

## LOCATIONS

### Calhan Library

600 Bank St., Calhan  
 (719) 531-6333, x7013

### Cheyenne Mountain Library

1785 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.  
 (719) 531-6333, x7001

### East Library

5550 N. Union Blvd.  
 (719) 531-6333, x7014

### eLibrary

ppld.org  
 Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

### Fountain Library

230 S. Main St., Fountain  
 (719) 531-6333, x7002

### High Prairie Library

7035 Old Meridian Rd., Peyton  
 (719) 531-6333, x7003

### Library 21c

1175 Chapel Hills Dr.  
 (719) 531-6333, x7012

### Manitou Springs Library

701 Manitou Ave., Manitou Springs  
 (719) 531-6333, x7004

### Mobile Library Services

ppld.org/mobile-library-services  
 (719) 531-6333, x7702

### Monument Library

1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr.,  
 Monument (719) 531-6333, x7005

### Old Colorado City Library

2418 W. Pikes Peak Ave.  
 (719) 531-6333, x7006

### Palmer Lake Library

66 Lower Glenway St.,  
 Palmer Lake (719) 531-6333, x7007

### Penrose Library

20 N. Cascade Ave.  
 (719) 531-6333, x7015

### Ruth Holley Library

685 N. Murray Blvd.  
 (719) 531-6333, x7009

### Sand Creek Library

1821 S. Academy Blvd.  
 (719) 531-6333, x7018

### Ute Pass Library

8010 Severy Rd., Cascade  
 (719) 531-6333, x7011



## HOMESCHOOL HUB | [ppld.org/homeschool-hub](https://ppld.org/homeschool-hub)

Whether you are a veteran homeschooling family or just getting started, visit the PPLD Homeschool Hub to find Library events and sign up for eNewsletters. Click on the “Resources” tab to link to information on getting started, Colorado homeschool law, local enrichment programs, tutoring, extracurricular activities, and more.

## WHEN KIDS DISCOVER DINOSAURS

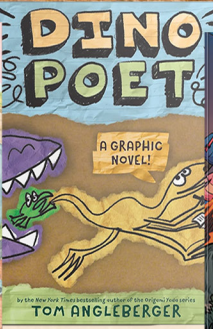
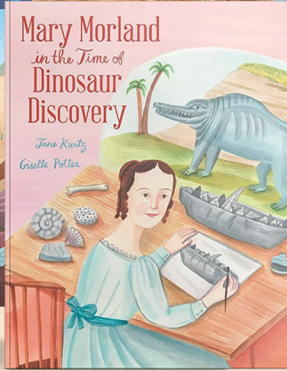
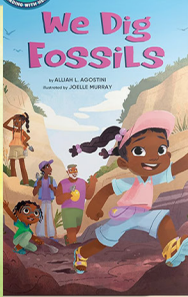
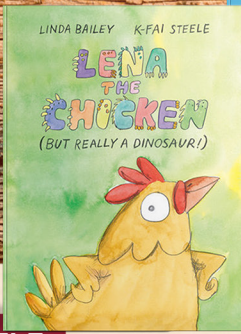
Many kids are interested in learning about dinosaurs, but did you know that for some young people, this fascination led to remarkable real-world discoveries? Across the globe, kids and teens have found fossils that reshaped scientific understanding and captured imaginations.

One of the most well-known examples is Mary Anning, who at just 12 years old discovered the first complete Ichthyosaurus fossil along the cliffs of Lyme Regis, England. Although this happened in the early 1800s, her story still inspires young scientists today. Her careful observations helped transform paleontology into a formal scientific discipline – proving that age is no barrier to meaningful discovery.

More recently, in 2011, 9-year-old Jude Sparks tripped over what he thought was a strange rock in the New Mexico desert. It was actually the fossilized tusk of a Stegomastodon (ancient cousin to the woolly mammoth and modern-day elephant). With his parents’ help, he contacted scientists who excavated an impressively complete skull. In the summer of 2022, three children hiking in North Dakota – brothers Liam and Jessin Fisher, and their cousin Kaiden Madsen – spotted bones poking from a hillside. What followed was the excavation of “Teen Rex,” a rare adolescent Tyrannosaurus rex, one of only four known specimens of its age group. This discovery provides scientists with essential clues about how the iconic predator grew and developed. In fact, the Denver Museum of Nature & Science features this find in its rotating “Discovering Teen Rex” exhibit, emphasizing how a simple family hike led to a world-class scientific breakthrough.

