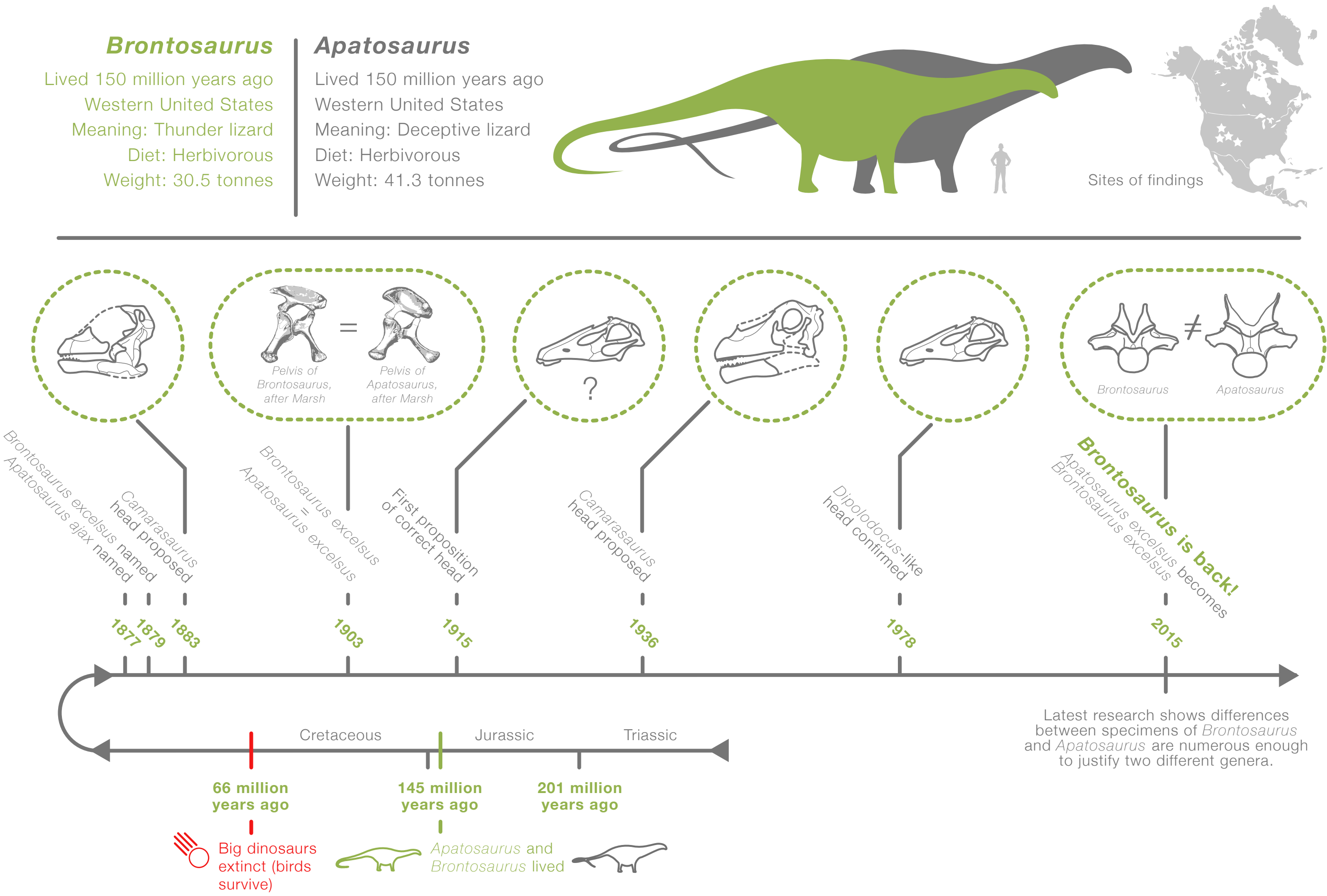


The history of Brontosaurus – one of the greatest stories in paleontology



1877	<i>Apatosaurus ajax</i> was named by Othniel C. Marsh (Colorado)
1879	<i>Brontosaurus excelsus</i> was named by Othniel C. Marsh (Wyoming)
1879	<i>Apatosaurus laticollis</i> was named by Othniel C. Marsh (Colorado)
1881	<i>Brontosaurus amplius</i> was named by Othniel C. Marsh (Wyoming)
1883	Marsh published a reconstruction of <i>Brontosaurus</i> . Because none of the skeletons were found with a complete skull, Marsh reconstructed a hypothetical skull, based on comparisons with the similarly massively built <i>Camarasaurus</i> from the same area and time (which was later found to be wrong, see below). This was the first published reconstruction of an entire skeleton of a long-necked dinosaur.
