

Land Mammals from the Middle Miocene Round Mountain Silt, Northeast of Bakersfield, California

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Although the Round Mountain Silt is well known for its marine vertebrate fossils (especially sharks and marine mammals from the Sharktooth Hill bone bed), it has also produced a small but significant number of land mammal fossils. Small collections have accumulated over the years at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History and at the Buena Vista Museum (collected by Bob Ernst). The fossils include a lower jaw of the mustelid *Sthenictis lacota*; a lower jaw of the huge amphicyonid, or "beardog" *Pliocyon medius*; the dog *Tomarctus optatus*; the three-toed horses "*Merychippus*" *brevidentus* and *Anchitherium* sp.; the rhinoceroses *Aphelops megalodus* and *Teleoceras medicornutum*; the tapir *Miotapirus* sp.; the deer-like dromomerycids *Bouromeryx submilleri* and *Bouromeryx americanus*; the protoceratid *Prosynthetoceras* sp.; and the gomphothere *Miomastodon* sp. Together, this assemblage is characteristic of the latest Hemingfordian to middle Barstovian, comparable to the assemblages found in the Barstow Formation in the Mojave Desert, and to Hemingfordian to Barstovian assemblages elsewhere in North America. This is consistent with the latest early to early middle Miocene age of the formation based on microfossils, mollusks, Sr-isotope dates, and magnetic stratigraphy.