

DINOSAUR PROVINCIAL PARK-WORLD HERITAGE SITE

...a place like nowhere else on earth!

Dinosaur Provincial Park was established by the Government of Alberta on June 27, 1955. On October 26, 1979 the Park was declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (U.N.E.S.C.O.) at a conference in Cairo, Egypt. A formal WHS dedication ceremony occurred at the park on June 15, 1980. Three significant natural features were recognized with respect to this distinction:

- The exceptional abundance and diversity of dinosaur and other vertebrate fossils.
- The largest and most spectacular area of badlands in Canada.
- Unique riparian (riverside) habitat including extensive groves of plains cottonwood trees that provide critical living space for many bird species.

Park Dimensions and Location

Park Area: 8,086 hectares (19,980 acres); 80.86 sq. km (31.22 sq. miles)

World Heritage Site Area: 8,321 hectares (20,561 acres); 83.21 sq. km (32.13 sq. miles)

Length: 27 km (17 miles) along the Red Deer River Valley in southeastern Alberta

Valley Width: 6.4 km (4 miles) at the widest point

Valley Depth: up to 100 metres (325 feet)

Location: 48 km (30 miles) northeast of BROOKS; or 235 km (147 miles) southeast of CALGARY; or 150 km (94 miles) northwest of MEDICINE HAT.

Main Access: Following big blue provincial park signs from Brooks, north on HWY. 873 (approx. 11km); turn right at HWY 544 and drive approx. 14km (outskirts of the village of Patricia); turn left (north) onto PR#130. Continue to the 4-way stop. Turn right (east) and follow the paved road (P.R.#130) all the way to the Park (approximately 15 km).

Dinosaurs and other ancient creatures

Over 49 different species of dinosaurs from the Late Cretaceous Period (75 million years ago) have been found in the Park. This is about 4-5% of the world's known dinosaur species. Many other kinds of animal fossils are also found here, including turtles, crocodiles, fish, flying reptiles, salamanders, birds and small mammals. The presence of fossilized pollen and spores from plants such as magnolia, sycamore and bald cypress trees, redwoods, and ferns indicates this was once a warm temperate landscape, making it a perfect habitat for dinosaurs.

Landscapes: Past and Present

Park geology provides evidence that this area was a lush coastal plain adjacent to the Bearpaw Sea, at the time of the dinosaurs, but the present day landscape is the result of glacial melt-water from the end of the Wisconsin Ice Age, only 15,000 years ago. Today, the Park contains three important habitats: prairie grassland, badlands and riparian (riverside), which together support a rich bio-diversity. Towering plains cottonwood trees, prickly pear cactus, and blue grama grass all contribute to the variety of plant life. Over 165 species of birds can be seen in the park, including threatened species such as the ferruginous hawk and

golden eagle. Mammals living here include cottontail rabbits, bats, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, weasels, porcupines, red fox, coyotes and bobcats.

Opportunities and Activities

The Park Visitor Centre in Dinosaur Provincial Park houses an information desk, fossil preparation lab, theatre, gift shop, exhibit gallery, washrooms and park administration offices. Nature activities and interpretive events include:

- Nature observation: bird-watching (May-June); flowering cactus (mid-June); fall colours (Sept.)
- Two outdoor interpretive displays depicting the park's palaeontological heritage
- Five self-guided interpretive trails in three different habitats and scenic public loop road (3km)
- Bus tours and hikes conducted by park interpreters into the restricted access Natural Preserve (mid-May through mid-October). Reservations recommended.
- Guest speaker presentations, school programs and educational video-conferencing
- Indoor family theatre and outdoor Amphitheatre programs

Visit our website at www.dinosaurpark.ca to plan your visit and for the tour/hike and program schedules. **Reservations for all interpretive programs are advised.** Reservations can be made online at www.dinosaurpark.ca or by calling (403) 378-4344. MasterCard, VISA and American Express payments are accepted. Please be aware that some programs are weather dependant as entry into the preserve is restricted during wet conditions. We recommend that you allow 2 days for an in-depth quality experience at Dinosaur Provincial Park.

The Park Visitor Centre is open daily from the beginning of April to the Canadian Thanksgiving long weekend in October (Monday – Friday the rest of the year). The park is open year round for camping and self-guiding opportunities.

The Dinosaur Park Concession has food services, washrooms, coin operated showers, laundromat and a convenience store in season.

Camping: 124 sites, (59 power). Camping reservations can be made on-line at www.reserve.albertaparks.ca or by calling 1-877-537-2757.

Contact us at:

Dinosaur Provincial Park
P.O. Box 60
PATRICIA, Alberta
CANADA T0J 2K0

PARK ADMINISTRATION: (403) 378-4342
FAX: (403) 378-4247
TOUR RESERVATIONS: (403) 378-4344
CAMPING RESERVATIONS: 1-877-537-2757

Above numbers are Toll-free (in Alberta) by dialling 310-0000 then enter the telephone number.

Visit our web site at: www.dinosaurpark.ca
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