1902	<i>Elosaurus parvus</i> was named by O.A. Peterson and Charles W. Gilmore (Wyoming)
1903	Elmer Riggs stated that differences between the species of <i>Brontosaurus</i> and <i>Apatosaurus</i> were not numerous enough to have two different genera. <i>Brontosaurus excelsus</i> and <i>Brontosaurus amplius</i> were included in <i>Apatosaurus</i> , and the new combinations <i>Apatosaurus excelsus</i> and <i>Apatosaurus amplius</i> were created.
1905	The first mount of a long-necked dinosaur was presented at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, it was an <i>Apatosaurus</i> (not clear which species).
1915	<i>Apatosaurus louisae</i> was named by William Holland (Utah). Holland found that <i>Apatosaurus</i> was actually more similar to the slender <i>Diplodocus</i> from the same area and time than to <i>Camarasaurus</i> , and proposed that a skull similar to already known <i>Diplodocus</i> skulls should be the real skull of <i>Apatosaurus</i> .
1936	Charles W. Gilmore published a detailed description of <i>Apatosaurus louisae</i> and another skeleton, which was found together with the reference specimen of <i>Elosaurus parvus</i> . He identified the second specimen as <i>Apatosaurus excelsus</i> , and argued for a <i>Camarasaurus</i> -like skull, supporting Marsh.
1978	John S. McIntosh and David Berman finally settled the question concerning the skull of <i>Apatosaurus</i> , and showed that Holland was right. <i>Apatosaurus</i> had a <i>Diplodocus</i> -like skull. The popular myth that <i>Brontosaurus</i> was a scientific error, and actually an <i>Apatosaurus</i> with a <i>Camarasaurus</i> head, was born, even though this is not entirely true.
1994	<i>Apatosaurus yahnahpin</i> was named by B. James Filla and Pat D. Redman, based on material from Wyoming.
1998	<i>Apatosaurus yahnahpin</i> was renamed as <i>Eobrontosaurus yahnahpin</i> by Robert T. Bakker, because he thought there were enough differences between <i>Apatosaurus yahnahpin</i> and the other <i>Apatosaurus</i> species such that <i>Eobrontosaurus</i> should be a unique genus.
2004	A first phylogenetic study of the <i>Apatosaurus</i> species was published by Paul Upchurch and colleagues, which found that <i>Elosaurus parvus</i> was another species of <i>Apatosaurus</i> . They considered valid the following four species: <i>Apatosaurus ajax</i> , <i>Apatosaurus excelsus</i> , <i>Apatosaurus parvus</i> , and <i>Apatosaurus louisae</i> . They did not include <i>Eobrontosaurus yahnahpin</i> in their study.
2015	Based on new finds, and a much larger dataset compared to the study of Upchurch and colleagues, Emanuel Tschopp and colleagues showed that differences between the specimens of <i>Brontosaurus</i> and the specimens from <i>Apatosaurus</i> are numerous enough to justify that there were two different genera. This also results in some species being moved from <i>Apatosaurus</i> into <i>Brontosaurus</i> . The now accepted species are the following: <i>Apatosaurus ajax</i> , <i>Apatosaurus louisae</i> , <i>Brontosaurus excelsus</i> , <i>Brontosaurus yahnahpin</i> , <i>Brontosaurus parvus</i> .