Across all these stories, one theme stands out: Kids notice what adults sometimes overlook. Whether exploring the badlands, Colorado’s Front Range, or simply in your backyard, young people often make scientific contributions simply by being observant, adventurous, and encouraged by the adults around them. So, the next time your family hits a trail – especially here in Colorado – remember: The world is full of ancient secrets waiting to be uncovered by curious young explorers.





**THE BOOKSHELF**

**Lena the Chicken (But Really a Dinosaur)**

by Linda Bailey; illustrated by K-Fai Steele

Lena may look like a chicken, but deep down she knows that she is really a dinosaur. Unlike the rest of her more-chicken chicken family, who are frightened of everything, Lena leads a more courageous life. When a weasel threatens the coop, Lena summons her true nature to save the day. Use this humorously told and illustrated story to launch your own explorations of the dino-bird connection.

**Ages 3 - 7; Chickens; Dinosaurs; Bravery; Humorous Stories**

**We Dig Fossils**

by Alliah L. Agostini; illustrated by Joelle Murray

Ava loves rocks of all shapes and sizes, but she really wants to find a fossil. When her family takes a trip to a fossil park, she can't wait to see what she might discover. At first disappointing, the smooth, oval rock she finds offers a special surprise! Illustrated with vibrant artwork, this engaging book features easy vocabulary, very short sentences, and a simple story, making it a great choice for kids starting to read on their own.

**Ages 4 - 6; Learning to Read; Reading Practice; Fossils; Family Stories**

**Mary Morland in the Time of Dinosaur Discovery**

by Jane Kurtz; illustrated by Giselle Potter

Born during a time when girls were seen as "dainty, delicate decorations to make a room pretty," Mary Morland (1797-1857) chose instead to explore the world around her. Her focus on shells and fossils (finding, collecting, drawing, and even repairing specimens) led her to work closely with contemporary fossilists. Acknowledging the fact that women in science largely went unrecognized at the time, this picture book biography conveys Mary's amazing abilities and passion for the subject.

**Ages 4 - 8; Women Scientists; Fossils; Paleontologists; History**

**Dino Poet**

by Tom Angleberger

A creative Coelophysis is trying to craft the greatest poem ever when he is distracted by a tasty piece of prey. However, this particular prehistoric frog does not want to be anyone's lunch, so he tells Dino Poet that his poem stinks and the only way to improve is to go see the world and write about it. The two embark on an adventure that includes a rampaging T-Rex and an exploration of different forms of poetry. Lively writing and action-packed artwork make this zany graphic novel perfect for dinosaur lovers and aspiring poets.

**Ages 6 - 9; Dinosaurs; Poetry; Creativity; Humor**

**Dinosaurs**

adapted by Jenny Laird; illustrated by Jomike Tejido

Part of the "Magic Tree House Fact Checker" series, based on Mary Pope Osborne's "Magic Tree House" books, this graphic novel stars Jack and Annie, who delve into the mysterious world of dinosaurs. The surprisingly thorough and clearly written book is packed with well-presented facts, helpful diagrams and illustrations, and tons of well-organized information. Chapters cover how fossils form, paleontologists, flesh-eating and plant-eating dinos, other prehistoric creatures, and theories on why dinosaurs vanished. A true dinophile's delight!

**Ages 6 - 12; Dinosaurs; Graphic Novels**



**DID YOU KNOW? COLORADO DINOSAUR FUN FACTS**

- Fossils were discovered in Colorado for the first time in the 1860s.
- Over **60,000** fossils have been discovered here, including fossils (footprints, impressions, and partial remains) from the Allosaurus, Stegosaurus, and Diplodocus.
- In 1874, T-Rex fossils were discovered for the first time anywhere, just outside Golden, CO.
- Head to the Picket Wire Canyonlands in La Junta to see over **1,000** fossilized dinosaur footprints!
- There is an active research site near Cañon City! The Garden Park Fossil Area has hosted researchers studying the Late Jurassic Period for almost **130** years.

**Upcoming Events**

Homeschool Curriculum Swap | Fri., June 12  
[tiny.ppdl.org/homeschool-swap](http://tiny.ppdl.org/homeschool-swap)

Homeschool Game Day | Fri., Aug. 28  
[tiny.ppdl.org/game-day](http://tiny.ppdl.org/game-day)

## ONLINE RESOURCES: DINOSAURS

### **American Museum of Natural History: Paleontology**

[amnh.org/explore/ology/paleontology](http://amnh.org/explore/ology/paleontology)

Learn about paleontology, the study of ancient life using fossils, with this website. Explore videos, games, and crafts all in a brightly colored format perfect for kids.

