

The
**FOSSIL
RECORD**

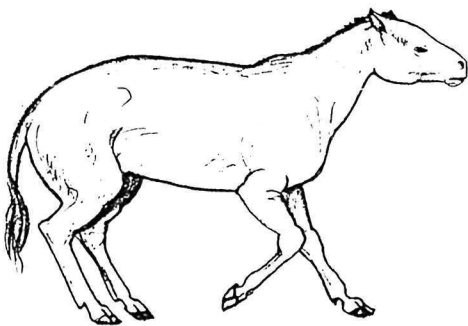
(Address Correction Requested) **WINTER, 1996**

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Newsletter
National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

Fossil Replicas Now On Sale ...

People have often asked if they could purchase fossils when visiting our monument sales area. Since the selling of fossils is prohibited in National Parks, the monument staff had replicas made of three fossil specimens, found in the John Day Fossil Beds, to be put on sale. The replicas were made by Smith Studios in Livingston, Montana, and look very realistic.

The specimens selected were a jaw fragment and teeth from a *Hypertragulus* (mouse-deer), the small skull of *Capacikala* (beaver family), and a skull and lower jaw of *Miohippus* (three-toed horse). Prices of the three, respectively, are \$10.00, \$30.00, and \$105.00. The original fossil specimens are about 29 million years old. As of December, the monument is the only source for the purchase of these replica fossils.



Miohippus

Painted Hills Festival Initiated ...

On Labor Day weekend, 1996, the city of Mitchell, Oregon, initiated a two-day Painted Hills Festival, held mostly in the city limits. It encompassed many different events including runs, music, evening outdoor dancing, quilt show, picnics, and several food and gift sale counters and displays. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument took part in the event by setting up a staffed exhibit displaying the Dayville High School fair exhibit featuring the James Cant Ranch Historic District, and some of the

monument's fossil specimens. Park Rangers Wayne Holm, Hank Tanski, and John Fiedor staffed the booth and contacted many visitors, both locals and those in travel through the region. The event was considered a success and is planned on being held again in 1997.

New Junior Park Rangers Announced ...

This year the monument initiated a challenging Junior Park Program for participants either visiting the park or willing to complete activities at their local school, nationwide. We are glad to announce the successful completion of the program by five individuals in 1996. They are:

- Victoria R. Beckley, of Richardson, Texas
- Michael J. Beckley, of Richardson, Texas
- James B. McElroy, of New York, New York
- Heather L. Donelson, of Denver, Colorado
- Jamie Harris, of Denver, Colorado

Congratulations to our new Junior Park Rangers!

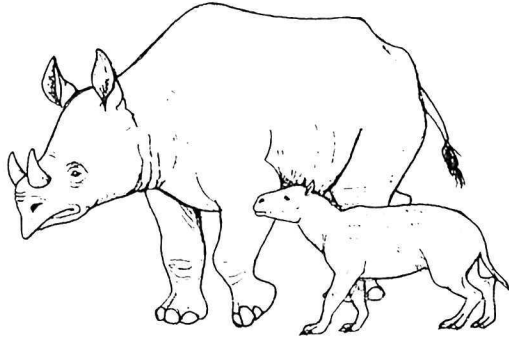
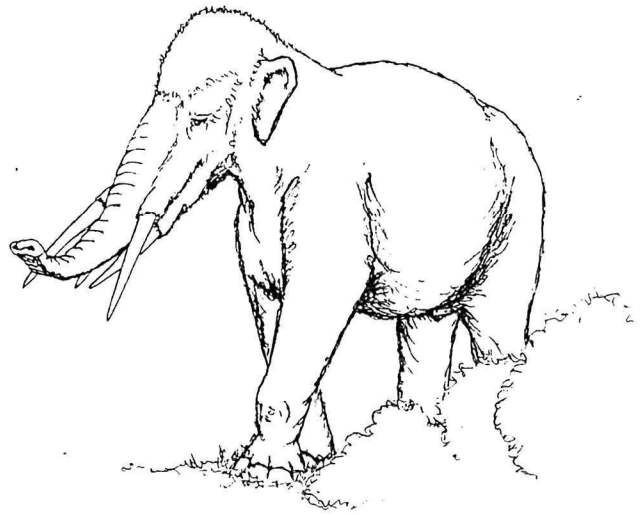
Paleontology Highlights ...

