



# Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds Newsletter

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## Juan Baptista de Anza's Military Campaign

by **Andy Weinzapfel**

If there were a time machine that could transport you back anywhere in this region, when and where would you go? What poorly understood historical curiosity might you pursue?

One of my choices would be the Florissant area of late August 1779, an interesting time in Pikes Peak backcountry. The quiet domain of the Tabaguache Utes was not in a "business as usual" mode. Deer, prairie dogs, and buffalo would have been startled at the sight and sounds of a massive army passing through the area. This military campaign, with de Anza as its leader, consisted of about 600 soldiers and militia, 200 Ute Indians, and 2400 horses. Anza was on a search and destroy mission targeting Comanche chief Cuerno Verde (Green Horn) and his warriors. He was

seeking the element of surprise by coming through the "backdoor" of the mountains, rather than traveling north along the Front Range from Santa Fe. At the time, the Comanches were ravaging the Pueblos and Spanish settlers without effective opposition. Anza, already a seasoned military leader and founder of San Francisco, was appointed Governor of New Mexico in 1777. In his mindset, Cuerno Verde and his band of troublemakers had to be defeated. He aligned with the Utes to accomplish this objective. There was a mutual family legacy of pain between the two leaders. Anza's father had been killed by Apaches, and Cuerno Verde's father had died at the hands of Spaniards. Ultimately, Anza's army surprised Cuerno Verde on the plains, engaged in a running battle, and killed him and his warriors on 3 September, 1779.

What we know about this military campaign comes primarily from two diaries in Spanish, one preserved in Mexico City, Mexico the other in Madrid, Spain. The best geographic anchor for this part of Colorado is their crossing of the Arkansas River (Rio Napestle) near Poncha Springs, the morning of 28 August, 1779. At this time, the army was headed to the north-east. The night of 29 August, they camped somewhere in the Florissant area at the foot of "los ojos ciegos" (the blind eyes). Celinda Reynolds Kaelin, in her book *Pikes Peak Backcountry*, proposes that this might be a reference to Twin Rocks, east of Florissant along the Ute Trail. Another possibility is that the blind eyes are twin exfoliation domes, rounded high weathering features in granite. Good candidates exist in the area. An

*(Continued on page 6)*



*Garden of the Gods is the gateway to Ute Pass, Teller County, and the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. Photo by Noah Divine, © 2004.*

## Extreme Weathering:

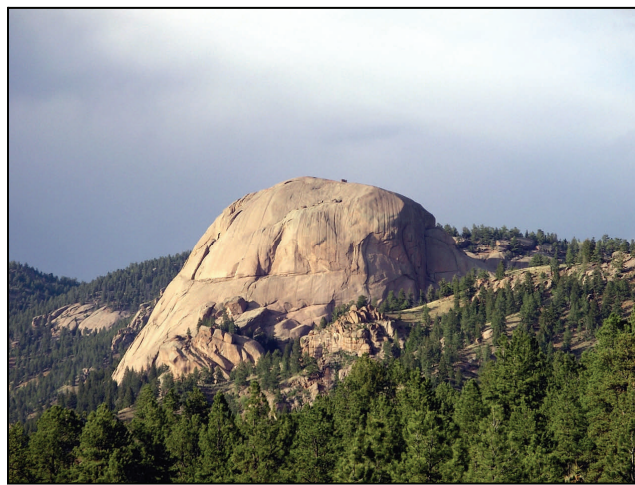
# Dome Rock

### Teller County's Scenic Rock

By **Steven Wade Veatch**

Dome Rock is a scenic outcrop of Pikes Peak Granite that can be seen north of Cripple Creek, Colorado along Teller County Road 1. Rising more than 800 feet from its base, Dome Rock is a classic example of an exfoliation dome that formed on Pikes Peak Granite.

Pikes Peak Granite, a plutonic rock (a rock formed at depth by crystallization of magma), was formed deep in the earth under high pressure. When the once deeply buried Pikes Peak Granite was exposed at the surface by uplift and erosion, pressure was released. Because Pikes Peak Granite is slightly elastic—just like all rocks—it expands from the release of pressure from the once overlying rocks. The expansion forms pressure release fractures (cracks) parallel to the surface of the granite and the outer layers peel off (“exfoliate”)—the result is an exfoliation dome.