### **Dino Pictures and Facts**

[dinosaurpictures.org](http://dinosaurpictures.org)

The internet's largest database of dinosaurs (1,989!) each with a link to pictures, information, and maps. Search by name, region, or time period.

### **Dinosaur George Kids Podcast**

[dinosaurgeorge.com/dg-kids-podcast](http://dinosaurgeorge.com/dg-kids-podcast)

"Dinosaur George" is a self-taught paleontologist who tours schools, museums, and other public venues giving lectures about dinosaurs. Listen to over 100 of his podcasts for free on this website!

### **Kiddle: Dinosaur Facts for Kids**

[kids.kiddle.co/Dinosaur](http://kids.kiddle.co/Dinosaur)

Full of kid-friendly information from how dinosaurs are classified to why they disappeared, this website will help you get a good grasp on the basics of dinos.

### **I Know Dino: Resources**

[iknowdino.com/resources/](http://iknowdino.com/resources/)

Have you ever wanted to visit the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History? This website has a great collection of links to virtual museums, teaching resources, and more!

SUMMER ADVENTURE IS COMING!



June 1 - July 31

[ppld.org/summer](http://ppld.org/summer)

## PLACES TO VISIT



### **Rabbit Valley Trail Through Time and Mygatt-Moore Quarry**

[blm.gov/visit/rabbit-valley-trail-through-time](http://blm.gov/visit/rabbit-valley-trail-through-time)

Begin at the Mygatt-Moore Quarry, where you can view interpretive panels as well as dinosaur fossil excavations during certain times of year. Follow the kid-friendly, 1.5-mile path to get up close and personal with dinosaur bones. (Mack, Colorado)



### **Picket Wire Canyon Trackway**

[fs.usda.gov/r02/psicc/recreation/picket-wire-canyonlands](http://fs.usda.gov/r02/psicc/recreation/picket-wire-canyonlands)

The largest dinosaur trackway in North America is tucked away among this canyon's ghosts and archaeological gems. (near La Junta, Colorado)



### **Garden Park Fossil Area**

[canoncity.org/594/Garden-Park-Fossil-Area](http://canoncity.org/594/Garden-Park-Fossil-Area)

An important location for the study of Late Jurassic dinosaurs, this was also the site of the "Bone Wars" between two rival paleontologists during the dinosaur rush of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Cañon City, Colorado)



### **Dinosaur Ridge | Morrison Natural History Museum**

[dinoridge.org](http://dinoridge.org)

[morrisonco.us/335/Morrison-Natural-History-Museum](http://morrisonco.us/335/Morrison-Natural-History-Museum)

Explore Dinosaur Ridge via self-guided walks or bus tours and discover fossils, dinosaur tracks, and local geology. Visit the museum to complement the experience. (Morrison, Colorado)



### **Florissant Fossil Quarry**

[florissantfossilquarry.com](http://florissantfossilquarry.com)

Offers hands-on fossil digging where kids can split shale and keep the 34-million-year-old fossils they discover, from leaves to insects preserved in detail. Tools and guidance are provided, making it ideal for beginners and families. (Florissant, Colorado)



### **Petrified Forest Loop Trail**

[nps.gov/thingstodo/hiking-the-petrified-forest-loop.htm](http://nps.gov/thingstodo/hiking-the-petrified-forest-loop.htm)

Hike this one-mile, self-guided trail to see fossils at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument – some of the biggest petrified redwood tree stumps in the world. Park fees may apply. (Florissant, Colorado)



### **Garden of the Gods Visitor Center**

[gardenofgods.com/visitor-and-nature-center/exhibits/](http://gardenofgods.com/visitor-and-nature-center/exhibits/)

Meet Kerri, a specimen originally misidentified, and now known as the world's only known fossil of an entirely new dinosaur species, Theiophytalia. (Colorado Springs, Colorado)



### **Rocky Mountain Dinosaur Resource Center**

[rmdrc.com](http://rmdrc.com)

Features fossils from North America's Cretaceous Period including marine reptiles, pterosaurs, dinosaurs, a working fossil lab viewable by visitors, children's play area, and hands-on educational activities. (Woodland Park, Colorado)

