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# **TUSHAR MOUNTAINS**

# **Beaver County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/eGC5BgiwguiZLc6K7)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Beaver County marker is located at the Minersville Campground on the Minersville Reservoir.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** The mountain range is located about 30 miles northeast of the marker.

## **About Tushar Mountains**

**FAST FACTS**

* The Tushar Mountains are the third highest mountain range in Utah.
* The highest peaks in the range are Mt Belknap and Mr Baldy, both above 12,000 feet.
* The name Tushar Mountains is thought to be a modification of the Paiute word “t’shar,” meaning “white mountain.”

**SCIENCE STORY**

The Tushar Mountains are one of southern Utah’s most special places. The third highest range in the state, the towering range is where the expansive Great Basin meets the heights of the Colorado Plateau to create unique forests where plants and animals from both areas mingle.

Up high, the Tushar Mountains are covered in alpine meadows covered with wildflowers in the warmer months. Lower down, forests and woodlands host many of Utah’s endemic species - as well as what may be the largest organism on the planet.

Much of the Tushar Mountains woodlands are part of Fish Lake National Forest, home of an enormous quaking aspen nicknamed Pando. Each individual “tree” is a close joined by a shared root system. Experts estimate that Pando is steep over 100 acres and weighs more than 6,600 tons, likely thousands of years old.  
  
DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/beaver](https://nhmu.utah.edu/beaver).

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# **PROMONTORY CAVES**

# **Box Elder County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/eGC5BgiwguiZLc6K7)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Box Elder County marker is in the grass on the southeast side of the Historic Box Elder Courthouse at 1 South Main Street in Brigham City.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights **Promontory Caves**, a site on the shore of Utah's Great Salt Lake first excavated in 1930s

The cave, on the shore of [Utah](http://www.westerndigs.org/category/utah/)’s Great Salt Lake, was first excavated in the early 1930s. The caves are not open to the public, but there is ample information about what was found there.

## **About Promontory Caves**

**FAST FACTS**

* These limestone caves were carved by ancient Lake Bonneville.
* Archaeologists first excavated the caves in 1930.
* Moccasins found in Promontory Caves are among the best-preserved found in the state.

**SCIENCE STORY**

The Promontory Caves are a place where multiple stories meet.

The geological story of how the caves formed go back thousands and thousands of years to the time Lake Bonneville filled much of the Salt Lake Valley. The lake water carved into nearby limestone, creating caves. Later, as the lake’s waters continued to recede, Indigenous people inhabited the caves around 8,000 years ago. But their culture was unlike any seen in Utah before.

Archaeological excavations at the Promontory Caves in 1930 and 1931 turned up many pairs of unique moccasins. The handmade footwear didn’t represent known Native American groups known to inhabit Utah at the time. Instead, the moccasin construction most closely resembled those of a people called the Dene from the colder regions of what’s now Canada. What these moccasins can tell us about who lived in ancient Utah and how they related to other people has made the Promontory Caves collection an extensively-researched part of the Natural History Museum of Utah.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/BoxElder](https://nhmu.utah.edu/boxelder).

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# **JARDINE JUNIPER**

# **Cache County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/zMJhyEdWUqmpq7DY6)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Cache County marker is located at the start of the **Jardine Juniper** trail. The 11-mile round-trip trail is an out-and-back until it intersects with the loop section around the tree.

## **About Jardine Juniper**

**FAST FACTS**

* The Jardine Juniper is nearly 1,500 years old.
* This ancient tree is 40 feet tal[https://app.cuseum.com/art\_obj...](https://app.cuseum.com/art_objects/jardine-juniper-cache-county/sortable_edit#app_settings)l and 23.6 feet in diameter.
* When this tree was a seedling, pigs had just been domesticated and the Sahara desert was a wet oasis.

**SCIENCE STORY**

In 1923, botany student Maurice Blood Linford was hiking through Logan Canyon when he noticed a very remarkable tree. Standing 40 feet tall and more than 20 feet around, the juniper was one of the largest anyone had ever seen. But the tree’s size is only part of its story. This tree, the jardine juniper, is almost 1,500 years old.

Juniper trees usually don’t live so long. Most only get to be 250-300 years old, at most. That makes the Jardine juniper about five times older than average. Back when it was a seeding, the Byzantine Empire was at its height, people had just domesticated pigs, and the area that is the Sahara Desert today was a wet, lush place. This tree has withstood it all.

Why is the Jardine juniper so old? The answer probably isn’t that this tree lived an unnaturally long time so much as the tree has somehow avoided the fires, blights, and other calamities that often kill trees. The fact that the Jardine juniper is rooted on a limestone ridge might have helped it avoid fire, for example, and junipers are generally less susceptible to rot than other trees. The Jardine juniper is a real survivor.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/jardine](https://nhmu.utah.edu/jardine).

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# **NINE MILE CANYON**

# **Carbon County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/4pQas2tXzP7auUxf9)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Carbon County marker is at the **Nine Mile Canyon** trailhead near Nine Mile Ranch.

## **About Nine Mile Canyon**

**FAST FACTS**

* Despite its name, Nine Mile Canyon is 45 miles long.
* Nine Mile Canyon contains the largest concentration of rock art in North America.
* Fossils like lizard skin impressions have been found in the rocks here

**SCIENCE STORY**

If you’re fascinated by rock art, you’ve come to the right place. Situated on the ancestral lands of the Ute people, Nine Mile Canyon is a 45 mile-long stretch with hundreds of rock art panels, granaries, houses, defense towers, and other archaeological sites created by Indigenous people over 1,000 years ago.

