

A CHAPERONE'S GUIDE TO FOSSILS: EVIDENCE OF THE PAST

Grades 2 & 4

Welcome Chaperone! Explore the Museum's main building — the Nature Exploration Center (NEC) — and be on the lookout for the fossils of North Carolina. This guide offers easy activities to help you engage your students in learning.

First floor, North Carolina's Natural Treasures gallery

Fossilized teeth

Find the Megalodon jaw.

Look closely at the gray fossilized teeth. Notice the size and serrated edges of the teeth.

By studying fossils and modern day ancestors of Megalodon, we can infer what life was like for this ancient animal.

Where do you think Megalodon lived and what did it eat?

Find the Mastodon tooth.

Notice the size and shape of the tooth. Teeth tell us a lot about the lifestyle of an animal.

What types of foods do you think Mastodon ate?

The diet of Mastodon provides evidence about the habitat in which this prehistoric animal lived. What types of vegetation may have been found in the habitat of Mastodon?

Third floor, Prehistoric North Carolina gallery

Types of Fossils

Find the "What is a Fossil?" exhibit near the *Tyrannosaurus rex* skull.

Discover how different types of fossils are formed.

What do trace fossils tell us? Give an example of a trace fossil.

Look for different types of fossils as you explore this gallery.

Find the "Giant Ground Sloth" exhibit.

Putting together a fossil skeleton is like putting together a puzzle. Parts of this skeleton are actual fossils and parts are casts. Look closely, can you tell the difference?

Describe the habitat in which the giant ground sloth lived and name several other animals that shared this habitat. What are some examples of the sloth's living relatives?

Third floor, Terror of the South

Acrocanthosaurus

Enter the McMillan Science Atrium and check out the scene.

What were some of the clues, or evidence, that paleontologists used to create this scene?

Which dinosaur is the predator? How can you tell?

How can you tell the difference between *Acrocanthosaurus* and *Tyrannosaurus rex*?



Megalodon tooth



Mastodon tooth



Giant ground sloth



Tyrannosaurus rex