## BOOKS FOR KIDS: J-EASY

*Bones, Bones, Dinosaur Bones* by Byron Barton  
*Crunch, the Shy Dinosaur* by Cirocco Dunlap  
*Angel Draws a Dinosaur* by Pavonis Giron  
*Field Trip to Dinosaur Valley* by John Hare  
*Stegothesaurus* by Bridget Heos  
*The Dinosaur Next Door* by David Litchfield  
*I Believe in You* by Tatsuya Miyanishi  
*How Do Dinosaurs...* by Jane Yolen



## BOOKS FOR KIDS: J-READER

*Nothing Scares a Dinosaur* by Jonathan Fenske  
*Danny and the Dinosaur* by Syd Hoff

## BOOKS FOR KIDS: J-NONFICTION/BIOGRAPHY

*The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins* by Barbara Kerley  
*The Iguanodon's Horn: How Artists and Scientists Put a Dinosaur Back Together Again and Again ... and Again* by Sean Rubin  
*Dinosaurs: By the Numbers* by Steve Jenkins  
*The Bone Wars: The True Story of an Epic Battle to Find Dinosaur Fossils* by Jane Kurtz  
*Dinosaur Lady: The Daring Discoveries of Mary Anning, the First Paleontologist* by Linda Skeers  
*When Sue Found Sue: Sue Hendrickson Discovers Her T. Rex* by Toni Buzzeo  
*Barnum's Bones: How Barnum Brown Discovered the Most Famous Dinosaur in the World* by Tracey Fern

## KIDS ACTIVITY: SALT DOUGH FOSSILS

Make your own trace fossils with a simple salt dough recipe and your plastic animal toys or gathered natural materials.

For the salt dough:

2 cups all-purpose flour    1 cup table salt    1 cup warm water

Mix the ingredients together with a spoon in a large bowl. Finish by kneading until the dough feels smooth. If the dough feels too tough to mix, add a little more warm water. If it's too runny, add more flour.

To make the trace fossils, roll out some dough to ¼ inch thick. Use a cookie cutter or an upturned drinking glass to make cutouts in your dough. Grab a plastic animal and press the feet into the dough shapes to leave footprints. Or use some found natural objects like leaves, acorns, etc. to make impressions. If you don't like your imprints, re-roll and cut the dough.

Bake your finished fossil circles at 250 degrees until they feel firm. This can take 1 to 2 hours. Remove from the oven and allow the circles to cool completely before using them.

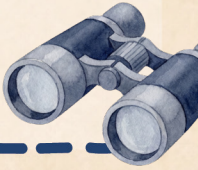


## BOOKS FOR TEENS: FICTION

*The Bone Wars* by Erin Evan  
*Dinosaur Sanctuary (series)* by Itaru Kinoshita  
*Hunted (series)* by Skye Melki-Wegner  
*Lost Time* by Tas Mukanik

## BOOKS FOR TEENS: NONFICTION

*The Monster's Bones: The Discovery of T. Rex and How it Shook our World* by David K. Randall  
*Dinosaurs & other Prehistoric Life: An Encyclopedia of Fantastic Facts* by William Potter  
*The Fossil Hunter Handbook* by William Potter  
*How to Survive in the Age of Dinosaurs: A Handy Guide to Dodging Deadly Predators, Riding out Mega-monsoons, and Escaping other Perils of the Prehistoric* by Stephanie Warren Drimmer  
*The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* by Elizabeth Kolbert  
*The Age of Dinosaurs: The Rise and Fall of the World's Most Remarkable Animals* by Stephen Brusatte



## TEENS ACTIVITY: RECONSTRUCTING DINOSAURS

How do we know what dinosaurs might have looked like? To make the images we see in books and museums, scientists work with artists to create drawings and models. Follow these steps to design your own:

After a skeleton has been reconstructed, artists use it as the framework or armature of the body. Find a dinosaur skeleton you would like to illustrate. Use tracing paper and a pencil to outline where you think the muscles and flesh of this dinosaur may have been. It may be helpful to think of descendants of dinosaurs who are alive today and have similar bodies.

Add shadows to your drawing to refine the shape of your dinosaur.

Add texture and color to your dinosaur. What kind of skin did it have? Was it scaly or feathered? Skin color and patterns cannot be determined from fossils, so this is your opportunity to be creative!

Love the way your dinosaur turned out? Try making it in 3D!

Activity adapted from [amnh.org/learn-teach](http://amnh.org/learn-teach). Find an illustrated version of the directions and sample skeletons on their website.



Do you have feedback or ideas for a Homeschool Connections issue? Please email Joy at [jfleshhacker@ppld.org](mailto:jfleshhacker@ppld.org).