*Dome Rock, a Teller County landmark, is a classic example of the process of exfoliation. Photo date 6/04, © S. Veatch.*

Water is also a part of the physical and chemical weathering at

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Archeological Sites In and Around Twin Creek and the South Platte River

By **Beth Simmons**

Native Americans—Utes, Arapahoes, Cheyennes—all occupied the Flowering Valley (the Florissant Valley) long before the white man—Pike and the mountain men—ever discovered the wonders of South Park, the Ute Trail, and the Pikes Peak backcountry and before the Castello's, Long's, and Hornbek's settled on the land we now know so well.

In the 1935 Colorado Archeological Inventory, E.B. Renaud of the University of Denver summarized archeological sites around Florissant. His report, [The Archaeological Survey of Colorado. Fourth Report, Seasons 1933 and 1934](#), published in March 1935 by the University of Denver (DU) Department of Anthropology, said that Bob Potts and his father, H.L. Potts, had done most of the collecting in Teller and Park Counties and reported their finds to Renaud.

Fortification Hill in Florissant, a well-documented campsite, served as a rock shelter and a workshop site (Renaud's site C-695; BP-11). In 1934, when Potts father and son did their collecting, they found fireplaces, metates, manos, and beads on the little mound in the middle of town. Fortification Hill was the site of a massacre of Arapahoe women by Cheyennes in 1858, just before argonauts chasing the riches of a great Golconda inundated the valley, hot on the trail of gold in South Park. Fortification Hill included the “only rock-shelter located on the Ute trail” that produced artifacts. There was also a dry masonry fortifica-

tion, made of small flat stones, that was of doubtful age and origin.

According to the card index on file at DU, another site (C-606; BP12) documented in 1935 was located one mile north of Woodland Park—just 50 yards west of US40S (Highway 24). This valley campsite, “formerly rich in finds”, was protected from both the south and west, and had a view to the east. Artifacts were rare.

Another camp site, C-697 (BP 13), was three-tenths of a mile west of Florissant, 300 yards south of Twin Creek, and 100 yards south of US40S (Highway 24). This campsite was at the foot of a hill with protection from the south and a view to the north and east. There the archeologists found tipi rings and fire places. The site was extensive with rare scattered artifacts on the surface. This site, described as a short distance west from the “inn at Florissant”, 100 yards south of the highway, is probably just south of where the fire station is today in Florissant.

Site C-698 (BP-14) was in Park County, on “hillocks” two tenths of a mile south of Lake George, 200 yards east of the South Platte, and 50 feet east of US40S. This campsite was on a hillock and produced fairly abundant scattered finds on the surface.

In addition to US40S, Renaud referred to the

*(Continued on page 7)*

## UTE INDIANS AT THE FLORISSANT FOSSIL BEDS

By **Celinda Reynolds Kaelin** © 2004

“Valley of the Shadows.” This is thought to be the appellation that the Ute Indians assigned to the area now called Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. Supposedly, this designation refers to the thousands of fossilized remains embedded in the shales of the Monument. Certainly, if one were unaware of the scientific process that created these dark silhouettes of insects, fish, leaves, birds and thousands of other flora and fauna – they would appear to be shadows. But what was the Ute understanding of this mysterious valley with its shadows embedded in rocks, its stone trees and other perplexing mysteries of nature?

Unfortunately, I have been unable to identify the source for “Valley of Shadows” quote. It is printed in old brochures on file at the Fossil Beds, but there is no trail of documentation. However, I have been very fortunate over the last dozen years to become enmeshed in the Ute culture through my friendships and working relationships with the people. When I began writing *Pikes Peak Backcountry* in 1994, I contacted all three of the Ute reservation tribal governments to review my book for accuracy. The Northern Ute Nation, headquartered at Ft. Duchesne, Utah, assigned a cultural liaison, Tumpi Pahyah, to review my manuscript with me. Our working relationship expanded from this historical framework into a spiritual and ceremonial context when he requested my help as his assistant. We then spent many years traveling to foreign countries and doing ceremony with the World Council of Elders. During this same time, I also

became acquainted with other Ute Elders, and developed a warm friendship with Loya Arrum, Kerry Cesspooch and their extended family, descendants of Chiefs Ouray, Colorow and Piah. We now regularly spend our summers working together in traditional ceremonies, including the Sundance, Pipe Ceremony, and Vision Quest.

