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New dinosaur trackways in the Lower Lias of Vendée.[†]

Veillon point, 12 km south of Sables-d'Olonne on the Vendée coast, has already furnished numerous reptile footprints¹. We have examined the strand of l'Anse de la République, 500 m north of the point. There we observed more than a hundred good hollow footprints, attributable to carnivorous dinosaurs, on large flagstones of wide sandstone.

The very small traces, not exceeding a few centimeters, that were numerous at Veillon point seem absent here. The large forms, of which we most often have the sandy counter-prints in relief, are represented in the new locality by hollow imprints, well pressed into the sediment and without natural counter-mold. Here this is due to direct filling of the traces by a green clay and not by sandstone.

The imprints are crossed in two directions, with a strong density: 8 can be counted on a 2.20 m flagstone, and 12 on a 4 m long flagstone. Moreover, sometimes there are trackways following a length of 4 to 6 m, with right and left pes alternating in single file; the claw is well marked, on the right for the right pes, on the left for the left pes. The facing figure shows an example of the trackway observed at L'Anse de la République.

We note as particularly remarkable the original ground of a fish lock; by scraping off the *Fucus* at low tide, dozens of footprints and trackways are seen to appear on the sandy flagstone. But toward the southeast angle, as the rock passes to a conglomerate with quartz pebbles, the traces are no longer found preserved.

All the imprints from the new locality are tridactyl, with the claw point generally well marked. Attributable to theropod dinosaurs walking on their strong hind feet, they are of three different types:

— the smaller (*a*), less frequent, are 15 to 20 cm long. The lateral digits are inclined and the claw is rather straight.

— those of medium size (*b*) measure 20 to 26 cm. The stride is variable: 70, 113, and 118 cm for three trackways examined. These traces are generally elongate and straight in form. The median digit is clearly longer than the lateral digits, which are appressed to it and hardly inclined. The asymmetrical claw is more elongate on the exterior side.

— the large imprints (*c*) are abundant, generally measuring 30 to 35 cm but being able to attain up to 45 cm, with one stride varying from 96 to 117 cm. These wide, heavy traces, with thick digits armed with strong claws and a strong rounded talon, well belong to the *Eubrontes* type, frequent in the Upper Triassic of Connecticut².

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¹ BESSONNAT G., LAPPARENT A. F. DE, MONTENAT Ch. and TERS M. (1965): Découverte de nombreuses empreintes de pas de Reptiles dans le Lias inférieur de la côte de Vendée. *C. R. Ac. Sc.*, vol. 260, p. 5324-5326.

² LULL, R. S. (1953): Triassic life of the Connecticut Valley. *Connect. Geol. and Nat. Hist., Survey Bull.*, no. 81.

It is necessary to note the variety of reptile traces in Veillon, of which our recent discoveries on the strand of l'Anse de la République bring the inventoried total to more than 400. The Lower Liassic prints from Vendée are distributed in fifteen different types, from small quadrupedal forms whose pes does not exceed 4 cm in length, to powerful bipedal carnosuars that we have come to evoke.

At this time, this ensemble constitutes the best reptile footprint locality visible in France.