

Sparassodonta: Metatherian mammals of South America

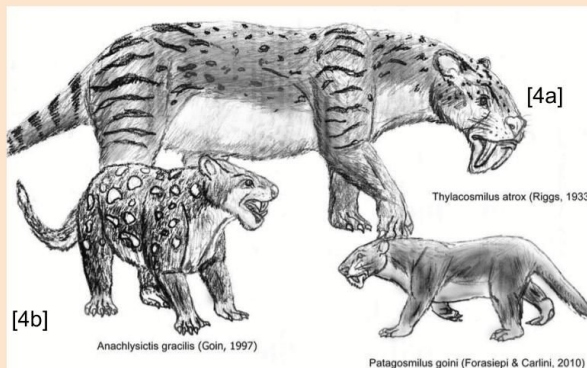
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[1a]

Introduction

Sparassodonta were a group of mammalian who evolved in South America. At the time, sparassodonta were carnivorous predators however the species is now extinct. Originally, it was said that the sparassodonta died out from competition thought later evidence suggest that they died out before the competition.[1]



[4a]

Thylacosmilus atrox (Riggs, 1933)

[4b]

Anachlysiotis gracilis (Goin, 1997)

Patagosmilus goini (Forasiepi & Carlini, 2010)

Distinctive Features

- Reduction in size of talonids, compared to other carnivorous mammals
- Dental morphology was less diverse than members of Carnivora [1]

Basic Ecology/Habits

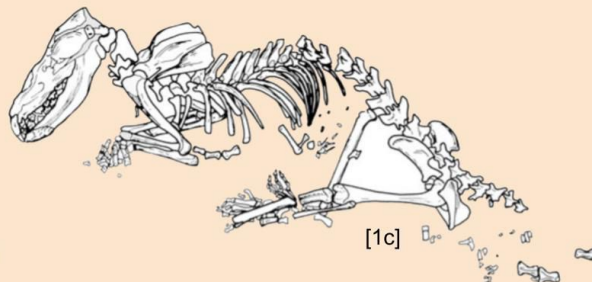
- Majority (90%>) of sparassodonts were hypercarnivores
- Only five of the fifty-eight taxa studied display omnivorous diets, additionally only one taxon is mesocarnivorous [1]
- Terrestrial locomotion assumed in larger members (over 20kg), such as *Callistoe vincei* [3]
- Smaller members suggest to have arboreal and scansorial habits



[1b]



[1d]



[1c]

Geological & Geographical Range

- Began from the early Paleocene (Tiupampan) OR the early Eocene (Itaborian) up until the early Pliocene (Chapadmalalan) [1]
- Found exclusively in South America [1]



[2]

An artist rendition of the sparassodonta (located in the bottom right corner).