The archaeological imprints in the canyon document changing cultures through time. Between 1,600 and 800 years ago, people belonging to the Fremont culture lived here and built many of the structures that are still visible today. After they left, the area became important to the Ute and they added their own artistic and cultural signs on the canyon.

Despite being world famous, archaeologists are still puzzled by Nine Mile Canyon. Why is there so much rock art here, even compared to other places rich in petroglyphs and pictographs? What was the purpose of the defensive towers and other structures hidden in this canyon?

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/carbon](https://nhmu.utah.edu/carbon).

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# **RED CANYON OVERLOOK**

# **Daggett County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/xDxtp299Kfjtyz9Q7)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Daggett County marker is at the **Red Canyon** Visitor Center in Dutch John, and offers a wonderful view of the Canyon.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** The canyon is right in front of you!

## **About Red Canyon Overlook**

**FAST FACTS**

* The rocks of Red Canyon Overlook record over 600 million years of Earth history.
* Each rock layer represents a different environment, from rivers to sand dunes.
* The strata record most of the Age of Dinosaurs, from 205 to 80 million years ago.

**SCIENCE STORY**

There’s hardly a more beautiful spot in Utah than Red Canyon Overlook. In this one spot you can see hundreds of millions of years of Earth history laid out in front of you, the drama of life on Earth locked in stone.

The different rock layers visible from the overlook weren’t formed in one kind of environment, but many. Some of the oldest were formed from sediment laid down by rivers and deltas about 760 million years ago. But the rocks from the Age of Dinosaurs were deposited in different ways, such as sifting desert sand dunes, shallow seas, and lakes.

Even though rocks from these times are found in other places, part of what makes Red Canyon Overlook unique is that there is an almost continuous sequence of rocks between 205 and 80 million years ago. This allows paleontologists to better understand climate and Earth change through time as continents moved and temperatures shifted.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/daggett](https://nhmu.utah.edu/daggett).

# **ANTELOPE ISLAND STATE PARK**

# **Davis County**

# [View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/RQcpj8hgEwriTr8z8)

# **FIND THE MARKER** The Davis County marker is in the landscaped rock in front of the painted bison in the parking area on the south side of the Antelope Island Causeway toll booth, on the way to Antelope Island.

# 

## **About Antelope Island State Park**

# **FAST FACTS**

# At 42 miles long, Antelope Island is the largest island in the Great Salt Lake.

# The Great Salt Lake surrounding the island is 12 times saltier than seawater.

# The shores of Antelope Island are a crucial stopover point for migratory birds.

# **SCIENCE STORY**

# Antelope Island might seem a funny name for the Great Salt Lake’s largest island. The pronghorn that live here are more closely related to giraffes than antelope, despite their common name in the west. But that’s only part of the story. Antelope Island is not only important to Utah’s native wildlife like mule deer, bobcats, and brine flies, but to the world.

# The extremely-salty waters around Antelope Island are filled with brine shrimp. Brine flies, that can tolerate life on the salty sand flats, thrive at the water’s edge. All this invertebrate food is a very important resource for gulls, ibis, avocets, and other migratory birds that stop here as they hop from spot to spot through the year.

# You’ll see plenty of wildlife on land, too, although not all of it is exactly native to the island. Bison were introduced to Antelope Island in the 1890s, and bighorn sheep were brought here a century later. (Elk were brought to this spit of land, too, but they simply walked through the shallow salt lake to other places.) The freshwater springs that bubble up from beneath the island help keep these big mammals hydrated, making a place that would otherwise be nearly-uninhabitable into a suitable home of grasslands and rocky crags.

# **DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit[**nhmu.utah.edu/davis**](https://nhmu.utah.edu/davis)**.**

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# **STARVATION STATE PARK**

# **Duchesne County**

# [View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/My4AMW2dRLB1WLUMA)

# **FIND THE MARKER** The Duchesne County marker is near Dinosaur Diamond Kiosk on Main Street in Duchesne.

# **WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights the Starvation State Park (Fred Hayes State Park), only 10 minutes northeast from the marker.

# 

## **About Starvation State Park**

# **FAST FACTS**

# Once called Starvation State Park, this area is now known as Fred Hayes State Park

# Starvation Reservoir was created in 1970 by the Starvation Dam on Strawberry River

# The reservoir gets its name from cattle ranchers who were challenged by the harsh weather conditions during winter

# **SCIENCE STORY**

# Utah is a state of stark natural beauty. But those glorious landscapes can also be harsh. That’s what inspired early 20th century cattle ranchers to call this spot in Duchesne County “Starvation” – a place where harsh winters with early frosts, hailstorms, and other natural events made life difficult for those trying to make a life on the sagebrush-covered tableland.

# The scene is very different today. In 1970 the Bureau of Reclamation created the Starvation Dam on the Strawberry River. The project created the Starvation Reservoir, now a popular spot for anglers and boaters in the warmer months. Walleye is a favorite fish in the reservoir.

# **DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit[**nhmu.utah.edu/duchesne**](https://nhmu.utah.edu/duchesne)**.**

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# **CLEVELAND-LLOYD DINOSAUR QUARRY**

# **Emery County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/LWsRCbFmreoXSgJeA)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Emery County marker is located outside of the Museum of the San Rafael at 70 N 100 E in Castle Dale.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights the **Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry**, which is about 30 miles northeast of the Museum.

## **About Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry**

**FAST FACTS**

* Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry contains the largest accumulation of Late Jurassic dinosaur fossils in the world
* The remains of over 48 *Allosaurus* have been found in this one place
* Why so many *Allosaurus* perished and were buried in such a small area remains a mystery

**SCIENCE STORY**

Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry is one of the densest collections of dinosaur bones in the world. Thousands of skeletal elements have been recovered at this site, with thousands more still in the Jurassic rock. Strangely, most are from *Allosaurus* – a Jurassic carnivore that could grow over 30 feet long and is the most common predator found in the Morrison Formation.

