

Utah Field House of Natural History State Park Museum



Utah State Parks

Utah Field House

The Utah Field House of Natural History State Park Museum sits amidst some of the most spectacular geologic and paleontologic resources on earth. This vast wealth of resources drew scientists from all over the world for research and collection. However, it did not escape the notice of former Ashley National Forest Supervisor A.G. Nord, that most of these priceless fossils were leaving the Uinta Basin for destinations elsewhere. It was through his vision of retaining these items locally that the Utah Field House of Natural History arose.

Share in one billion years of history revealed in the museum and explore the story of Utah's ancient past. Touch actual rock and fossil specimens, including a 150 million-year-old dinosaur bone.



Activities

Visitors begin their Uinta Fossil Journey in the rotunda and are greeted by Diplodocus, a dinosaur 90 feet long from tip to tail. After taking a close look at this giant, visitors proceed to the theater where their discovery of the Uinta Basin continues.

Theater

Did you ever wonder what it would be like to participate in a fossil dig? What types of tools would you use, what might the area look like, and which fossils might be found? A short film, *Stories in Stone*, answers these questions by sharing a day in the field at two dig sites. The story features volunteers and scientists who helped excavate fossils for exhibits at the Utah Field House.

Morrison Dig Site and Fossil Lab

After leaving the theater, visitors proceed into the sights and sounds of the Morrison Formation. This chapter of Earth's story has produced many dinosaurs familiar to us. Listening to sounds of an actual dig, visitors take up

excavation tools and proceed to uncover fossil bones. Several of the most recent and best dinosaur books are available in the lab study area. Younger visitors enjoy a visit to the Children's Lab, designed to both amuse and educate with a variety of toys, books and puzzles. A small theater area encourages children to make up their own Jurassic stories.



Jurassic Hall

From the dig site and lab, visitors wander back to the Morrison Formation as it looked 150 million years ago. View several fossils, some that are unique and rare, such as the plate arrangement of *Stegosaurus stenops*, or the nearly complete *Haplocanthosaurus*, a sauropod skeleton known from less than five specimens.



Eocene Gallery

Visitors move forward in time 100 million years as they travel from the Jurassic Hall into the Eocene Gallery. The gallery features rock layers found primarily south of town. These rocks formed when vast lakes dominated the landscape. Visitors will marvel at the wall of leaves, some so exquisitely preserved that all the minute veins are still visible. View the fossils of turtles, crocodiles, small primates and the massive beast Uintatherium; a six-horned saber tusked giant.

Dinosaur Garden

The dinosaur garden is home to 14 life-size prehistoric animals. Ever wonder just how big a woolly mammoth was, or if the tyrant of the Mesozoic, Tyrannosaurus rex was really so terrible? The answer is just a garden visit away.

Fluorescent Minerals Room

One of the most popular exhibits is the Rock and Mineral Room. Vibrant, glowing colors are produced when minerals within the rocks are exposed to ultraviolet light. Flip the switch again to view the rocks in their usual manner and be amazed by how ordinary they look.



Education

Educational programs are available to public and private groups. It is recommended that requests be made two weeks prior to the desired date. Contact the Curator of Education for more information or to schedule a program. Two junior scientist programs are available for purchase through our gift shop. Children ages three to 13 will enjoy learning about the museum through a series of fun, science-based activities. A junior scientist patch is awarded upon completion of each booklet.



Rocks in Time

The Rocks In Time exhibit is designed to make the science of geology more user-friendly to visitors. Different “chapters” of Earth’s story are displayed in a mural covering one entire hallway from floor to ceiling. Many rocks and fossils on display compliment understanding of this story through both touch and sight.



Museum Rentals

The museum, which includes a large rotunda, exhibit halls, classroom, theater and garden, may be rented separately or in its entirety for public or private functions. Please inquire at the visitor information desk for cost and availability.



Vernal Visitor Information Center

Conveniently located inside the museum, a free visitor center allows our guests to get all the necessary information to fulfill their adventure in the Vernal area. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff is available year-round to answer questions and help enhance your visit. Visitors can get up-to-date information about attractions, recreational opportunities, food, lodging, as well as local events.

Park Guidelines

Please observe the following park regulations to ensure everyone's visit is pleasant.

- Please leave food and drink outside.
- Pets are prohibited from the museum. Service animals are allowed.
- Children must be supervised at all times. Running or rough play within the museum can damage displays, result in injury and disrupt others' enjoyment of the museum.
- Please do not climb on or touch any of the museum or garden models.



Your park fees provide for the care, protection and enhancement of this park.

Park Location

The park is located on US Highway 40 in downtown Vernal, near the junction of US Highway 191.

Operating Hours (subject to change)

Summer: 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily

Fall: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily

Winter/Spring: 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday - Saturday

Closed Sundays October - March

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day

Address Inquiries To:

Utah Field House of Natural History State
Park Museum
496 East Main Street
Vernal, UT 84078
(435) 789-3799

utahfieldhouse@utah.gov

or

Utah State Parks and Recreation

P.O. Box 146001

Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6001

(801) 538-7220

stateparks.utah.gov

Utah State Parks Mission:

To enhance the quality of life of Utahns and visitors by preserving and providing natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.