



*I see paleontology as
adventure with a purpose.*

— Paul Sereno

TOPICS:

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This unique look inside the life of a dinosaur hunter illustrates the scope of Sereno's work and its relevance for the rest of us.

Expedition Essentials: Achieving Peak Performance in the Desert

Sereno is best known for leading expeditions in the Sahara desert where keeping a team properly motivated and healthy is as important as finding the next big discovery.

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Sereno and his wife are using science and discovery to change the lives of city kids and to usher in a new generation of American scientists.

The Art of Paleontology

Sereno discusses how he weaves together adventure, discovery, art and intellect to re-create some of the world's most fascinating ancient creatures.

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Paul Sereno grew up in Naperville, a suburb of Chicago, and studied art and biology as an undergraduate at Northern Illinois University. A behind-the-scenes museum tour opened his eyes to a life of science, art, and adventure: "I never recovered from that visit. In paleontology I saw an irresistible combination of travel, adventure, art, biology, and geology."

Sereno studied dinosaur fossils in far-flung collections in China and Mongolia while earning a doctorate in geology at Columbia University and the American Museum of Natural History in New York. In 1987 he joined the faculty of the University of Chicago, where he teaches paleontology and evolution to graduate and undergraduate students and human anatomy to medical students. Together with his wife, educator Gabrielle Lyon, Sereno co-founded Project Exploration, a nonprofit outreach organization dedicated to making the wonders of science accessible to the public, young girls, and inner-city children.

Having discovered dinosaurs on five continents, Sereno has been called a modern-day Indiana Jones. He began his fieldwork in 1988 in the foothills of the Andes in Argentina, where his team discovered the first dinosaurs to roam the Earth, the predators *Herrerasaurus* and the most primitive of all, *Eoraptor*, the "dawn raptor." The Andes desert findings revealed the most complete picture yet of the dawn of the dinosaur era, some 225 million years ago.

In the early 1990s Sereno began exploration of the Sahara to unearth Africa's lost world of dinosaurs. As the continents drifted apart during the dinosaur era, Africa's dinosaurs evolved into new species. Discovering them has involved a series of intrepid and ongoing expeditions into the heart of the Sahara. Among his Sahara discoveries are a new 27-foot-long meat-eater, a 70-foot-long plant-eater, a fish-eating dinosaur, and the skull of a huge, T. rex-size meat-eater. Besides new and unusual dinosaurs, Sereno's team stumbled on the world's largest crocodylian, the 40-foot-long *Sarcosuchus*, dubbed SuperCroc.

One of National Geographic's explorers-in-residence, Sereno is a dynamic speaker whose enthusiasm inspires his audiences. He has authored several books and magazine articles and been featured in numerous documentaries. His honors include *Chicago Tribune's* Teacher of the Year Award (1993), *Chicago* magazine's Chicagoan of the Year (1996), *Newsweek's* Century Club Award (1997), *People's* 50 Most Beautiful People (1997), *Esquire's* 100 Best People in the World (1997), Boston Museum of Science's Walker Prize (1997), and Columbia University's University Medal for Excellence (1999).