Paleontologists have recently come to understand how the logjam of dinosaur bones formed. Dinosaurs that died in the area were swept up by local floodwaters during the ancient wet season, their bones and bodies washed down river channels. At what would become Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, those waters jumped the banks and deposited dead dinosaurs and bones into a mucky pond. This happened over and over again, resulting in a huge mass of fossil bone.

While *Allosaurus* is the most common dinosaur found at Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, it’s not the only one. The long-necked Barosaurus, the spike-tailed *Stegosaurus*, and more have been uncovered here. In fact, Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry has been the site of new dinosaur discoveries – the small- and medium-sized predators *Stokesosaurus* and *Marshosaurus* were first found here.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/emery](https://nhmu.utah.edu/emery).

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# **COOMBS VILLAGE**

# **Garfield County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/SAguKckPBtGxe1Cf9)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Garfield County marker is at the Anasazi State Park Museum, and it highlights **Coombs Village**, which is a site within the Museum.

## **About Coombs Village**

**FAST FACTS**

* Coombs Village is one of the largest Kayenta Anasazi settlement west of the Colorado River
* The archaeological sites here are famous for their ancient pottery
* Indigenous people lived here about a thousand years ago for a span of almost two centuries

**SCIENCE STORY**

What happened at Coombs Village? Archaeologists have been puzzling over that question since the 1950s, wondering what stories are held in the pottery and burned structures of this special place.

So far as experts have pieced together, the Coombs Village was a Kayenta Anasazi Village that appears to have been an important center of trade between 1075AD and its abandonment in AD1235. Pottery created almost a thousand years ago indicate that ceramics from other cultures were often exchanged here.

Whatever happened to the people here, however, seemed to have transpired quickly. This settlement was burned as it was abandoned, yet archaeologists haven’t found any signs of violence. The settlement may have been burned as “a termination event” to bring Coombs Village to a close. The people here moved on, taking their history with them.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/garfield](https://nhmu.utah.edu/garfield).

# **UTAHRAPTOR**

# **Grand County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/15U4CbtH8gKBoTa16)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Grand County marker is in front of the Museum of Moab at 118 E Center Street in Moab.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights ***Utahraptor ostrommaysorum***, which was found in both the Dalton Wells Quarry and Gaston Quarry, near Moab. When you're visiting the marker, you can see a cast of a leg of a *Utahraptor* at the museum!

## **About *Utahraptor***

**FAST FACTS**

* *Utahraptor* is the largest raptor dinosaur ever found.
* The killing claw of *Utahraptor* was over nine inches long.
* Paleontologists have excavated a 9-ton block containing multiple specimens of *Utahraptor* from youngsters to adults.

**SCIENCE STORY**

When *Jurassic Park* hit theaters in 1993, some dino fans in the audience had a critique of the movie’s raptors - the pack-hunting dinosaurs were too big. No one had ever found a *Velociraptor*, or similar dinosaur, as big as a person. But just as the film was roaring through theaters, paleontologists working in the desert near Moab announced that raptors really could get that big, after all. They had discovered Utahraptor, the largest raptor of all time.

*Utahraptor* lived about 125 million years ago during the Early Cretaceous. This was a time millions of years after the Allosaurus of Cleveland-Lloyd were stomping around and tens of millions of years before the likes of *Tyrannosaurus*. In fact, paleontologists hypothesize, the lack of huge, big-headed predators during this time in ancient Utah is what allowed *Utahraptor* to evolve and thrive as the apex predator of its ecosystem.

The largest *Utahraptor* could grow to be more than 20 feet long and weigh more than half a ton. Their skulls were deep, with some of their teeth angled forward to deliver deadly bites that snagged prey on those sharp points. Recent finds of *Utahraptor* youngsters, however, have shown that these dinosaurs started life with a more slender build. As researchers continue to excavate a 9-ton block chock full of *Utahraptor* bones, we’ll be sure to learn more.

**DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/grand](https://nhmu.utah.edu/grand).

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# **PAROWAN GAP**

# **Iron County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/9Jkqwv6eL4711dPU6)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Iron County marker is located at the **Parowan Gap** visitor's circle, next to the fee tube and register box.

## **About Parowan Gap**

**FAST FACTS**

* This three-mile gap in stone is an intersection of geology, paleontology, and anthropology.
* The Jurassic stone of Parowan Gap preserves the tracks of three-toed dinosaurs.
* Pictographs made by Utah's Indigenous peoples dot the walls of the geologic wonder.

**SCIENCE STORY**

There are few places in Utah quite like Parowan Gap. This three-mile cut through Jurassic stone is a place where geologists come to study Earth’s past, paleontologists search for signs of dinosaurs, and archaeologists can track the history of Indigenous people and cultures.

The actual gap was created by erosion. The 200 million-year-old Navajo Sandstone eroded away into the geologic channel, exposing the footprints of dinosaurs that wandered along ancient sand dunes. But some of the most striking aspects of the channel were made by people.

The walls of Parowan Gap are dotted with 90 panels of pictographs made by Indigenous people, totaling over 1,500 different figures. These were not made by a single culture, but by different groups who have passed through the gap over time. The rocky walls are a kind of billboard that displays the art and culture of many different people and cultures through time.

Precisely who created some of the pictographs is not always clear. The art was created by different cultures over thousands of years as they passed through or settled for a time. But at least some of them belong to the Southern Paiute who still call Utah home. From the rock, to the fossils, to the pictographs, Parowan Gap is a place to get in touch with time.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/iron](https://nhmu.utah.edu/iron).

