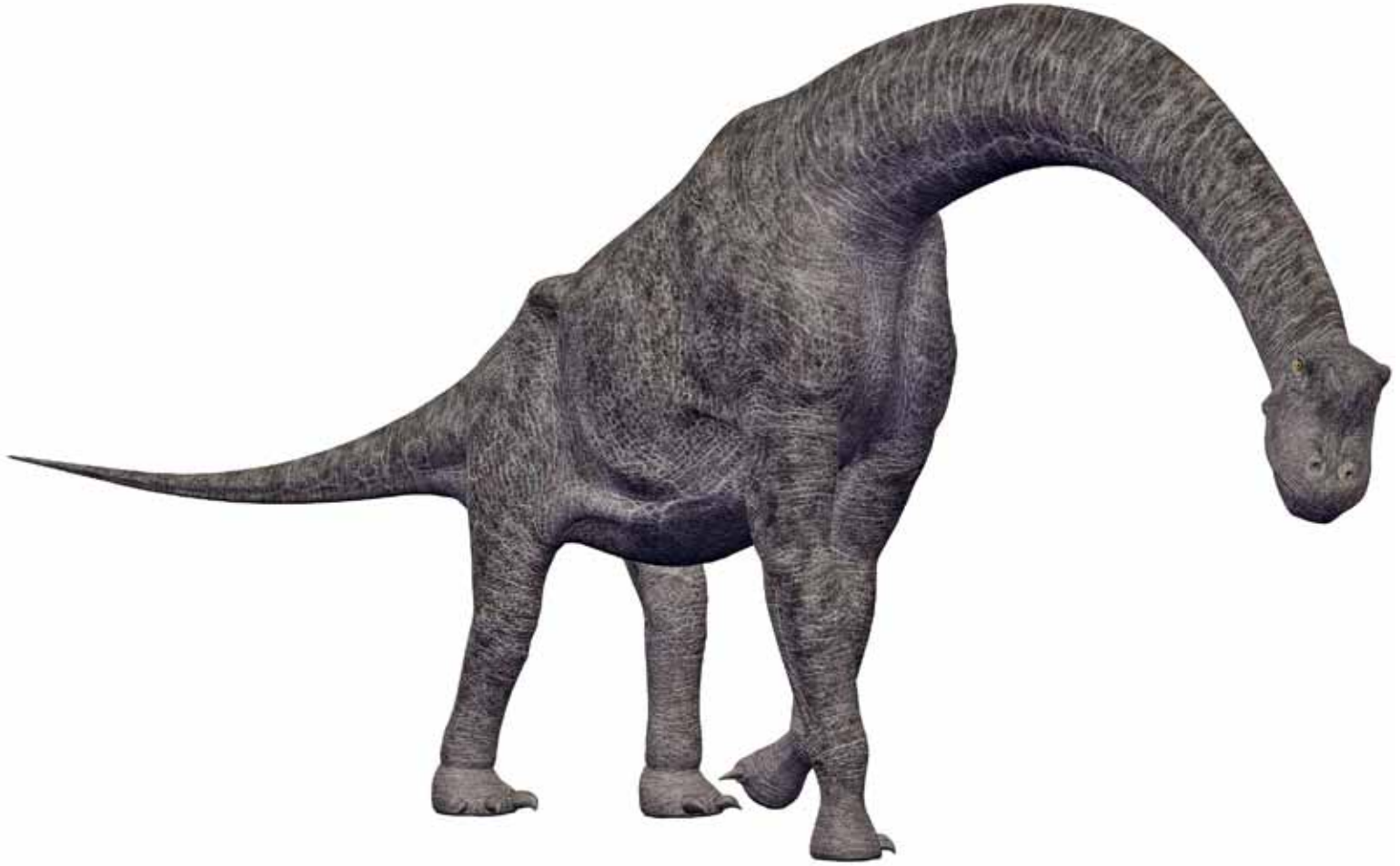


# Apatosaurus (Brontosaurus)



Originally called Apatosaurus (meaning 'deceptive lizard'), it became known as Brontosaurus for decades, but scientists have now gone back to its original name.

This is perhaps the best known Jurassic sauropod. It was over 20m long and weighed up to 25 tonnes.

Apatosaurus was a tough guy. It was more heavily built than its other large relatives such as Diplodocus. Yet it had quite a thin, almost delicate-looking tail. This was so mobile it could easily have been flicked like a whip and anything that got in the way would surely have known about it.

Apatosaurus has often been shown with its neck and head held high in the air, but scientists have examined the neck bones and now believe this was unlikely and that the animal kept its head bent down. If its head had been too high for too long, its heart would have had trouble pumping blood to its brain!

Although it was toughly built, the vast bodyweight, as with other sauropods, meant that, most likely, once it grew up it could never lie down, for its legs would not have the strength to get it off the ground again. So it probably locked its legs and went to sleep standing up.

Its lungs moved huge volumes of air in and out with each breath. This is an important finding, for, if Apatosaurus had been a true reptile its lungs would have been much smaller – reptiles don't breathe as much as most other animals. Instead its lung space was more like the kind of space (scaled up) that birds have. With a bird-like lung system, it would have been able to walk long distances and even break out into a long-distance run, something that reptiles cannot do.