

Public Fossil Dig - Marmarth

-This dig is co-sponsored by the North Dakota Geological Survey, the US Forest Service, and the Marmarth Research Foundation. These areas are one of the few in the state that are home to dinosaurs. We will be working in the Hell Creek Formation, which was during the last gasp of dinosaurs before they went extinct, some 65 million years ago. While dinosaurs tend to be the largest things found, they are not necessarily the most common. Other creatures that lived during the same time, including crocodiles, turtles, fish, and plants, are also found frequently. This is a great week-long opportunity for those looking for a challenge, and up for hiking in rugged terrain. During the evenings, or if the weather is poor, you can learn to prepare fossils in the MRF paleontology laboratory in Marmarth.

-When: July 7th - 11th, 2015

-Where: Near Marmarth, Slope County, North Dakota

-Cost: Adults for one week \$1,000
Students (high school or college) for one week \$900

-Lodging in the rustic Marmarth bunkhouse, meals, and transportation to the fossil sites from Marmarth included.



-Registration:

To register, please visit the MRF website :
<http://www.mrfdigs.com/>

For more information contact:

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Marmarth Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Where do we meet?

A: After breakfast, we will meet at The Bunkhouse, where we will divide up into dig locations. Some people will go with the MRF staff, and others with the NDGS staff.

Q: Can I take pictures?

A: Please do! We would love if you would be willing to share them with us as well.

Q: How strenuous is this dig?

A: If you are with the NDGS staff for the day, you will be prospecting. This includes a lot of hiking and climbing in the North Dakota badlands, and not a lot of sitting.

Q: If I get too hot, is there any shade?

A: Sadly no – we will be very exposed. Your best option is to stay well hydrated, and wear a good hat.

Q: What should I bring?

A: Please bring more water than you think you will need – it tends to get hot, and we don't want people becoming dehydrated. Lunches will be provided by MRF. Be prepared to hike with whatever you bring, so pack accordingly. NDGS will provide any tools you might need for the day. We pack out what we pack in, so please take all garbage back with you. No littering!

Q: What types of fossils are we finding?

A: Marmarth is highly variable. We will be working in the Hell Creek Formation, 65 million years in age, so there is a chance at finding dinosaur material. Depending on where we are hiking at the time, we may also find bones from crocodiles, turtles, gar-pike, bowfin, champsosaurs, birds, salamanders, mammals, and plants.

Q: Wow! We can find a whole dinosaur?!

A: While it's possible to find a whole animal, most of what we are finding are parts and pieces. A crocodile tooth here. A gar-pike jaw there. A rib from a turtle. Finding a whole dinosaur would be a very rare, and time consuming project. A single leg bone could take you days to uncover, and an entire skeleton weeks. The MRF staff have a number of dinosaur quarries if you would like to experience what digging a dinosaur is like.

Q: Can we keep the fossils we find?

A: No – all fossils we find will return to the State Fossil Collection in Bismarck, ND. Most of the land we search on is State, Federal, or Foundation land (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Teddy Roosevelt Medora Foundation, etc.), and the NDGS curates whatever is found. Feel free to take photos of whatever you find however!

Q: Is there a restroom?

A: No – we will be removed from any modern conveniences. Our standard is to hike a distance away from others, and find a comfortable spot.

Q: Will my cell phone work?

A: Highly doubtful. We generally get very poor signal out where we are prospecting. Even if you do manage to connect, we ask that you head back to the vehicles if you want to chat, as courtesy to the other diggers.

Q: Can I smoke?

A: Yes, but just like the cell phone use, as courtesy to the other diggers, we ask that you smoke back where we park the vehicles, or far from other people. Please take your cigarette butts with you as well – we want to make sure we keep the area clean.

Q: I'm from out of town – where's a good place to stay?

A: There are few places to stay within Marmarth. If you are not staying at the Bunkhouse, there are hotels available in Bowman (Super 8, Northwind Lodge, etc.)

Q: Where can I find some grub around here?

A: There are few places in Marmarth to eat. If you are signed up for the dig, most meals are catered in as part of your fee. Other places to eat include The Pastime Bar, and Hwy Café. Nearby in Bowman is JaBBR's Family Restaurant, Dairy Queen, Windy's, The Steakhouse, and more.