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# **FISH SPRINGS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

# **Juab County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/yKZMU25F3wZoyHKj9)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Juab County marker is in front of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum at 4 S Main Street in Nephi.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights **Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge** roughly three hours west in Dugway.

## **About Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge**

**FAST FACTS**

* Fish Springs was founded 1959 to provide habitat for migratory birds.
* Over 275 bird species have been seen in this wildlife refuge.
* In 1860, the Fish Springs area was home to a relay station for the Pony Express.

**SCIENCE STORY**

You can’t see it with your eyes, but Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge hosts one of the most important thoroughfares on the continent. It’s not made as asphalt, but of air - the Pacficic Flyway that countless birds travel along each year as they migrate up and down the latitudes.

Soon after its founding in 1959, this national wildlife refuge was focused on providing migratory birds a place to stop, feed, and even nest. The wetlands of northern Utah provide a smorgasbord for traveling birds, and so the wildlife refuge was created to maintain a space for traveling birds during their stopovers. Over time, the refuge expanded its mission to protect marshland birds and other species that call this place home.

The wildlife refuge isn’t easy to get to. It is one of the most remote wildlife refuges in the country. But that’s part of what makes it so important. This place is critical habitat for both local and migratory birds, as well as home to many species of mammals. By protecting this place, conservationists have preserved a connection between Utah and the rest of the world - a much-needed resting point for birds that may travel as far as Argentina on their hemisphere-spanning journeys.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/juab](https://nhmu.utah.edu/juab).

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# **GLEN CANYON NATIONAL RECREATION AREA**

# **Kane County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/6tQjC8WUQQpNuetSA)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Kane County marker is outside of the Kanab Convention Center at 20 N 100 E in Kanab.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights **Glen Canyon**, about an hour east through the Utah red rock.

## **About Glen Canyon National Recreation Area**

**FAST FACTS**

* Glen Canyon National Recreation Area covers over a million acres.
* The waterways and rock formations of this place were made famous in the book *Desert Solitaire* by Edward Abbey.
* The construction of the Glen Canyon Dam created Lake Powell.
* Utah is full to the brim with natural wonders, but few places are as starkly beautiful as Glen Canyon National Recreation area. Covering 1,254,429 acres in southern Utah, this red rock refuge features everything from dinosaur tracks to whitewater rapids in the heart of the desert.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Explorer John Wesley Powell, one of the first people of European descent to see this place, described Glen Canyon as a “land of beauty and glory.” The arches, bridges, canyons, and other geological features of this area left a lasting impression on Powell and his crew.

Today, Glen Canyon looks a bit different. The construction of the Glen Canyon Dam in 1966 flooded much of the area, setting the stage for the Glen Canyon National Recreation area to be established in 1972. Campers and boaters alike are drawn to this place, where massive exposures of Early Jurassic rocks create an otherworldly landscape. Those exposures have drawn paleontologists, as well, who search the slopes and shores around Lake Powell for Jurassic age dinosaur tracks and other trace fossils.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/kane](https://nhmu.utah.edu/kane).

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# **TRILOBITES**

# **Millard County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/SZsaoLMLHdcBzpq67)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Millard County marker is just outside of the entrance to the R.J. Law Community Center at 75 W Main St in Delta.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights **trilobites**, which are very frequently found around the Wheeler Amphitheater in the House Range, a little under an hour due west of Delta.

## **About Trilobytes**

**FAST FACTS**

* The House Range preserves an exception record of the Cambrian Period, 541-485 million years ago.
* The trilobite Elrathia kingi is the most common species found in this area.
* Fossil hunters have been finding trilobites here since the 1950s.

**SCIENCE STORY**

There’s more to Utah’s fossil wonders than dinosaurs. The House Range, in the western part of the state, is home to exceptional outcrops of the Cambrian Period - a time of early animal life spanning 541-485 million years ago. Innumerable Cambrian fossils have been found here, many of which preserve delicate soft tissues that are rarely found.

The earliest reports of fossils from the House Range were made in the 1850s. Since that time, however, professional paleontologists and amateur collections alike have returned over and over again to explore one of the richest Cambrian sections on the entire planet. Here, paleontologists have found early relatives of worms, arthropods, mollusks, sponges, and even some of our own distant relatives that lived during a time when animal life was entirely restricted to the seas.

Part of what makes the House Range so special is that the fossils there are divided into three separate rock units, called the Wheeler, Marjum, and Weeks Formations. Each represents a slightly different time, allowing paleontologists to track how life changed through the ages. Through it all, though, the most common trilobite species found here is called *Elrathia kingi*. Millions of these trilobites have been found and this species is the epitome of what trilobites were like when animals were going through their evolutionary Big Bang.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/millard](https://nhmu.utah.edu/millard).

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# **DEVIL'S SLIDE**

# **Morgan County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/eHhhHLxcKSPnHbg77)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Morgan County marker is by the east end of the sidewalk across the river from the base of **Devil's Slide.** You can't miss it!

## **About Devil's Slide**

**FAST FACTS**

* Erosion created this geological curiosity’s unique shape.
* The rocks making up the Devil’s Slide are about 170 million years old.
* The buildup of mountains about 70 million years ago pushed upthe rocks layers that make the Devil’s Slide.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Utah’s rocks make all sorts of wonderful shapes, from the hoodoos of Bryce Canyon to the magnificent arches around Moab. But one of the most distinctive Utah landmarks is Morgan County’s Devil’s Slide.

The story of the slide goes back to the Jurassic. The limestone that makes up this geological feature was laid down over 160 million years ago. Those layers were buried under additional rock layers through time. But then, about 70 million years ago, the shifting of Earth’s tectonic plates caused western mountains to be pushed up from the bedrock. This event is what exposed the rocks that make up the Devil’s Slide, bringing them to the surface and tilting them at an angle.

