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Digging for Dinosaurs in Queensland

Did you know Queensland is home to the most spectacular dinosaur footprints in the world, as well as the largest fossil marsupial sites? It also has the largest remains of dinosaurs in Australia, the largest dinosaur digs and the best fossil collections.

Australia's Dinosaur Trail

The Queensland Outback is home to some of the world's most amazing fossils and they are still being unearthed. One hundred million years ago this part of the world lay under inland seas filled with marine reptiles and prehistoric creatures roamed the shoreline. Australia's Dinosaur Trail links the area around the three towns of Winton, Hughenden and Richmond. Check out amazing displays and fossil collections including footprints from a stampede, dig up the past at public fossicking sites or join an organised fossil dig.
www.australiasdinosaurtrail.com

Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways, Winton

The Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways are located 110km from Winton and are the world's only recorded evidence of a dinosaur stampede. In this place, around 95 million years ago, a large herd of small two legged dinosaurs gathered on the banks of a forest lake to drink. The herd was stalked by a large theropod, the herd panicked, stampeding across the muddy flats to escape the theropod's hungry jaws. A record of those few terrifying minutes is cast in more than 3300 fossilised footprints. Conserved in an ecologically sustainably designed building in Lark Quarry Conservation Park, regular tours to the site explain what happened during the stampede and bring to life the dinosaurs whose footprints remain etched in the rock. www.dinosaurtrackways.com.au

Elliot Dinosaur Dig Site, Winton

Visit the dinosaur display in the Corfield and Fitzmaurice Building in Winton where the skeletal remains of "Elliot", Australia's largest known dinosaur, were discovered on a Winton sheep station in September, 1999. Other fossils and a dinosaur diorama recounting the stampede at Lark Quarry are also on display. www.outbackholidays.info
www.australianageofdinosaur.com/cms/index.php?page=Elliot-Digs

Kronosaurus Korner, Richmond

This centre was designed to display local fossils from the inland sea that covered a large section of Queensland 120 million years ago. Richmond is the geographical centre of what once was the Cretaceous Inland Sea and the fossils found in this area are remains of animals that lived and died in the sea. The centre contains over 200 individual exhibits including *Minmi*, a 100 million year old armoured dinosaur with impressions of its fossilized skin, and the *Richmond Pliosaur*, Australia's best vertebrate fossil ever found. Guests can watch the resident Curator at work preparing new-found fossils for display. Information and mud maps are available at the centre showing selected free designated fossicking sites for those keen to make their own discoveries which can then be brought back to the curator for identification. www.kronosauruskorner.com.au



Muttaborrasaurus, Hughenden

The towering statue of "Mutt" the *Muttaborrasaurus* welcomes visitors to this little town and there are a number of designated fossicking area close by where you can unearth the remains of shells and prehistoric creatures. Nearby Porcupine Gorge does not have fossils, but the layers of sediment and rock formations tell the stories of the different eras throughout time. www.flinders.qld.gov.au

Riversleigh Fossil Deposits and Fossil Centre, Mount Isa

The World Heritage listed Riversleigh Fossil Fields in Boodjamulla National Park in north-west Queensland are among the richest and most extensive in the world, with some fossils dating back 15 to 25 million years. The site provides exceptional examples of the first records of many groups of living mammals including marsupial moles and feather-tailed possums as well as for extinct species like the 'marsupial lion'. The area open to the public was one of the first fossil deposits found in Mount Isa, visitors to the Riversleigh Fossil Centre come face-to-face with the prehistoric inhabitants of Outback Australia. The state-of-the-art museum in the Outback at Isa complex includes video displays, dioramas and scientific displays of fossils. Take a guided tour of the laboratory and see Outback at Isa's resident palaeontologist and trained staff free fossil bones of extinct creatures from limestone and piece the puzzle of their lives back together. www.outbackatisa.com.au

Queensland Museum Dinosaur Dig

Dinosaur enthusiasts can join the Queensland Museum Geosciences with their research by applying for a position as an honorary technical assistant. Projects can include working with the collection and preparing/sorting fossils and joining palaeontologists on dinosaur digs. www.qm.qld.gov.au/features/dinosaurs/volunteer/index.asp

Energex Playasaurus Place, Queensland Museum, Brisbane

The two life-sized dinosaur statues of a T-Rex and a Triceratops in the Dinosaur Garden at the Queensland Museum have been loved by children for years and they now take pride of place in the new Playosuarus Place. Entry is free and the space is packed with interactive activities. Visitors can trace the story of energy throughout the ages from the time when dinosaurs ruled the earth. The triceratops protects a nest of dinosaur eggs and x-ray images show visitors the babies within the eggs. Learn how the famous T-Rex replica came to live at the museum and compare the size of a human foot with the footprints left by dinosaurs at the Lark Quarry stampede in a 2D representation of part of the Winton trackway. www.southbank.qm.qld.gov.au

Dig the Tropic Drive, Central Queensland

Drive from Central Queensland to the Outback and see for yourself unique fossil deposits and amazing rainforest menagerie frozen in time. Visit the ancient Capricorn Caves near Rockhampton and watch a specialist from the Queensland Museum uncover the fossil remains of bulldog-sized ringtail possums, gigantic pythons known as mastoid snakes and Australia's largest fossil frog. Take an interpretive walk through the Camoo Caves in Mt Etna Caves National Park where the limestone is a 380 million year old fossilised coral reef. Continue to head west to Winton and the Outback dinosaurs, stopping off in Boulia to visit the Stone House Museum and check out the vertebrate and invertebrate fossil display, including the remains of large fossil marine reptiles, sharks, and fish. www.digthetropic.com.au