



# Mosasaurus

*Means "lizard of the Meuse River"*

*Scientific name: Mosasaurus hoffmannii*

## **Period:**

Late Cretaceous (~ 70 – 66 Ma -  
{Mega annum, or million years ago})

## **Diet:**

Carnivore (meat eater)

## **Current day location found:**

Cosmopolitan distribution

## **More information:**

- Named after a river near where the first specimen was found in the Netherlands
- Originally described as a species of 'big breathing fish'
- Later thought to be a crocodile or an unknown 'toothed whale'
- Eventually identified as some unknown type of giant monitor
- Helped pave the way for the idea of extinction
- Before this people had no concept that a species could become extinct
- The largest and most strongly built species of mosasaurids
- It is a marine reptile (not a dinosaur)
- Preyed on fish, turtles, ammonites (a type of squid-like shellfish), plesiosaurs and even smaller mosasaurids
- Estimated length up to 18 m (59 ft)
- Estimated weight about 5 tonnes (about the same as an elephant)

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