But that was hardly all. Once exposed, erosion abraded the rocks around the Devil’s Slide. Some rocks are harder and more resistant to erosion than others, like the limestone making up the slide. As the rock around it was winnowed away, the slide became more prominent as the softer rock around it eroded. Millions upon millions of years were needed to make the Devil’s Slide what it is today.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/morgan](https://nhmu.utah.edu/morgan)

# **MARYVALE VOLCANIC FIELD**

# **Piute County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/fT4izthsGiUVk38z5)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Piute County marker is in the ground between the flag pole and the old post office marker at the Piute County Building in Junction, Utah.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights the **Marysvale Volcanic Field**, one of the largest volcanic fields in the western United States, which a little over an hour north west of the marker itself at and around N 38°30' 2.77'' and W112° 29' 59.999''.

## **About Marysvale Volcanic Field**

**FAST FACTS**

* The ancient landslides here covered 3,000 square miles.
* The megalandslides in this area occurred 25-20 million years ago.
* This area includes an unusual form of melted rock called pseudotachylyte.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Imagine a landslide roughly the size of Yellowstone National Park. That might seem incredibly strange, even impossible, but such an event really happened. Piute County’s Marysvale Volcanic Fields record a devastating geologic event that covered about 3,000 square miles.

This local catastrophe occurred between 25 and 20 million years ago. A series of volcanoes oozed thick layers of lava and ash across southwestern and south-central Utah. This was the perfect setup for a megalandslide. The rock spewed out by the volcanoes was relatively easy to break, not to mention heavy, and so the accumulated weight eventually gave way into incredible landslides. It was so momentous that the friction of all this moving rock created a rare form of molten rock called pseudotachylyte.

These megalandslides are very rare and very hard to find. Their sheer size makes it complicated to understand the scale of these events. So much rock was moved during these landslides, in fact, that geologists estimate that the rock could have filled the Grand Canyon to the rim. Thank goodness these events don’t happen often!

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.utah/piute](http://nhmu.utah.edu/piute).

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# **WOODRUFF BISON JUMP**

# **Rich County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/MkmJRPfewBCLujLt6)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Rich County marker is just next to the Woodruff sign, east of the Woodruff Town Park.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights the **Woodruff Bison Jump**, a cliff site and ravine near the Utah-Wyoming border that tells the story of a native hunting practice circa A.D. 500 to 750.

## **About Woodruff Bison Jump**

**FAST FACTS**

* This site is the only known bison jump in Utah.
* The remains of over 300 bison have been found here.
* Woodruff Bison Jump dates back to about 1,335 years ago.

**SCIENCE STORY**

In northeastern Utah, just south of the town of Woodruff, is one of the state’s most spectacular archaeological sites. Known as Woodruff Bison Jump, the ravine below a 75-foot-tall cliff is positively littered with bison bones. Initial excavations in the 1960s by NHMU archaeologists uncovered the bones of at least 85 bison that had fallen and been butchered at this place, and the total estimate of animals buried here is between 300 and 400 animals.

What happened here? The story matches other such sites found through western North America. Sometime around 1,335 years ago, Native Americans herded bison towards a steep cliff. Eventually the bison ran over the edge. At the bottom, people then came in to butcher the bison and take back essential parts of these animals back to their communities.

To date, no one knows how many bison jump events there were at this one site. The hill of bones could have been created by one massive jump or several smaller ones over time. But the cut marks and damage on the bone speak to how important these animals were to Native American communities.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/rich](https://nhmu.utah.edu/rich).

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# **BASKIN MUSK OX**

# **Salt Lake County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/jtxfW1gL8q1CPxJs7)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Salt Lake County marker is located in a large triangle of grass just west of the main entrance to the Natural History Museum of Utah (NHMU).

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?**

The **Baskin Musk Ox** in the Museum's collections is notable because it was the first example of Ice Age fauna from Utah, and because of where it was discovered. The site it was found at is in downtown Salt Lake City, close to the intersection of North Temple and State Street, under five miles to the west of NHMU.

**About Baskin’s Musk Ox**

**FAST FACTS**

* Over 10,000 years ago, musk ox roamed the area that would become Salt Lake City.
* A “petrified buffalo head” was found in 1871 while workers were digging a cellar for Salt Lake City’s mayor Robert N. Baskin.
* The skull belongs to an extinct mammal called Bootherium bombifrons, or Baskin’s musk ox.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Salt Lake City might seem like a strange place to find fossils, but that’s just what happened in 1871 when workers were digging a cellar for Salt Lake City’s mayor Robert N. Baskin. They uncovered a skull, initially assumed to be an ancient bison skull. But this was something much more special.

Paleontologists later realized that the skull belonged to an extinct mammal called Bootherium bombifrons. This herbivore is related to today’s musk ox, a large, shaggy mammal that lives in cold places and belongs to the same family as bison and cows.

There are no musk ox in Salt Lake City today. Bootherium lived here over 10,000 years ago, when the giant Lake Bonneville filled much of the valley and mammoths still lived in the grasslands around the lake. In fact, Baskin’s musk ox skull was the first Ice Age fossil found in Utah and today is curated in the Natural History Museum of Utah across town from where it was discovered. On display in the Past Worlds gallery, the skull is a reminder of just how much Utah has changed through the depths of time.

**DIG DEEPER** For even more information, visit: [nhmu.utah.edu/saltlake](https://nhmu.utah.edu/saltlake).

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# **COMB RIDGE**

# **San Juan County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/RYDzvByFXM8HVWLd9)

**FIND THE MARKER** The San Juan County marker is on the southeast side of the Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum in Blanding, Utah.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights **Comb Ridge**, a 120-mile-long north to south-trending ridge from where *Seitaad ruessi*, the plant-eating 'sand monster' of Utah's Navajo Sandstone was discovered.

