

# Prehistoric Life of the Bakony Site, Hungary, Part 1

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This article describes the 2020 issue from Hungary – the World of the Bakony Dinosaurs II. It is the second in a series of issues from Hungary, with the first set published in 2018. The 2020 stamps were released as a souvenir sheet with 6 stamps (Figure 1). A special imperforate version was also printed (4,000 numbered sheets) but is not useable as postage (Figure 2). In addition, an official first day cover (Figure 3) and postmark (Figure 4) were released for the First Day Ceremony on March 4.



Figure 1: The 2020 Dinosaurs of the Bakony World Set, Hungary.



Figure 2: An example of the imperforate special souvenir sheet.

Scott Catalogue numbers have not been issued yet for these stamps. [Numbers were published in the May issue of Scott's Monthly Update, Scott #4545a-f. Ed.] The geological context of the Bakony Region will be explored in part 2, we will focus on the species shown on the 2020 set in this article. The 2020 set includes depictions of reconstructions of *Hungarobatrachus sukachi*, *Mochlodon vorosi*, *Bauxitornis mindszentyaie*, *Atractosteus*, *Foxemys trabanti*, and *Doratodon carcharidens*.

*Hungarobatrachus sukachi* is one of the most unusual fossils from the Bakony site – as frogs generally do not preserve well in the fossil record as their bones are usually too delicate. Fossils include portions of the pelvic girdle. The paleontologists who described the fossil interpreted the pelvic girdle structure, suggesting that this frog was equally at home in both the terrestrial world and in water, able to both jump and swim. It is the oldest true frog found in Europe to date.

Two bird species are known from the Itharkút locality – *Bauxitornis mindszentyaie* and a second un-named species represented by a small thigh bone. Both species are members



Figure 3: The Official first day cover which is illustrated with individuals of *Mochlodon vorosi* watching the hatching of their young.

of the Enantiornithes, an extinct clade of birds from the Late Cretaceous with some more dinosaurian characteristics including teeth and clawed fingers on the wings. *Bauxitornis mindszentyae* is known



Figure 4: Special Postmark for the First Day Ceremony. Picture courtesy of Michael Kogan (<http://www.paleophilatelie.eu/index.html>).

from about a dozen bones (mostly from the feet – figure 5b) and was the size of a modern buzzard. The type specimen was discovered in a bauxite mine – hence the name “bird of the bauxite”. The species was also named after Andrea Mindszenty, a geologist at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary.

*Mochlodon vorosi* is the only non-avian dinosaur in the 2020 set. It was a small herbivore, measuring in length. The name *Mochlodon* is derived from Greek mokhlos – bar and odont – tooth and describes the bar-shaped ridges on the teeth. It is also named after Paleontologist Attila Vörös. One of its closer (and much larger) relatives is the famous *Iguanodon*.

*Atractosteus* sp. is a genus of gar that ranges from the Early Cretaceous to the present. In fact, three living species including the Alligator Gar (*A. spatula*) are found in North and Central America today. At the Iharkút locality, *Atractosteus* and a related genus *Lepisosteus* are known from a variety of fragmentary fossils of the jaws (Figure 5a), skull, vertebrae and scales.

*Foxemys trabanti* is one of the most common fossils at the Iharkút locality with abundant fossils of skulls (Figure 5c), shells, vertebrate, pelvic and pectoral girdles, and limb bones. *Foxemys* is a turtle – and the species *Foxemys trabanti* was named in honor of the Trabant 601 (a type of vehicle that the researchers used during their field expeditions to Bakony). *Foxemys* is a genus within a larger group of turtles that are informally referred to as side-neck turtles – because when they retract their head into the shell, they retract it horizontally to the side. *Foxemys trabanti* is interpreted as a durophage – an animal that eats shelled animals like snails or bivalves.

The last stamp in the set commemorates *Doratodon carcharidens*, a terrestrial crocodile. The few fossil specimens from the Iharkút locality include jaw fragments and sharp, serrated teeth. Similar specimens have been found from Late Cretaceous rocks of Austria.

Part 2 will explore the 2018 issue and describe the world of the Bakony region during the Late Cretaceous in more detail.

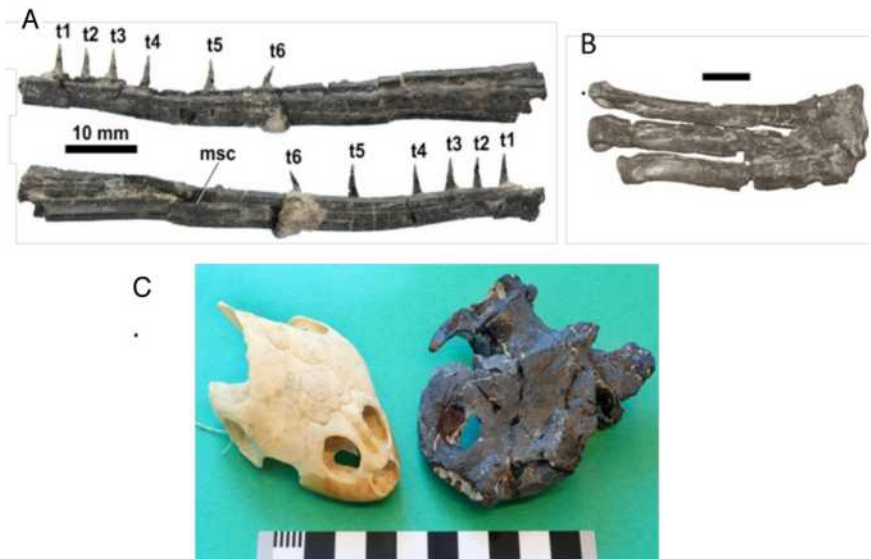


Figure 5: Fossil specimens from the Bakony Region. 5A. jaws from *Atractosteus* sp. from Szabo et al. (2016) 5B. Metatarsal bones (foot) of *Bauxitornis mindszentyae*. Picture from Wikipedia.org. 5C. Comparison of the modern side-necked turtle, *Podocnemis unifilis* from Brazil with *Foxemys trabanti* skull from the Late Cretaceous of the Bakony region. Scale bar is in centimeters. Picture from <http://magyardinoszaurusz.hu/en/foxemys-trabanti/>.



**References:****Magyar Post Materials for the 2018 and 2020 issues:**

<https://www.posta.hu/stamps/stamps/new-stamps/the-world-of-the-bakony-dinosaurs>

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<http://magyardinoszaurusz.hu/en/>

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