

Fossil Hunting ID



Corals can be found in colonies or in single entities. These marine animals had sac-like body, mouth, tentacles, & skeleton. Both Colony coral and single (Horn) corals can be found in the Park. The Horn Coral being the most abundant.



Bryozoans were colonial animals with encrusting, branching or fan-like growth. The supporting structures are limy and the individual animals were housed within tiny cups. More complex than corals, Bryozoans have a nervous & muscular systems and complete digestive tracts.



Crinoids or Sea Lilies, appear plant like but are actually echinoderms. Most of the Crinoids were attached to the sea floor and used arms to filter food from the water. After Crinoids die, the entire skeleton normally falls apart into small, separate pieces. It is rare to find an entire Crinoid fossil.



Brachiopods, lived inside the protective cover of two hinged shells attached to the floor of warm, shallow seas. They are the most common fossils found in Iowa and here at the Park.



Gastropods, are another common fossil at the Park. These snails moved on a muscular foot and could withdraw inside its shell for protection. Gastropods were bottom dwellers that scavenged or grazed on the sea floor.

Collecting Tips

- No tools needed, just pick them up with your fingers.
- Bring an egg carton or plastic bucket for fossils, plastic bags rip.
- Be a responsible collector!



Pelecypods, or clams are often mistaken for Brachiopods. Clams have two equal shells.



Cephalopods, (squid-like animals) are occasionally found at the Park.