## **About Comb Ridge**

**FAST FACTS**

* The Early Jurassic dinosaur Seitaad ruessi was found at Comb Ridge.
* Comb Ridge combines geological, paleontological, and archaeological wonders.
* The one and only Seitaad skeleton is about 180 million years ago.

**SCIENCE STORY**

While traveling between the towns of Blanding and Bluff in southeastern Utah, you might notice a long, towering wave of rock along your journey. That’s Comb Ridge, a place with great expanses of exposed rock, archaeological wonders, and some spectacular fossils. In fact, Comb Ridge is where NHMU researchers excavated a very rare Early Jurassic dinosaur named *Seitaad ruessi*.

From what we know of the dinosaur’s bones, Seitaad was a sauropodomorph. These are the early relatives of some of the later Jurassic giants like Apatosaurus and Brachiosaurus, with many sauropodomorphs walking on two legs rather than four. So far as paleontologists have been able to reconstruct, Seitaad lived in ancient, sandy deserts that had both dry and wet seasons. This was a dry place in the Early Jurassic, but there were enough ponds and other watering holes to allow dinosaurs to survive.

To date, only one Seitaad skeleton has been found. Finding another might be difficult. Seitaad was found in the Navajo Sandstone, a rock unit that is rich in tracks but rarely gives up bones. As paleontologists go back to Comb Ridge, though, they might luck out and find more ancient desert dwellers.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/sanjuan](https://nhmu.utah.edu/sanjuan).

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# **MAPLE CANYON CRETACEOUS CONGLOMERATE**

# **Sanpete County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/PSFgUb3STGENF7r18)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Sanpete County marker is just outside the entrance to the Ephraim Co-Op Mercantile Association at 96 N Main Street in Ephraim.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights **Maple Canyon,** about 20 miles northwest of Ephraim, which is a unique formation of conglomerate rock very popular with rock climbers all over the world.

## **About Maple Canyon Cretaceous Conglomerate**

**FAST FACTS**

* Maple Canyon gets its name from the unusual abundance of maples here.
* Maple Canyon is one of Utah’s most popular climbing areas.
* The geology of Maple Canyon was created during ancient mountain building.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Maple Canyon is strikingly different from many of Utah’s other famed canyons. Instead of smooth-sided red rock, the canyons in this part of Sanpete County are full of rounded cobblestones. The rock is almost like a form of natural cement, called conglomerate, laid down around 75 million years ago.

Back then, during the Late Cretaceous, Utah’s mountains were forming. During an event called the Sevier Orogeny, our Sevier Mountains were pushed up. Erosion broke down some of those exposed rocks, and mountain streams sent that broken-up sediments downhill to spread out to the east. The process moved a great deal of sediment, creating rock layers as much as 15,000 feet deep.

Through pressure and time, the eroded sediment layers became rock. Those rock layers were then lifted back up, themselves eroding to create Maple Canyon. This is what created the conglomerate full of large cobbles that is so attractive to climbers today, the leftovers of ancient mountains creating a climber’s paradise.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/sanpete](https://nhmu.utah.edu/sanpete).

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# **CLEAR CREEK CANYON**

# **Sevier County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/DZeMNRjHQ7FME76J7)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Sevier County marker is just to the left of the fee box and entrance sign to Fremont Indian State Park, which offers wonderful views of **Clear Creek Canyon.**

## **About Clear Creek Canyon**

**FAST FACTS**

* This beautiful canyon gets its name from the creek running through it.
* Archaeologists and members of the Paiute tribe worked together to excavate and understand this site.
* The area’s Five Finger Ridge hosted one of the largest Fremont villages ever found.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Clear Creek Canyon has been home to people for thousands of years. The first to see it were the people of what archaeologists call the Archaic culture, around 4,000 years ago. People of the Fremont culture left behind signs of their presence around 800 years ago, and the area continues to be important to Utah’s Southern Paiute and Ute peoples.

Researchers worked in Clear Creek Canyon have found a variety of structures from the cultures who lived here. Pithouses, adobe-walled granaries, storage cists, and even evidence of corn farming have all been found here. Naturally, the canyon walls are also dotted with art also created by these people.

This isn’t to say that everything about Clear Creek Canyon is known. Archaeologists have found shell beads, colored stones not from the area, turquoise ornaments, and more that indicate that the Fremont people were part of a vibrant trade network. Some of the ceramics found in Clear Creek Canyon were made far away near what is Parawan today, and experts are still studying what other connections there might be between this site and other parts of the west.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/sevier](https://nhmu.utah.edu/sevier).

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# **ICE AGE FOSSILS**

# **Summit County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/ubVbGuuG7GMoQWySA)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Summit County marker is in the front lawn on the northside of the Kimball Junction Branch of the Summit County Library. The address is 1885 West Ute Blvd, Park City, UT 84098.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights the **Ice Age fossils** found at the Silver Creek site, about 5 miles east, which yielded one of the largest and most diverse assemblages of Pleistocene (Ice Age) megafauna in Utah, as well as remains of numerous other smaller-bodied vertebrates.

## **About Ice Age Fossils**

**FAST FACTS**

* Ice Age fossils found in Summit County date back to between 100,000 and 40,000 years ago.
* The animals found here are a mix of living species, like pronghorn, and ancient ones like giant ground sloths.
* The site was originally found when a local landowner was digging a ditch on his property.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Utah was once an Ice Age wonderland. Saber-toothed cats, mammoths, mastodons, giant ground sloths, wild horses, camels, and more once lived here, and we know a great deal about them thanks to fossils found in Summit County.