I consider these relationships fortunate, not only because they have enriched my life, but because they afford me an insider’s view of the culture. As an historian, I have often bemoaned the fact that there were no contemporaneous accounts of the Ute people. Our dominant culture is probably most conversant with the Lakota (Sioux) culture simply because so many outsiders were given entrée to their society and wrote about it. It is extremely unfortunate for history that the Ute Nation had no George Catlin or others of his ilk. I offer the observations in this paper, then, to help bridge this gap of understanding and to help future historians.

When I asked Tumpi Pahyah about the “Valley of Shadows,” he couldn’t remember having heard that term used for the Fossil Beds. However, he said that it was probably true, and then explained his reasons.

“Look at the ground. Look at your shadow. Only living things cast a shadow that moves with them. Your shadow indicates that your soul is in your body, that you are alive.”

*(Continued on page 8)*

## The Aspen Tree

By **Harv Burman**, Ranger, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

I have noticed that many people, often including me, who live in a beautiful area don’t appreciate their surroundings as much as folks who are just visiting. We get so used to our surroundings that they fade from our attention. If you think about it, the tourists who are so prominent in this area drive hundreds or thousands of miles and spend big bucks to vacation where we live! Just one example of what I mean about things we ignore is the aspen tree. When aspens turn brilliant gold in the fall we notice their beauty, but what about the rest of the year? Aspens are fascinating and quite beautiful all year.

**Winter:** Aspens are one of the few trees able to photosynthesize year round. Photosynthesis, the process that uses sunlight and carbon dioxide to produce food for the plant, is normally done only by the leaves of a tree, so after the leaves fall in autumn, most trees become dormant. Aspens are able to carry on, a little, even in winter. Elk often graze on the tender bark of the



*Aspen leaves have fallen on the ground at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument.  
2004 by S.W. Veatch*

aspen, after which the tree heals itself with black “scabs”. A grove of aspens with black bark from six feet on down is clear evidence of elk grazing.

**Spring:** Ripe aspen seeds sprout quickly (within one or two days of being dispersed, as long as a suitable seedbed is reached), germinating in temperatures ranging from freezing to close to 100 degrees. Survival of such sprouts is rare though. Most of the time aspens reproduce by generating a new tree, called a ramet, from the root of an existing tree. 75% of aspen

reproduction is by such cloning.

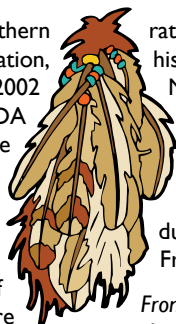
**Summer:** Aspen groves provide a habitat for many forest creatures because of the under story that flourishes beneath them. Unlike the dark, bare-floored conifer forests, sufficient light

shafts through the aspen canopy to encourage abundant herbage that provides excellent wildlife habitat for birds and mammals. A good place to go birding is an aspen grove.

*(Continued on page 8)*

## New Archeological Site Studied in Northern Teller County

The Trail Creek Folsom site (5TL3032), located in northern Teller County along Trail Creek Road, is a high elevation, multi-component campsite. The site was recorded in 2002 during a cultural resources inventory project for the USDA Forest Service. The site was assessed as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places based on its Folsom period affiliation but the full extent and nature of the site in the subsurface was not known. During the current project, the nature and extent of the site were investigated. An assessment of the geomorphological context of the site indicated that cultural materials on the site are associated with deposits that date from the Pleistocene and Holocene time periods. Test excavations conducted at the site indicate that it has very sparse cultural remains from two sepa-



rate occupations dating to the Folsom period and Late Prehistoric period. The site is re-evaluated as eligible to the National Register of Historic Places because it has yielded important information on the prehistory of the area, and appears to have further research potential regarding settlement patterns during both the Folsom and Late Prehistoric time periods as well as the paleoenvironment during the Folsom period in the mountains of the Colorado Front Range.

*From the abstract for the Trail Creek Folsom site taken from the archaeological assessment of the site prepared by RMC Consultants, Inc.*

## A Quick History of Idaho Springs: A Review

by **Beth Simmons**, Western Reflections Publishing Company, 2004.