In August the monument was visited by a French bio-geochemist, M. Mariotti, from Paris. He was traveling around the Pacific Northwest and made a special trip to the monument because he had heard of the work we are doing here documenting fossil specimens. He wants to analyze some of the fossil bones to determine how much original collagen remains. From this he can determine proportions of various types of vegetation in an organism's diet. Our fossil record transition from forest browsers to savanna grazers would be an ideal test. We agreed to contact each other at a later date to discuss this project.

In September, several sites on BLM lands east of Monument near "Windy Canyon" were visited for the first time by the park paleontological staff,

Ted Fremd and Kelly Cahill, and volunteer Dwight Hoy. Representing strata poorly preserved on Sheep Rock, these localities yielded a mouse-deer, rhinoceros, a small cat-like nimravid, snails, two kinds of oreodonts, and a pelvis and robust femur from an unknown animal.

Speaking of super-volunteers, Dwight Hoy brought over another 100 or so fine micro vertebrate specimens from the new localities near the Clarno Unit. The fauna includes new animals to the John Day Formation, including what appears to be a different hedgehog and a bizarre, mole-like animal. These all are being worked into a formal publication.



Diceratherium & Oreodont

This last fall monument paleontologist Ted Fremd attended the Society for Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) meeting at the American Museum for Natural History in New York City and presented recent research findings regarding the John Day Fossil Basin. The technical meetings included a poster session for members to present new data, at which Ted presented his findings. These all-day sessions include a mandatory 3-hour opportunity for presenters to "defend" their work in a peer-review setting. Generally, more people have a chance to see the work in a poster session than would attend the talks.

Ted also attended the Government Liaison Committee meetings while in New York. He presented a summary of work between the National Park Service (NPS) and the SVP, including a progress report on a new cooperative agreement that will be signed by NPS Director Kennedy and SVP President Dave Krause. The new "fossil bill" in Congress was the main subject of discussion, and they agreed that a legislative task force would need to be formed. The research community is very interested in public stewardship of fossils these days and in making sure the public is aware of the big differences between amateur and commercial fossil collectors.

The Trust for Public Lands is contacting us regarding preserving the paleontological resources within the Clarno Unit. They are also interested in trying to conserve the fossils outside park boundaries within the Turtle Cove area, working with the BLM.

Of note, there is a growing recognition of the importance of the Mascall Formation proboscideans (elephants) we have in our fossil collection. Evidence suggest that they are the first recorded specimens in North America, in any collection anywhere. This makes the Mascall Formation increasingly significant as a fossil locality from a global perspective.

Fair Exhibit Awarded ...

In a cooperative first, the monument staff contacted nearby, Grant County, Dayville High School about the possibility of their students producing an exhibit, featuring the monument, for the Grant County and Wheeler County fairs. The school was enthused about the idea. The monument supplied the exhibit hardware and \$100 in funds for production costs. The Dayville students conducted research, produced the exhibit text labels, and the exhibit images and designs.

The final exhibit was entitled the James Cant Ranch Historic District and was exhibited at both county fairs and the Painted Hills Festival, in Mitchell, over the Labor Day weekend. The students are to be congratulated, as their exhibit won first place at the Wheeler County Fair.

For the county fairs in 1997, a local high school in Wheeler County will be contacted about undertaking a similar cooperative project.

A New Building Is Born ...

Jerry Frisinger, the monument's Chief of Maintenance, proudly announced the birth of a new, 5,000 square-foot maintenance shop last October. Jerry also stated that the gestation period for this shop was over ten years. The attractive structure is located about one-quarter mile north of the visitor center along Highway 19. The rest of the maintenance staff is also warmed by the arrival of this shop, literally, as they can now do winter carpentry and vehicular work in an indoor area with heat.

Yearly Visitor Stats In ...

For fiscal year 1996, ending September 30, the visitation figures showed a slight decrease. Total monument visitation for FY-96 was 123,002. This was down 4% from the previous year. The visitation for the visitor center was 30,072 (down 5% from the previous year).