The fossils were uncovered by accident. In 1963, landowner Allan J. Lewis was digging a ditch to lower the water table on his property when he found a mammoth tooth. This came to the attention of NHMU scientists, who visited the site and found further evidence of as many as 25 species. Some of these animals, like pronghorn and coyotes, still live in Utah today, but the dire wolves, long-horned bison, and other Ice Age species haven’t been seen in the state for thousands of years.

Based upon the species found at the Silver Creek site, as well as some geological sleuthing, paleontologists see this area as an ancient marsh along the edge of a grassland. If you were to visit this spot more than 40,000 years ago, you’d find marsh dwellers like mallards and leopard frogs as well as the great mammoths and horses. When you visit now, try to imagine the animals who were here practically yesterday from the perspective of Deep Time.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/summit](http://nhmu.utah.edu/summit).

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# **DANGER CAVE**

# **Tooele County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/qdu1J1nLFfxNHmK87)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Tooele county marker is in the landscaped gravel on the Southeast side of the Wendover Airport Operations Building, right next to the Avfuel sign.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights **Danger Cave**, which isn't open for public visitation.

## **About Danger Cave**

**FAST FACTS**

* Danger Cave is home to one of North America’s oldest archaeological sites.
* The oldest layers of the cave date back to about 12,000 years ago.
* Stone tools, ceramics, hearths, and more tell experts about what life was like here long ago.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Utah is positively full of remarkable archaeological sites, but Danger Cave is very special. Archaeologists have studied this site since the 1940s, uncovering clues about Utah’s earliest people going back 12,000 years. Stone tools, baskets, ceramics, animal bones, plants, fire hearths, and seed processing materials all say something about the cultures who lived here.

Some of the most significant finds from Danger Cave help show what sorts of foods and resources people used. Ground stone tools, baskets, and plants found within the cave layers indicate that the people who lived here started making the most of small seeds found in the area around 9,700 years ago.

What led the people here to start including more plants in their diets and culture? Changes in climate and the disappearance of big game like Utah’s camels and horses might have had something to do with it. Many of Utah’s megafauna species went extinct during the time Danger Cave was occupied, and so the people there may have included more processed seeds and plants into their diets in order to survive. This is part of what makes Danger Cave so remarkable, records from a time of great change.

**DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/tooele](https://nhmu.utah.edu/tooele).

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# **DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT**

# **Uintah County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/fRrT8zEZmACpDbXJA)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Uintah County marker is on the lawn next to the dinosaurs at 200 East Main Street in Vernal.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** It highlights **Dinosaur National Monument**, about 20 minutes east in Jensen.

## **About National Monument**

**FAST FACTS**

* The Carnegie Quarry at Dinosaur National Monument is one of the most spectacular Late Jurassic bonebeds in the world.
* The Split Mountain Anticline is what exposed so many beautiful rock layers here.
* The recently-named Allosaurus jimmadseni was found at Dinosaur National Monument

**SCIENCE STORY**

When Earl Douglass was looking for fossils in eastern Utah over a century ago, he was hoping to find some fossil mammals. But then a new directive came from the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh - find an impressive dinosaur. Douglass not only did that, but he found a gigantic Jurassic bonebed brimming with Apatosaurus, Stegosaurus, and other Jurassic favorites.

The famous Carnegie Quarry preserves part of a Jurassic river channel from about 148 million years ago. Dinosaurs would perish on the Late Jurassic landscape during the dry season, with the wet season washing their bodies and bones together into this great fossil logjam. Even though many of the fossils Douglass found were sent to the Carnegie, he successfully petitioned to have some left in place as part of what’s now the national monument.

But there is more to Dinosaur National Monument than the famous quarry. Many rock layers are exposed here, one after another, documenting deserts, oceans, floodplains, and other environments that are preserved here. Fossil discoveries have been made in many of these rock layers, as well, form new dinosaur species to nearly-complete marine reptiles.

**DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/uintah](https://nhmu.utah.edu/Uintah).

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# **TIMPANOGOS CAVE**

# **Utah County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/1xrraw3HSC2uzJFTA)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Utah County marker is in the landscaped gravel near the entrance to the **Timpanogos Cave** Visitor Center.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** If you're ready to spend some time in the canyon or hike to cave trail, make sure to plan your visit in advance and [see operating hours and tour schedules](https://www.nps.gov/tica/planyourvisit/hours.htm). Also, the visitor center is [accessible](https://www.nps.gov/tica/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm) and offers video programs and exhibits about the caves.

## **About Timpanogos Cave**

**FAST FACTS**

* Timpanogos Cave holds one of the largest collections of helictites in the world.
* The bright colors in the cave come from nickel and heavy metals.
* More than 40 different kinds of cave formations have been found inside.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Timpanogos Cave is a stunning place right in the middle of urban Utah. Located on the flanks of Mount Timpanogos and overlooking American Fork Canyon, this cave contains a fantastic array of colorful cave formations that are some of the most stunning in the world.

The main claim to fame in Timpanogos Cave is the large number of helictites found within. These rock formations are delicate, twisting structures found within limestone caves. But there’s much more. Some of the other cave formations inside have names like stalactites, stalagmites, drapery, soda straws, forstwork, and more.

Timpanogos isn’t the only cave here, though. It’s connected in a cave system to Hansen and Middle Caves, which can be explored with human-made tunnels. Each are carved from limestone that was laid down around 340 million years ago, so venturing into these underground spaces really is like a form of time travel.

**DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/utah](https://nhmu.utah.edu/utah).

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# **CASCADE SPRINGS**

# **Wasatch County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/TrUHwNoo3LdkH1Ht9)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Wasatch County marker is at the OHV trailhead at Wasatch Mountain State Park, in the ground between the restroom and the information and fee kiosk.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** From the marker, the trailhead to **Cascade Springs** is located about five miles southeast, and the trail to the springs is roughly half a mile. But it's worth it for the series of beautiful springs, cascades, and pools.

## **About Cascade Springs**

**FAST FACTS**

* The mineral-rich waters created travertine terraces and pools.
* Wildlife from otters to hummingbirds can be found here.
* The springs produce over 7,000,000 gallons of water a day.

**SCIENCE STORY**

High up in the Uinta National Forest, Cascade Springs is a welcoming and lush part of the Wasatch Range. Otters, moose, wild turkeys, beavers, deer, and other wildlife call this place home, a series of pools and terraces that are remade a little more each day.

The nature of the springs is thanks to a chemical interaction between the water and the rock it moves through. As the spring water moves underground, it dissolves and carries calcium carbonate from rocks like limestone and dolomite. When that mineral-rich water then spills out over the surface, the water releases some carbon dioxide within it and this is what allows the calcium carbonate to sift back out along the terraces. Considering that about seven million gallons of water moves through these springs a day, it’s easy to see how these invisible interactions have built these springs over time.

**DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/wasatch](https://nhmu.utah.edu/wasatch).

# **CONFLUENCE PARK**

# **Washington County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/R9CcPuseVmmDUH3YA)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Washington County marker is near the northeast corner of the sign pavilion on the north side of Confluence Park in La Verkin, Utah.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** Confluence Park has been the part of human history for over a millennium.

## **About Confluence Park**

**FAST FACTS**

* Archaeological sites here represent at least four different cultural groups.
* Spanish explorer Dominquez-Escalante visited the area on October 15, 1776.
* Permanent water and wild game made this place an attractive place to live.

**SCIENCE STORY**

On October 15, 1776, the Spanish Escalante-Dominquez Expedition stopped at a spot in what’s now Washington County, Utah. The flowing water of the area was certainly a boon to the explorers, but they found more. The Europeans found corn growing here, as well as large ears of corn placed on a mat. They had found evidence of the people who had lived here before, people who made use of the water and wild game just as the European expedition did.

Later archaeological explorations of the area found evidence of different cultural groups who lived at Confluence Park in different times. The Virgin Anasazi, southern Paiute, Spanish explorers, and Mormon settlers all spent time here, and there’s evidence that others passed through as part of a major route through the region.

**DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/washington](http://nhmu.utah.edu/washington).

# **COWBOY CAVE**

# **Wayne County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/o22VdRbmbZqKdNbG8)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Wayne County marker is at the Wayne County Information Center at the junction of highways 12 and 24 in Torrey, Utah.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** The marker highlights Cowboy Cave, located on ancestral lands of the Ute Tribe and situated along a tributary of the Green River in southeastern Utah. Travel to Cowboy Cave is prohibited due to prior desecration of the site.

### **About Cowboy Cave**

**FAST FACTS**

* Archaeological sites here represent at least four different cultural groups.
* Spanish explorer Dominquez-Escalante visited the area on October 15, 1776.
* Permanent water and wild game made this place an attractive place to live.

**SCIENCE STORY**

Located on the ancestral lands of the Ute people, Cowboy Cave sits along a tributary of the Green River. Over 9,000 years of history are recorded in this cave carved into the Jurassic Navajo sandstone, told through artefacts ranging from sandals and baskets to plant and animal parts.

People didn’t stay at Cowboy Cave consistently. The artefacts found in the cave layers, such as baskets, indicate that the cave was occupied and abandoned over and over again through time. During the summers, people would use the cave as a shelter to process small seeds for food. During harsh winters, people again used the cave as a shelter and cooked their jackrabbit dinners here.

But there are still mysteries about this place. One of the artefacts found here is a coiled basket. How and why people made baskets like this isn’t yet clear, and it might have to do with processing seeds. Perhaps the answer still rests within the cave.

**DIG DEEPER** To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/wayne](https://nhmu.utah.edu/wayne).

# **OGDEN RIVER**

# **Weber County**

[View Marker on the Map](https://goo.gl/maps/AyPGJh9PMi25Ws3A7)

**FIND THE MARKER** The Weber County marker is at the southeast corner of High Adventure Park, with a view of the Ogden River.

**WANT TO GO FURTHER?** In 2012, this 1.1-mile stretch of river running through the heart of downtown Ogden was designated a Blue Ribbon Fishery. This designation identifies recreational fisheries of extremely high quality.

### **About Ogden River**

**FAST FACTS**

* The Ogden River has three forks, the North, Central, and South.
* The Ogden River is a tributary of the Weber River.
* The river, like the city, is named after Canadian fur trapper Peter Skene Ogden.

**SCIENCE STORY**

In a state as dry as Utah can be, water is life. And some of the most vibrant waterways in the state are the Ogden River’s North, Central and South forks. Tributaries of the larger Weber River, these forks keep the habitats along the northern Wasatch Range lush.

Strange as it may seem, the Ogden River is older than the Wasatch Mountains. The mountains started rising about 15 million years ago, but the ancient Ogden River was already there. The water cut through the rising rocks, creating the six-mile-long Ogden Canyon.

The waterways along the river are very popular with fishers. Rainbow trout, mountain whitefish, small-mouth bass, and tiger muskellunge are some of the fish found here. Just don’t catch a tuber, as the swift rivers are popular for summertime tubing, too.

DIG DEEPER To learn even more, visit [nhmu.utah.edu/weber](https://nhmu.utah.edu/weber)