ISBN: 1-932738-08-9, softbound, \$9.95

Review by **Steven Wade Veatch**

Beth Simmons, a member of the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds, tells the fascinating story of the history of Idaho Springs in her new book: *A Quick History of Idaho Springs*. The narrative, full of details and anecdotes, contains carefully selected historical photographs that enliven the story.

The account starts from a spot in the rugged mountain wilderness of Colorado at the confluence of Vasquez and Chicago Creeks, where George Andrew Jackson—just before a cold January snow storm in 1859—filled his tin coffee cup with gold dust and nuggets. Keeping his find a secret, Jackson quietly organized the Chicago Mining Company. A rush of eager prospectors soon followed and a mining camp was rapidly established nearby. It was George Jackson's strike that started the Colorado Gold Rush of 1859, and quite hurriedly the "Idaho Springs area had sprouted mines like gopher holes in a potato patch." Simmons describes how the town was laid out, including the Beebe House, where some of the men who made fortunes in mining around the Idaho Springs area stayed.

This thoroughly researched and well-written book describes Fall River, Freeland, Trail Creek, Chicago Creek, Virginia Canyon, and the Lamartine mining districts. Simmons has included interesting information about the area mines, including the Amethyst, Stanley, Alma-Lincoln, and the Lamartine.

The book has an interesting account of Joel Parker Whitney,

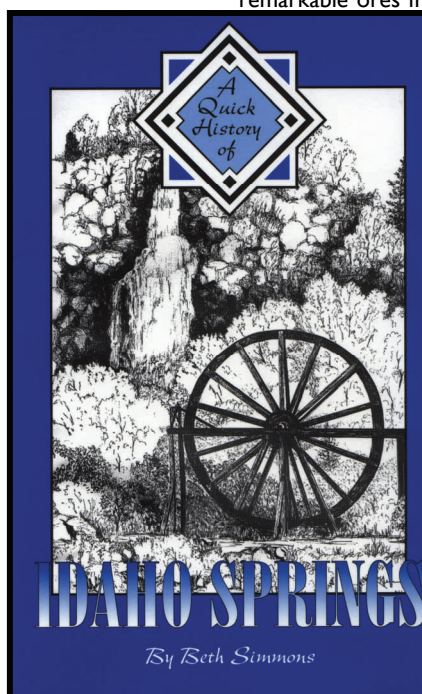
who had been in the shipping business in Boston. Whitney was interested in ores from Colorado, and he bought a collection of remarkable ores from mines along Clear Creek. After carefully preparing his specimens, Whitney exhibited his collection in the Colorado Room at the Paris Exposition of 1867 where he won a gold medal and special commendation from Napoleon III.

The author provides an informative overview of the technological advancements in mining techniques and engineering as they were applied in the Idaho Springs area (including electricity, pneumatic drills, ore roasting, floatation, amalgamation, chlorination, and cyanidation). Mining still continues: the Henderson and the Edgar Experimental mines are the two major mines operating today in the area.

If you are interested in mining history or the history of Idaho Springs, this book must be on your bookshelf.

**Beth Simmons** teaches geology part time for the Community College of Denver. She also teaches oceanography at Metro State and a graduate-level online oceanography course for NOAA and the American Meteorological Society. Beth Simmons is working on her Ph.D. in Colorado History through the Union Institute and University, a distance-learning program in Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Steven Wade Veatch** is an independent geologist who lives in Florissant, Colorado. He is an adjunct professor of earth science at Emporia State University.



## A TREK TO THE BOTTOM OF THE “BOTTOMLESS PIT”

by J.J. Huie

At the outer edge of Barr Camp, which consists of a cabin and a few shelters about seven miles up Barr Trail (the path leading to the summit of Pikes Peak), there's a sign with the words “Pikes Peak” and “Bottomless Pit” carved into it along with arrows pointing up the trail. While many people are eager to “conquer” the Peak, few are as interested in discovering the Bottomless Pit, which is a cirque, or bowl-shaped depression, that was carved by glaciers within the last one million years during the Pleistocene Epoch. Since the Pit is four miles past Barr Camp on the northeastern side of the mountain, one has to either be extremely determined to hike all the way there on a summer day or be willing to spend the night at Barr Camp (for \$15 per night) and spread the trip out over two or three days. Because I thought that seeing the Pit covered in snow might give me a glimpse into what the mountain would have looked like during a period of glacial advance, I decided to devote a weekend this past February to exploring it.

