

# ROYAL TYRRELL MUSEUM

2009/10 Fact Sheet

## MUSEUM OVERVIEW

The Royal Tyrrell Museum is one of the world's premiere palaeontological research facilities and Canada's only museum dedicated exclusively to palaeontology.

### The Museum:

- is home to over 120,000 individual specimens, 150 of which are holotypes (term used to describe an individual plant or animal that serves as the basis for the description of a species).
- has over 2,000 specimens added to the Museum's collection annually.
- site spans over 77,500 m<sup>2</sup> (835,000 sq.ft.) with the actual building being 11,200 m<sup>2</sup> (120,000 sq.ft.) and houses 4,400 m<sup>2</sup> (45,000 sq.ft.) of gallery space.
- is operated by Alberta Culture and Community Spirit, and generates the highest economic output of all Alberta Government heritage attractions.

## ATTENDANCE & VISITORS

In 2008/09, the Royal Tyrrell Museum welcomed:

- just under 400,000 visitors
- over 20,000 students participated in Museum educational programs by visiting the Museum in person and through video conference connections to schools across North America (hosted from the Distance Learning Studio in the ATCO Tyrrell Learning Centre)

## PERMANENT GALLERIES

The Royal Tyrrell Museum houses a range of permanent galleries that immerse visitors in the 3.9-billion-year history of life on Earth.

Current permanent galleries include:

- *Cretaceous Alberta*
- *Nexen Science Hall*
- *Lords of the Land*
- *Burgess Shale*
- *Devonian Reef*
- *Cretaceous Garden*
- *Ceratopsians: the Horned Herbivores*
- *Dinosaur Hall*
- *Age of Mammals*

## SPECIAL EXHIBITION

### ***"I think..." (Charles Darwin, 1837) and Perspectives from HMS Beagle***

The Royal Tyrrell Museum is celebrating the international Year of Darwin with two new exhibits. *"I think..."* (Charles Darwin 1837), and *Perspectives from HMS Beagle*. See spectacular scientific illustrations and examine rare specimens as the Museum pays tribute to one of the greatest thinkers of all time. Darwin proposed his concept of evolution in 1859 and provided the first evidence for its mechanism—natural selection. His proposal, that life changes and diversifies naturally over time, was revolutionary. Today, it is the underlying and unifying principle in the biological sciences.

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### PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The Royal Tyrrell Museum offers a variety of programs designed to inspire the young and young at heart with creative, fun, and educational activities that bring the Museum to life. Through award-winning school and outreach programs to innovative and adventurous summer public programs, the Museum makes palaeontology accessible to everyone.

### HISTORY OF THE MUSEUM

On August 12, 1884 Joseph Burr Tyrrell (TEER-uhl), a geologist with the Geological Survey of Canada, discovered a 70-million-year-old carnivorous dinosaur skull near present day Drumheller. Tyrrell's find was named *Albertosaurus sarcophagus* ("flesh eating lizard from Alberta") in 1905 by American Museum of Natural History palaeontologist Henry Fairfield Osborn.

So significant was Tyrrell's discovery that when the Museum opened its doors to the public on September 25, 1985 it was named the Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology. Originally intended to serve as a research and scientific facility, the plans soon changed to include a large public gallery and display area that attracted over 500,000 visitors in its first year.

Since receiving the Queen's "royal" appellation in 1990, the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology has become world renowned for its innovative public education programs, engaging exhibits and ongoing devotion to the science of palaeontology.

The Royal Tyrrell Museum is dedicated to the collection, preservation, protection, presentation, and interpretation of palaeontological history with a particular emphasis on Alberta's rich fossil history.

For more information about the Royal Tyrrell Museum please visit:  
[www.tyrrellmuseum.com](http://www.tyrrellmuseum.com) or call (403) 823-7707

Government of Alberta ■