the brains and nasal cavities of four different lambeosaur species.

"The shape of the brain can tell us a lot about what senses were important in a dinosaur's everyday life, and give insight into the function of the crests," said study lead author [David Evans](#), a paleontologist at the Royal Ontario Museum and the University of Toronto.

"It's difficult to infer the function of structures in an extinct dinosaur when there is so little resemblance to any living animal," said [Jack Horner](#), a paleontologist at Montana State University.

But, by analyzing CT scans conducted by [Lawrence Witmer](#) and [Ryan Ridgely](#) of Ohio University's College of Osteopathic Medicine, the scientists were able to conclude the elaborate nasal cavity crests were likely used to produce sounds for communication.

Portions of the research is to be published in an upcoming issue of the journal The Anatomical Record.

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