Late in the morning, my friend Ben and I headed up Barr Trail, a path that has the greatest elevation gain of any peak in Colorado. Pikes Peak may not be a technically difficult mountain via Barr Trail (i.e., leave your rock climbing equipment at home), but the journey is taxing because of its length (almost 13 miles to the summit). Ben and I saw lots of people on the bottom few miles, some out for slow-paced hikes, while others galloped down the trail. About three miles up, Ben and I parted ways; he had brought a daypack and intended to turn around after a couple hours. As I hiked a gentler portion of trail, snowflakes filled the sky and fell among the conifers, creating a scene both tranquil and full of motion. I arrived at Barr Camp at about two o'clock and learned from the caretakers that pork tenderloins and rice were to be served for dinner that night (for a \$7 charge). The caretakers, Greg and Stephanie, had been living at Barr Camp for years, cooking meals and attending to the upkeep of the cabin and shelters. After hiking seven miles uphill with a heavy backpack strapped to you, virtually any food seems exquisite, but I have to say that Stephanie made the best pork tenderloins I'd ever tasted.

The following morning was typical for Colorado: brilliantly sunny and beautiful. Attached to my pack were snowshoes and adjustable snowshoeing poles, since I knew deep snow ahead was a possibility. Where the trail for Bottomless Pit branches off from Barr Trail (a little more than a mile above Barr



Camp), I eagerly strapped on the snowshoes and followed some footprints in the snow that looked to be from several days earlier, judging by the fact that they were mostly filled with snow. After less than one mile from the branch-off point, the foot-

prints ended, and I found myself in thigh-deep snow. Following advice Greg had given me, I pushed up to timberline in order to get to the shallower snow of the treeless, windswept alpine zone. Shortly after gaining timberline, the Pit came into view, and I noticed that instead of hiking to the edge of a cliff, the route I was taking led to the bottom of the Pit. During the last quarter mile, I snowshoed through an area clear of conifers but having shorter deciduous vegetation, which confirmed that I was walking through a riparian area that was the headwaters of the

South Fork of French Creek. In contrast to the extreme cold at the start of the morning, I began to overheat and shed layers, since the reflection from the snow of this open area radiated toward me from many angles.

Arriving at the Pit, I was pleasantly surprised to gain another view hidden during the approach. To the south was an incredibly steep route up Pikes Peak, which would probably challenge a Himalayan mountaineer if attempted during the winter. Surrounding me on all sides were boulders and walls of granite. The ridges at the top of the cirque appeared to be about 1,500 ft. above. I was amazed to find the twisted and weathered pieces of a truck that I would learn from Greg had been driven off the Peak in the early '90's. Despite having the desire to spend the day hanging out and soaking in the views, my drinking water was frozen and my food consumed; in addition, I was thinking that I still had “miles to go before I sleep”. Reluctantly, I followed my tracks back to Barr Camp, bought the most delicious Milky Way bar to ever cross my lips, and willed myself to hike down the bottom seven miles.

From many points in Colorado Springs, particularly in the central and northern areas of the city, the Bottomless Pit is clearly visible as a reminder that glaciers once covered the Peak. They may cover the Peak again soon (geologically speaking), since most climate models suggest we are simply in a warmer phase of the Pleistocene Ice Age. Though the Pit is now less of a mystery to me, I came away from the trip with a clearer sense of a glacier's power to form many of the beautiful and massive features we witness while hiking in the mountains of Colorado.

## Juan Baptista de Anza's (Continued)

Interesting piece of trivia from Anza's diaries: the weather during that August was quite foggy, snowy, and cold. Campfires were not possible because of a concern that Comanche scouts might discover the army, and remove their element of surprise. The army probably suffered greatly because of this. Historians have recognized the Little Ice Age, about 1450-1850 A.D, a period of a much cooler climate. Apparently the clouds did not lift sufficiently to discern Pikes Peak, since there is no specific refer-

ence to this awesome topographic feature. The diaries do refer to their difficult travels over the "mountains of the red earth", however, on 30 August, 1779.

