

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!

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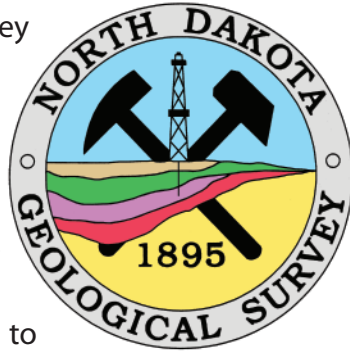
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<https://www.dmr.nd.gov/dmr/paleontology/fossils-north-dakota-find-newsletter>



Curse of the Dinomummy

October was the month... of the Dinomummy Curse... I'm sure you've read how graverobbers who disturb the rest of the dead may have a curse bestowed upon them? Well, it sure felt like our department was cursed - just in time for Halloween!

First, the lights stopped working in the lab... spooky... hooray for table lamps.

Then after months of drought, we had a monstrous rain storm that lasted all night - and about midnight, the pipe that carries water from the roof through the Geology Gallery, and back outside again, BURST. Water gushed in by the gallon; it sounded like a waterfall. As I came to work, Security stopped me and said "Uhh... you'll want to take a look at this..." - words you never want to hear at 7:30am. I stepped inside the Security booth, and they panned the gallery camera down to the floor. The floor was reflective and lapping... neither of which was it supposed to be! The new exhibit opening scheduled for the Dinomummy was only 2 days away. It was time to panic. Professional cleaners were brought in, and the water was sucked up, with the carpet tiles now spread along every inch of basement hallway to dry.

When we finally thought we were in the clear - how wrong we were. The flight for our guest speaker, Dr. Stephanie Drumheller, was delayed, then cancelled, rerouted, delayed again - she finally made it in with only hours to spare.

Meanwhile on poor Dr. Drumheller's end, there was no room at the airport hotel, or any other nearby hotel, so she had to make due with the airport itself. We were prepared to drive to Fargo to pick her up, in order for her to make it to Bismarck on time - but at the last moment she was able to snag a flight.

As part of the new exhibit opening, we had obtained permission to show the movie "Land Before Time" movie - a childhood classic for many of us. However - the DVD had been backordered not once, but twice, and never arrived. We all rushed home and brought in our personal copies, testing them out to make sure they actually played - success! Or so we THOUGHT. The time of the viewing came, and the Blue Ray player hooked up to the screen didn't like any of our DVDs. The movie played for all of the first 10 minutes... then nothing.

One of the dinomummy preparators who was scheduled to come in and talk was trapped in Montana in a snowstorm.

Our new dust collector didn't come with a plug-in, and we had to have an electrician specially called to install it.

It was just one thing after another - but in the end, Dakota the Dinomummy was successfully installed in its new case, the events were held, plenty of people were able to view the newest preparation work, the lab lights were fixed, our filter was installed, and the gallery was dried out. Thankfully, October is well behind us.



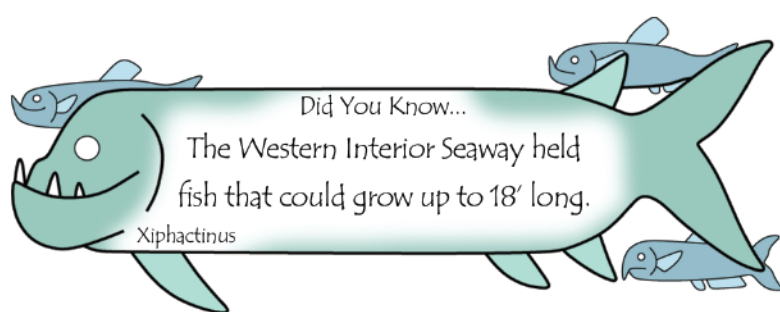


Of course, as with many new exhibits, we stood back and thought "Hmm... what could we add to make it even more amazing?" We decided that the exhibit artwork by Natee Puttapipat (@Himmapaan) blown up to a scale that more closely represented the size of Dakota in life would be perfect. So if you saw the exhibit when it first opened - come back and check out the new wall art!

Dept. Mineral Resources Tree

One of the traditions in the Capitol hallways are trees decorated by different agencies or organizations. This year, the Dept. of Mineral Resources (or DMR - the main tree which Paleontology is a branch of) decided to decorate a tree too! The general theme was to be tidbits of information about the Geological Survey, the DMR, and Paleontology in North Dakota.

Paleo staff brainstormed, and came up with 19 different ideas. Why 19? Totally random. I swear it has nothing to do with Jeff's obsession with the Dark Tower book series. Anyways - each ornament started with a "Did You Know..." phrase, with the factoid placed somewhere nearby. An image was drawn to support or emphasize each factoid. It was mirrored, then sandwiched on a wood blank to create an individual two-sided ornament.



Watch for all the ornaments on Social Media! We'll be posting them on weekdays - feel free to download them and print off your own cool ND themed paleontology ornaments. We would love to see what other fun filled fossil facts YOU come up with!

Topping the DMR tree, of course, we have paleontology's Tree-rex angel.

The "Showcase Of Trees" is located on the ground floor, west end, of the Capitol building. The trees will be on display through December. Come see them!

If you need a kid-friendly coloring activity for the holiday season, don't forget - we have the 12 Days of Cretaceous available FREE on our website!

Nine Duck-bills Dancing...

