

XV Jornadas Argentinas de Paleontología de Vertebrados, La Plata, May, 1999.
Ameghiniana 36(4).

**A PROBABLE TROODONTID (THEROPODA-COELUROSAURIA) FROM
THE LATE CRETACEOUS OF PATAGONIA[†]**

Fernando E. Novas*, Sebastián Apesteguía*, Diego Pol* and Andrea Cambiaso*

The rocks of the Portezuelo Formation (Río Neuquén Subgroup; Turonian-Coniacian; Neuquén) offered abundant remains of interesting predatory dinosaurs (e.g. *Unenlagia*, *Patagonykus*, *Megaraptor*). To this list, should be added now a probable troodontid, which would consist its first record for the Southern Hemisphere. It is represented by some postcranial elements, including an almost complete foot. The troodontids are slender theropods that barely reach 3 meters in length, recorded up to now in Cretaceous rocks of Laurasia. The new taxon is preliminarily referred to the Troodontidae based on the following combination of traits, present only in these coelurosaurs: arctometatarsalian condition of the metatarsus, didactily, second toe with raptorial ungual phalanx, articulations of the first and second phalanges of the second digit capable of hyperextension, and strongly recurved and transversely compressed claw in the second toe. However, the Patagonian form differs from the Northern Hemisphere troodontids in several features. The vertebrate fauna recorded up to now in the Southern continents show marked differences with that of the Northern Hemisphere. However, some recently documented theropods (e.g., Alvarezsauridae, dromaeosaurids from Sudan) and that here reported evidence that the paleobiogeographic history of the Gondwanan fauna is much more complex than expected.

*Laboratorio de Anatomía Comparada, Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales, Av. Angel Gallardo 470, Buenos Aires (1405), Argentina. E-mail: fernovas@muanbe.gov.ar

[†] Original citation: F. E. Novas, S. Apesteguía, D. Pol, and A. Cambiaso. 1999. Un probable troodóntido (Theropoda-Coelurosauria) del Cretácico Tardío de Patagonia. XV Jornadas Argentinas de Paleontología de Vertebrados, La Plata, May, 1999. *Ameghiniana* 36(4).