

3D models related to the publication: Early Evolution of the Ossicular Chain in Cetacea: Into the Middle Ear Gears of a Semi-Aquatic Protocetid Whale

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Abstract

This contribution contains the 3D models of the ossicles of a protocetid archaeocete from the locality of Kpogamé, Togo, described and figured in the publication of Mourlam and Orliac (2019).

Keywords: archaeocete, incus, malleus, stapes

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Model IDs	Taxon	Description
M3#407_UMKPGM73	Protocetidae indet.	Stapes
M3#408_UMKPGM73	Protocetidae indet.	Incus
M3#409_UMKPGM73	Protocetidae indet.	Malleus

Table 1. Protocetid inner ear ossicles. Collection: Université de Montpellier.

INTRODUCTION

The 3D models presented here are part of the protocetid whales specimens retrieved from the Lutetian bone bed of Kpogamé-Haotoé (Togo, 46 - 43 Ma; Cappetta and Traverse 1988; Gingerich and Cappetta 2014) and described by Mourlam and Orliac (2017a, b, c). The skull fragment UM-KPG-M 73 referred to as Protocetidae indeterminate (Mourlam and Orliac 2017a), allowed to realize the first description of the bony labyrinth morphology of protocetid whales (Mourlam and Orliac 2017b; Orliac and Mourlam 2017); this specimens also provides an unprecedented access to the tree ossicles composing the ossicular chain for a protocetid taxon (Fig. 1 A-B and table 1). Protocetid whales are transitional taxa between terrestrial and fully aquatic cetaceans and are a key for determining the hearing abilities of early whales. Data on their middle ear ossicles allows for refining our understanding of the first steps of the terrestrial/aquatic transition. The functional analyses of the different middle ear units of UM-KPG-M 73 reveal a mosaic pattern of terrestrial and aquatic signatures (Mourlam and Orliac 2019). This integrative anatomical and functional study demonstrates that protocetids had efficient hearing in both air and water.

METHODS

The 3D surface of the different ossicles of the ossicular chain of the skull fragment UM-KPG-M 73 was extracted slice-by-slice manually within AVIZO 9.0 (Visualization Sciences Group) with the limited range only option of the brush tool. The rather low resolution (70 µm) and low contrast of the CT scan acquisition (Fig. 1 C-D), as well as the presence of sediment and

recrystallization in the middle ear cavity are responsible for the limited quality of the resulting models. The 3D surface models are provided in PLY format, and can therefore be opened with a wide range of freeware.

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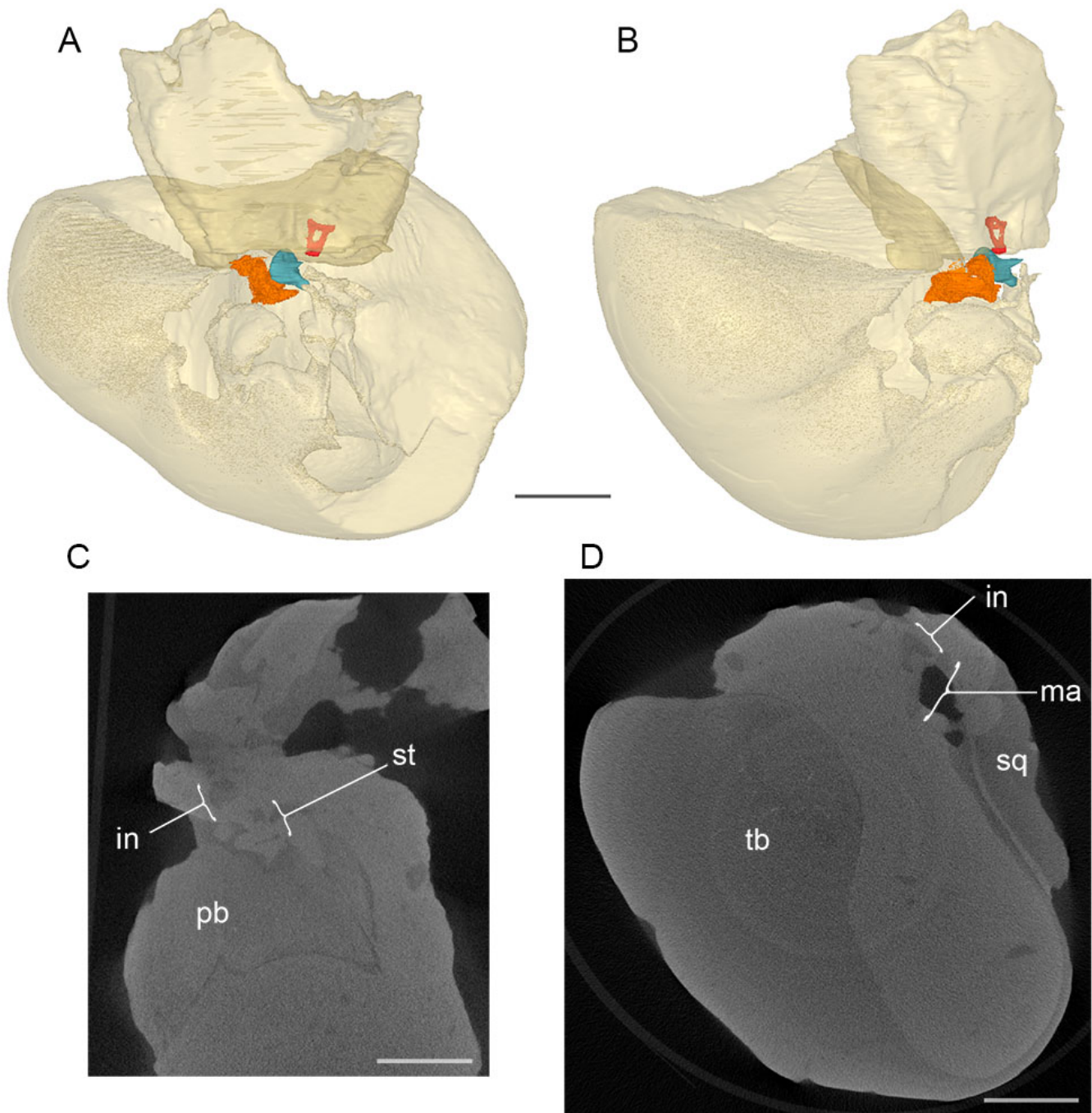


Figure 1. Location of the ossicular chain preserved within the middle ear cavity of protocetid indeterminate γ (UM-KPG-M 73); A-B, 3D models of the middle ear in A) lateral and B) anterior views (red, stapes; blue, incus; orange, malleus; bony transparent elements, petrosal on top and tympanic bulla underneath), C-D, reconstructed slices showing the location of the ossicles; Abbreviations: in, incus; ma, malleus; pb, petrosal bone; sq, squamosal; st, stapes; tb, tympanic bulla. Scale bar = 10 mm. 3D surfaces of the petrosal bones and bullae are available at MorphoMuseuM (Mourlam and Orliac, 2017c).

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