

the pterosaurians or flying reptiles, which were likewise peculiar to Mesozoic time. These huge, winged, bat-like

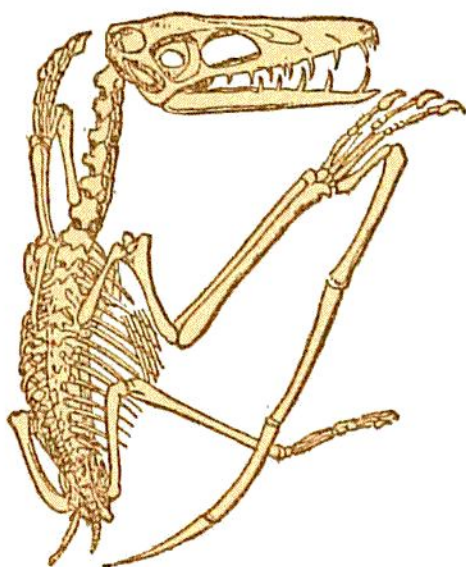


Fig. 397.—Jurassic Pterosaur.
Scaphognathus (*Pterodactylus*)
crassirostris, Goldf. (Middle
Oolite).

creatures had large heads, teeth in distinct sockets, eyes like the *Ichthyosaurus*, one finger of each fore-foot prolonged to a great length, for the purpose of supporting a membrane for flight, and bones, like those of birds, hollow and air-filled.⁵¹

The best-known genus, *Pterodactylus* (*Scaphognathus*, Fig. 397), had a short tail and jaws furnished from end to end with long teeth.

Others were *Dimorphodon*, distinguished especially by long anterior and short hinder teeth, and by the length of its tail, and *Rhamphorhynchus* (Figs. 398, 399, 400, 401), also possessing a long tail, with a caudal membrane, and having formidable jaws, which may have terminated in a horny beak. These strange harpy-like creatures were able to fly, to shuffle on land, or perch on rocks, perhaps even to dive in search of their prey. The long slender teeth which some of them possessed probably indicate that the creatures lived on fish. Lastly, the most colossal living beings of Mesozoic time, and, indeed, so far as we know, of any time, belonged to the ancient order of *Deinosaurs*, which now attained their maximum development. In these animals, which appeared

⁵¹ See Marsh on wings of *Pterodactyles*, *Amer. Journ. Sci.* April, 1882. The remarkable specimen of *Rhamphorhynchus* (*R. Münsteri*) from the Solenhofen Slate, described by this author (Figs. 399, 400, 401), possessed a long tail, the last sixteen short vertebræ of which supported a peculiar caudal membrane which, kept in an upright position by flexible spines, must have been an efficient instrument for steering the flight of the creature. I am indebted to the kindness of Prof. Marsh for the three figures which illustrate this structure.