

Fossils In North Dakota

FIND is a newsletter dedicated to helping young readers (in age or spirit) express their love of fossils and paleontology, and to help them learn more about the world under their feet. Each issue will be broken up into sections including Feature Fossils, Travel Destinations, Reader Art, Ask Mr. Lizard, and more!

Fall 2013, No. 10

Editor: Becky Barnes
North Dakota Geological Survey
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505

becbarnes@nd.gov

Next Issue: December 2013

Please e-mail us if you wish to receive the electronic version of FIND, or view past issues at:

<https://www.dmr.nd.gov/ndfossil/kids/newsletterkids.asp>



Adaptation Gallery: Geologic Time

Work continues with the demolition of the old areas, and construction of the new. The whole building is working in a leap-frog style, where one division (paleontology, for example) moves out, and another division moves in. It is busy busy busy!

When the paleo-staff first moved into the Heritage Center in 1991, they were housed in a 3-part room divided up into lab and office space. They outgrew the area, and were moved into the newly renovated Johnsrud Paleontology Laboratory down the hall. With the construction, paleo had to move again... back to the original lab! Talk about feeling squished!



Photo by Brian Austin: Old lab and collections area being renovated. Notice the old, brown collection storage cases.



Photo by Brian Austin: Temporary "old" lab. At left, Amy Sakariassen works on the Dinomummy body-block, while Sam Pounds, right, works on the tail.



Photo by Brian Austin: New lab (pre-equipment) - more room, more storage, more counter space - more everything!

Check out the following address for a more in-depth look at our Paleo lab through the years, and how it started:

<https://www.dmr.nd.gov/ndgs/newsletter/nl2010/The%20ND%20State%20Fossil%20Collection.pdf>

Now that the new paleontology labs, offices, and collections spaces are nearly finished, we're working hard moving down to the new area. All of the lab equipment is set up and ready to go. The old collections have been wheeled down, one cart at a time, and put into brand new cabinets. Even though you won't see it, the behind-the-scenes work is what really will make the new Geologic Time Gallery run smoothly.

I know it's the new gallery space that everyone is excited about – and we are too! We are helping construct the new area from scratch, building walls and display areas, and eventually adding in old and new fossils and casts. Many of the beautiful fossils that we have housed in collections will be brought to light, now that there is space to show them off.

Dakota the Dinomummy has moved from downstairs, up into the new hallway, just outside the entrance to the Geologic Time Gallery. For the first time, the body, tail, arm, and foot will be reunited under one display, giving visitors a chance to see fossilized dinosaur skin from different parts of the animal. A freeform wooden base wrapped tightly around the pieces will hold plexiglass walls, enabling visitors to view the fossil up close.



Photo by Brian Austin: Moving Dakota's body block through the narrow hallways downstairs.



Photo by Brian Austin: Dakota in the much larger, upstairs hallway. Other blocks and case yet to come.



Did you know there was a *Triceratops* skull buried in the Cretaceous display of the old gallery? Don't worry - most people missed it. The skull was taken off display, further restored, and will be placed in a much more prestigious (and easy-to-view) spot in the new gallery. Instead of flat, the skull will be angled and visible on a platform housing our new *Triceratops* skeleton cast.



Triceratops skull, freshly restored and ready for display. The wooden base will be covered by a "rock" wall.

Pembina Gorge Public Fossil Dig

Monday August 19th kicked off our week-long Public Fossil Dig up in the Pembina Gorge area. The hunt was on for more of the elusive mosasaur we began working on last year. Sure enough, more vertebrae were found. A number of jackets (plaster + burlap protective coating) were removed with more mosasaur bones in it. We're eagerly waiting to work on those for inclusion in our new Underwater World seafloor display.

Check out the photos on the next page to see some of what was going on!



Left: Dan, of Crosby, ND, and Mike of Longville, MN enjoy a day of digging. Other participants are had at work in the background.

Below - view across the road from the site.

(Photos by Rosann Wold)



Below: Paleontologist Jeff Person clears the site, while diggers look on.

(Photo by Trissa Ford)



Bottom Left: Emily, Lorena, Riley, Amanda and Trissa.

Bottom Right: Errol, Amanda and Logan "the walking text book."

(Photos by Trissa Ford)





Mara poses with Paleontologists John Hoganson (left) and Jeff Person (right).

(Photos by Molly Bestge)



Molly & Mara at the dig site; Mara posing with this year's souvenir - an entrenching shovel (black bag with squid); Molly & Mara showing off their discoveries.

(Photos by Molly Bestge)



Left: Logan chats with Mike Duerre, of the ND Parks and Recreation.

(Photo by Jason Ekstein)

Below: Fog rises above the Pembina River.

(Photo by Jeff Person)



Right: Errol lines up the meter-grid to map the mosasaur bone positions.

(Photo by Jeff Person)

