

WEEK 4 EXTINCTIONS AND DIVERSIFICATIONS

In this week, we spoke about the end Triassic extinction event and how this spurred on the evolution of dinosaurs and mammals. We had a chance to hear Emil Krupandan talk about the early radiation of dinosaurs and then, towards the end of the week, we spoke about the end Cretaceous extinction event and the subsequent radiation of mammals.

We then heard from Pippa Haarhoff about the five to seven million year old fossils at the West Coast Fossil Park.

We also spoke to Emeritus Professor William Bond about the spread of the grasslands, and we chatted to archaeologist Professor Becky Ackermann about how and when humans became the dominant animals on our planet.

The end Triassic extinction event is highly significant. Like today, global warming caused by increased carbon dioxide, may have been the cause. The difference, of course, is that the increase in carbon dioxide then was the result of volcanic activity.

Today, of course, it is industrialization that is mainly to blame. Irrespectively, we see global warming causes major shifts in ecosystems, and from this point onwards, right until the end of the Cretaceous we see dinosaurs dominate terrestrial environments.

Next week, we're going to talk about the current biodiversity crisis. We will be talking to scientists from a range of different disciplines about how we can avert the sixth extinction.



Anusuya Chinsamy-Turan 2017

Unless otherwise stated, this material is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). This means you are free to copy, distribute, display, and perform the work as long as you attribute the authors of the work.