The Trails Committee of the Pikes Peak Historical Society is dedicated to research and investigation of the Anza campaign. Given the large size of his army, it is possible iron artifacts were lost or deliberately discarded at every campsite. At least one "dig" is scheduled for 2005.

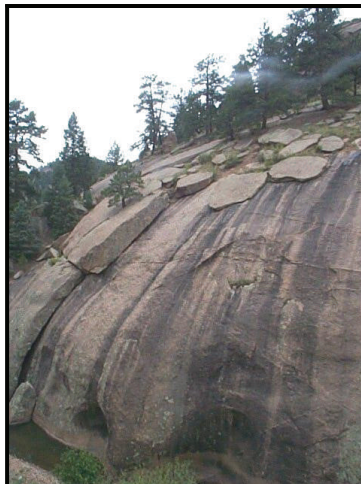
## Dome Rock (Continued)



*This field of granite exfoliation domes is near Westcreek in Teller County, Colorado. Photo date 9/04, © S. Veatch.*

work forming Dome Rock. During the winter when water enters the cracks and freezes, the ice expands, widens the cracks, and loosens the sheets. Rainwater and groundwater contains dissolved carbon dioxide forming carbonic acid. This weak acid decomposes feldspar and ferromagnesian minerals in the granite, which also weakens the granite. The weathering of these minerals (into clay) give Pikes Peak Granite its pinkish color; other granites are much grayer.

These processes of physical and chemical weathering cause slabs of granite to break off along the pressure release fractures, forming exfoliation domes. The slabs of rock that fall off are termed exfoliation sheets. Other exfoliation domes can be seen throughout the Pikes Peak region and in other parts of the nation. Perhaps the most famous exfoliation domes in the United States are Stone Mountain, Georgia and Enchanted Rock in the Hill Country of Texas.



*Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument also has exfoliation domes. Photo courtesy of Cliff and Jean Dickey.*



*This picturesque outcrop of exfoliating granite is on the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. Photo courtesy Cliff and Jean Dickey.*

*An excellent example of a granite exfoliation dome in Sphinx Park near the town of Pine in Jefferson County, Colorado. These pressure release cracks, forming parallel to the surface, can be clearly seen. Slabs of rock, or exfoliation sheets, still cling to the dome. Photo courtesy of J. Ghist.*

## Archeological Sites (Continued)

“Eleven-Mile Canyon Road”, the “Wilkinson Pass Road” and the “old post road to Howbert”, but made no mention of what is now called Teller County I, the road to Cripple Creek, or either of its previous road numbers, Highway 9 or Highway 143. Both local highway numbers date from after the switch from US40S to US Highway 24, the “Ocean to Ocean Highway”.

Two miles south of Florissant, site C-699 (BP 15), “in the Petrified Forest Region”, was an extensive campsite and workshop, yielding manos and a fair abundance of scattered finds on the surface. “An ancient workshop showed evidence of former activity in flaking and making stone implements.” (p. 5)

In 1935, the term “Petrified Forest region” probably referred to the “Original Colorado Petrified Forest”, Singer’s name for their “Bronco Dude Ranch” that included the Big Stump, a huge log south of the Big Stump, and a number of stumps throughout the valley. The Henderson family operated the site of the present visitor center at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, which they dubbed “The NEW Petrified Forest”. They had just constructed the present visitor center as a museum and ticket booth for their high-mountain valley tourist attraction. Unfortunately the report does not pinpoint the site, which obviously lies now in the center of the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. The Monument conducted an archeological reconnaissance of the park in the 1990s, but there was no sign of this campsite in their inventory.

In 1877, Arthur Lakes found a “spear point made from agatized wood” west of Florissant along the road to Lake George while hunting for Samuel Scudder’s horse. So Native Americans used the easily worked petrified wood to advantage; perhaps this reported camp and workshop site served as a center of source material. Renaud dated very few of the finds in the report except for the recent site in Florissant. Native Americans visited Adeline Hornbek and the Castello’s in Florissant. Atlanta Georgia Long Thompson tells of a number of visitations she experienced as a child living in the Flowering Valley (in [Daughter of a Pioneer](#)). So the site Potts found in the Petrified Forest region may have been a relatively recent site.

