



## Hobby Collecting of Rocks, Meteorites, Artifacts, and Fossils On National Forest System Lands



### ROCKS AND AGATES

Rock hunting (surface collection of rocks and agates, excluding meteorites and fossils), for personal, hobby, and noncommercial use only, is allowed without a permit. For other uses of rock material, contact the local Forest Service Office. Trading, bartering, or selling rocks and agates from National Forest System Lands is not allowed.

### METEORITES

**Meteorite** is a stony or metallic object from interplanetary space that has fallen to the earth's surface. The collection of meteorites for personal, hobby, educational, and noncommercial use is allowed without a permit.

### ARTIFACTS

**Archeological resource** means any material remains of prehistoric or historic human life or activities, which are at least 50 years old, and includes the physical site, location, or context in which they are found (36 CFR 261.2). The collection of projectile points, pottery, or any other archeological resource or artifact is not allowed (36 CFR 261.9 (h)) without a permit. Projectile points include 'arrowheads' and any prehistoric human-modified stone.

### FOSSILS

**Fossil (Paleontological) resource** means any evidence of fossilized remains of multicellular invertebrate and vertebrate animals and multicellular plants, including imprints thereof (36 CFR 261.2). There are four major types of fossils: **ichnofossil** (a.k.a. imprint or trace fossil), **plant**, **invertebrate**, and **vertebrate**.



**Ichnofossils (or trace fossils)** are typically sedimentary structures consisting of a fossilized track, trail, burrow, or tube resulting from the life activities and behavior of an animal, such as a mark made by an invertebrate creeping, feeding, hiding, or resting on or in soft sediment. Some non-sedimentary examples include tooth marks (resulting from predation), skin impressions, and coprolites (fossil dung).

**Fossil plants** are the fossilized remains of all parts of a plant. **Petrified wood** is a common term used for wood fossilized by silica, where the woody structure is visible. A permit is not required to collect petrified wood for personal, hobby, and noncommercial use. A permit may be required to remove petrified wood from National Forest System Lands for non-personal, scientific, and commercial purposes.



**Invertebrate fossils** are the fossilized remains of animals lacking a backbone. A few examples include: ammonites, trilobites, snails, clams, and insects. Invertebrate and plant fossils (including invertebrate and plant trace fossils) may be collected without a permit, from the surface without digging and for personal, hobby, educational, and noncommercial use only. A permit is required for research/scientific purposes.

**Vertebrate fossils** are the fossilized remains of any animal having a bony skeleton or backbone such as: fish (includes sharks and rays), amphibians, reptiles (including dinosaurs, mosasaurs, and turtles), birds, mammals, and all trace fossils from vertebrate animals, such as dinosaur tracks.

The collection and/or duplication of vertebrate fossils, including vertebrate trace fossils, from National Forest System Lands requires a permit (36 CFR 261.9 (i)). Permits are issued to qualified paleontologists, who curate fossils and their duplicates into federally approved facilities.

No permits for the collection of any fossils (plants, invertebrates, vertebrates, or any trace fossils) are issued for commercial purposes, except for petrified wood. Trading, bartering, or selling any fossil material (plants, invertebrates, vertebrates, or any trace fossils) removed from National Forest System Lands is prohibited.

