

HOW CAN I LEARN OR DO MORE?

You can be involved in and contribute to today's exciting advances in paleontology. Many museums and colleges offer opportunities for volunteers to study and work alongside trained professional paleontologists. Contact your local institutions to see how you can help.

You can also help the BLM preserve paleontological resources by leaving them as you found them for you and others to enjoy whenever visiting public lands. If you think a fossil or track, especially a vertebrate fossil, may be unique and of scientific interest, or may be damaged or destroyed, do not collect it. Please report your finding and the location to the nearest BLM office. This way, land managers can alert professional scientists to ensure that the paleontological resources are properly recorded and cared for. Please do not attempt to remove them yourself. Important information may be lost, no matter how careful you might be.

We hope that you will enjoy the opportunities to collect and learn about fossils on your public lands. If you have any questions or want to know more about collecting fossils, please visit

www.blm.gov/heritage to find more information on paleontology, fossil collecting, permits, and your local BLM offices.



FOSSILS on America's Public Lands



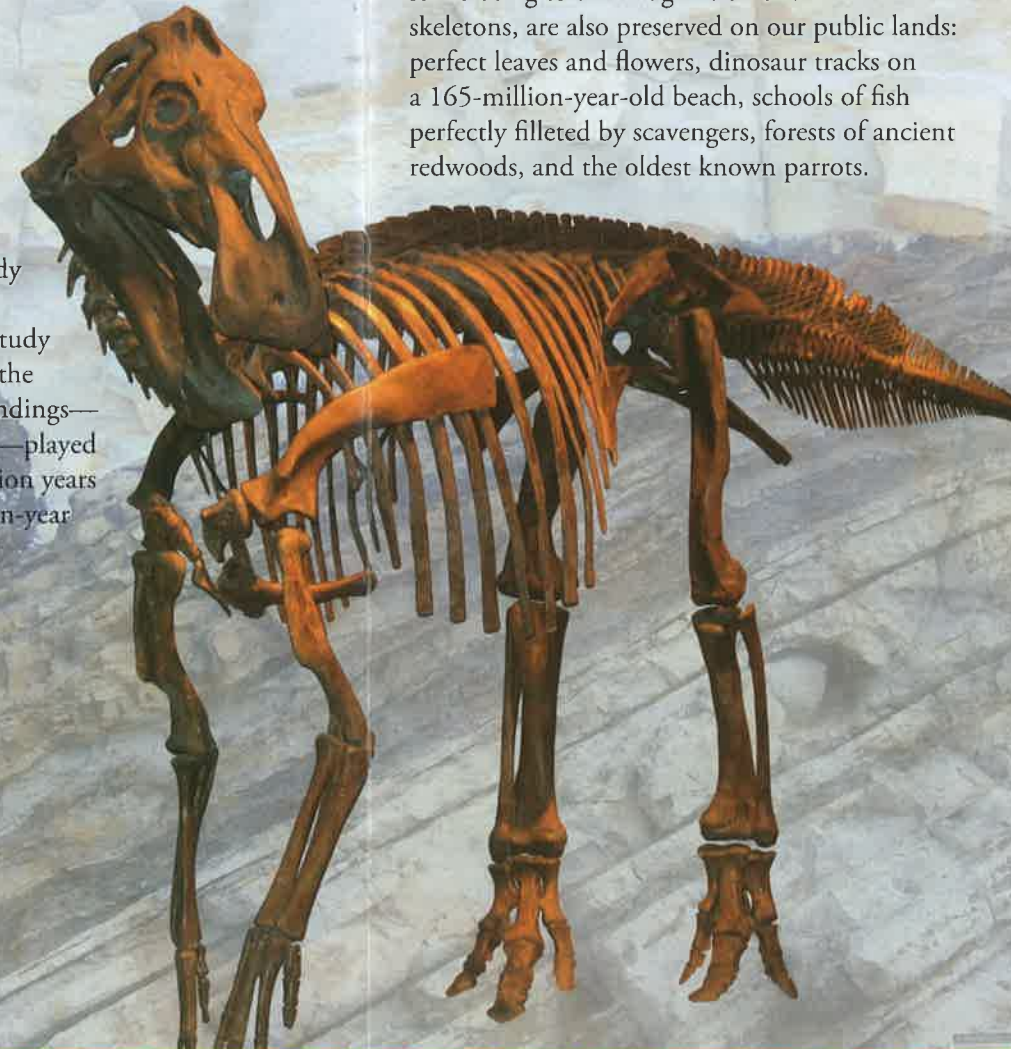
BLM

FOSSILS

Tyrannosaurus. Allosaurus. Triceratops.
The mere words send the imagination soaring. Children and adults alike are fascinated by the deep past and fossils of all kinds. We hope that this guide will help you understand more about the importance of fossils and also appreciate the public lands that preserve remnants of past ages.

WHAT ARE FOSSILS?

Fossils are the remains or traces of any organism preserved in the Earth's crust, and paleontology is the study of fossils. Through the careful collection and study of fossils, we can learn the stories of origins and endings—life, death, and change—played out over nearly 3.5 billion years of the Earth's 4.5-billion-year history.



WHERE ARE FOSSILS FOUND?

Americans share an extraordinary natural legacy—the public lands. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages more than 245 million acres of public lands in the Western United States, lands where *Edmontosaurus*, *Stegosaurus*, *Deinonychus*, and *Pentaceratops* once roamed. Well-preserved dinosaur fossils are often found in the steep, arid, and deeply eroded terrain in the West. Other fossils, though perhaps less stimulating to the imagination than dinosaur skeletons, are also preserved on our public lands: perfect leaves and flowers, dinosaur tracks on a 165-million-year-old beach, schools of fish perfectly filleted by scavengers, forests of ancient redwoods, and the oldest known parrots.