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Probable Oviraptorosaurian and Therizinosaur Tracks from the Upper Cretaceous of Western North America

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The large tetradactyl, bird-like footprints of *Saurexallopus* were first reported from the Upper Cretaceous of western North America and first described from the Harebell Formation of Wyoming by Harris et al., in 1997. Additional well-preserved *Saurexallopus* material was described from the Lance Formation in Wyoming, and less-well preserved material was reported from the Laramie Formation in Colorado (Figure 6a). However the trackmaker affinity of *Saurexallopus* was unknown until our observation in 2009, which points to the fact that the only Late Cretaceous vertebrates in North America, with tetradactyl bird-like feet large enough to produce these ichnites are oviraptorosaurs.

The second unusual track from the western North America was found by one of us (G.G.) in the Ferron Sandstone of Utah, in 2008. This is 30 cm long and 14 cm wide footprint with four slender (Figure 6b). It strongly resembles *Macropodosaurus* ichnites described originally by Zhakarov from the Upper Cretaceous of Tadjikistan, in 1964, and later attributed to a therizinosaur by Sennikov, in 2006.

Both these morphotypes appear to represent derived maniraptoran tracks, and contribute new knowledge on the Late Cretaceous ichnofauna of North America.

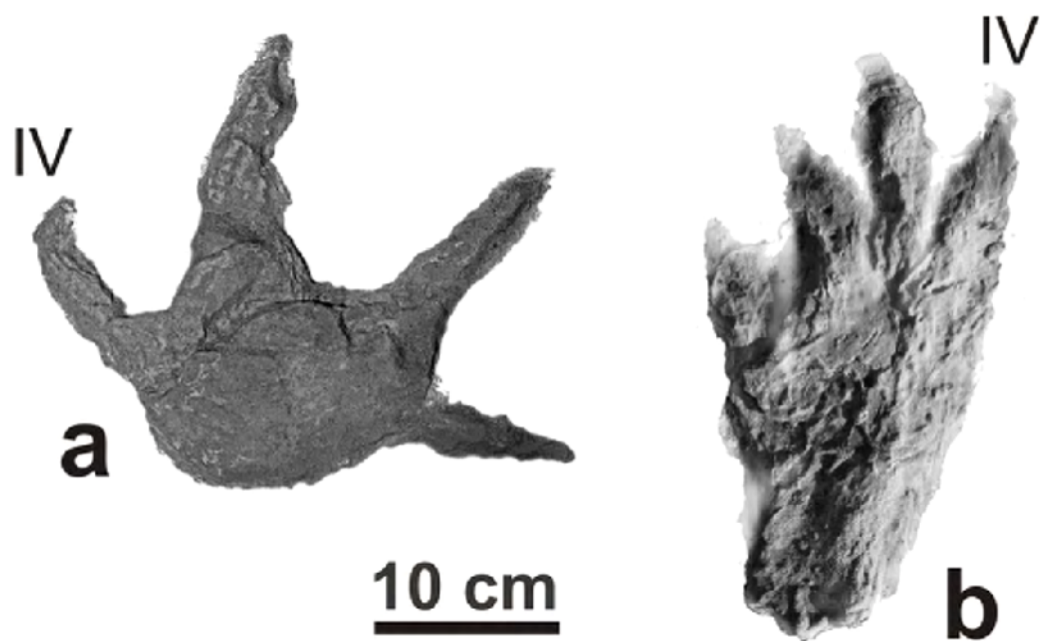


FIGURE 6. Tetradactyl maniraptoran footprints from the Upper Cretaceous of western North America: a, *Saurexalopus* specimen CU-MWC 220.24 from the Fossil Trace Golf Course site, Colorado; b, *Macropodosaurus* specimen CU 219.3 from the Muddy Creek Canyon, Utah.