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A new meiolaniform turtle from the Maastrichtian of Northern Patagonia, Argentina

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Meiolaniformes are a group of chelonians including the famous horned-turtles *Niolamia argentina* (Patagonia) and *Meiolania platyceps* (Australia). In South America, the Late Cretaceous meiolaniforms are represented by two named taxa: *Patagoniaemys gasparinae* coming from Campanian–Maastrichtian beds of the La Colonia Formation, Chubut province, and *Trapalcochelys sulcata* from the Campanian–Maastrichtian beds of the Allen Formation, Río Negro Province. The aim of the present contribution is to describe a new meiolaniform chelonian coming from the Upper Cretaceous (Maastrichtian) Los Alamitos Formation, at Río Negro Province, Argentina. The material is represented by a partial basicranium, incomplete carapace and fragmentary postcranial bones (MPMIK 1839/P/33) belonging to a new species *Patagoniaemys aeschyli*. To this new species we refer all the material previously referred as indeterminate meiolaniid, meiolaniform and cf. *Niolamia* sp., coming from the same site and locality, and described by different authors since the 1980s. This new species differs from the type species *P. gasparinae*, particularly by the presence of longitudinal ridges in the nuchal bone. We also include brief comments about meiolaniform palaeobiogeography and the impact of K/Pg extinction event in Patagonian chelonians.

Key words: Testudinata, Meiolaniformes, Los Alamitos Formation, Maastrichtian, Cretaceous, Patagonia, Argentina.

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