

***NICHOLLSEMYS BAIERI* GEN. ET SP. NOV, A PRIMITIVE CHELONIOID TURTLE FROM THE LATE CAMPANIAN OF NORTH AMERICA**

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ABSTRACT

We describe *Nichollsemys baieri* gen. et sp. nov., a primitive non-protostegid chelonoid turtle from the late Campanian Bearpaw Formation of Alberta, Canada, and DeGrey member of the Pierre Shale of South Dakota, USA. Known only from skull morphology, *Nichollsemys baieri* is phylogenetically intermediate between *Toxochelys* Cope, 1873, and *Ctenochelys* Zangerl, 1953. It is similar to *Toxochelys* and primitive with respect to *Ctenochelys* in the presence of a narrow triturating surface that does not incorporate the vomer, a large foramen palatinum posterius, and a well-developed processus pterygoideus externus on the pterygoid. It is derived relative to *Toxochelys* in features of the braincase, including the presence of a reduced area of exposure of the basisphenoid on the ventral surface of the braincase, a mid-ventral ridge on the palate extending between the basisphenoid and vomer, a rod-like rostrum basisphenoidale, a mid-line ridge extending from the foramen anterior canalis carotici interni to the dorsum sellae. It also differs in that the foramen caroticum laterale is larger in diameter than the foramen anterior canalis carotici interni.