Site C-700 (BP 16) was another site near Lake George (in Park County just west of the junction of “11-Mile Road” and US40S). This campsite, in the valley flat east of the South Platte, showed “signs of being water washed at flood time”. It had protection

from the east and west, with a view to the north. It was large, but finds, which were scattered on the surface, were scarce.

Another campsite (BP-17) was southwest of Lake George, “along the old post road to Howbert”, one and a quarter mile away, south of the road, and one-half mile towards Eleven Mile Reservoir. It was fairly abundant in finds before being submerged by the rising water of the reservoir.

BP-18 and BP-19 were near the bridge over the South Platte River and the Denver Water Company’s stream gauge #6. These two campsites are around the top of the rocks and hills, BP –18 being north of the river and BP-19 south of the river. Finds were scarce in both sites. The report also described a site in the Eleven Mile Canyon site ten miles from the junction of Eleven Mile Canyon Road and US40S where “scattered finds mark a hunting ground, if not clearly a camp site, and a work shop.”

Trying to locate the sites that Renaud mentioned in the 1935 Archeological Report could occupy a lifetime. As Arthur Lakes would have said, “The vandals from Chicago have hauled all the treasures away.” But listing the sites will at least serve as a reference for historians of the Flowering Valley and perhaps instill in someone an interest in Native American sites throughout the “Pikes Peak Backcountry”.

Note: these sites were reported over 60 years ago; since then they have vanished into bulldozed sites, been covered with asphalt parking lots, been grazed over, plowed under, picked clean, or come under the protection of the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. But their presence reveals that the Native Americans also enjoyed camping and living in the beautiful Flowering Valley.

I’d like to thank Brooke Rohde, Curator of Collections at the University of Denver’s Museum of Anthropology, and Bernie Spilka, retired psychology professor at UD, for their help locating the original card catalog. More information and the entire 1935 archeological report can be accessed online at <http://www.penlib/du/edu/specoll/renaud/index.html>.

Other references included Mike Kohl’s [Discovering Dinosaurs in the Old West: the Field Journals of Arthur Lakes](#) and Atlanta Georgia Long Thompson’s [Daughter of a Pioneer](#), both available at the gift shop at the Fossil Beds.

## Florissant Trivia

Question: What was the REAL name of Coplen’s Dude Ranch?

A. Palmello Country Club

Q. Name the names and numbers which Teller County I has been called through time.

A. County I  
 end you were sitting), Highway 9, Highway 143, Teller  
 Florissant Road, Cripple Creek Road (depending on which

## UTE INDIANS (Continued)

He then carefully examined the fossil of a fish that I had found in the shales of ancient Lake Florissant.

"Do you see, this is the shadow of that fish. The fish is gone, but it has left its shadow here. That means that the spirit of the fish is in this stone. This is how the people would have looked at it. This valley would have been very sacred."

Many times in ceremony, I saw Tumpi Pahyah carefully gather stones. He then spoke to them and rubbed them in his palms, "awakening their spirit." He explained that all things are imbued with the Spirit of the Creator, and that Stones especially hold this energy since they were created before the earth was. They are thought to hold all knowledge and wisdom. Because of this attribute, Tumpi Pahyah often used them in his healing ceremonies. This numinous status would have added to the Ute understanding of the sacredness of the "shadow stones" at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. Also, the Monument was covered with "stone" (petrified) trees which would have only magnified its relevance as a sacred place.

I feel this hypothesis is further validated by the large numbers (almost 100) of Ute culturally scarred trees that can be found at the Monument. Fortunately, these trees excited the passion of ranger Harv Berman who has spent almost a dozen years identifying and mapping their locations.

The Ute people label these culturally scarred trees according to function. Therefore, there are Medicine Trees, Prayer Trees, Message Trees, etc. On the other hand, several academic studies refer to the Medicine Trees as "Peeled Bark Trees" because of the distinctive, rectangular section of outer bark that has been removed. These same studies also propose that the inner bark of these trees was used primarily as a food source during times of famine. Tumpi Pahyah counters, however, that these trees were used in healing ceremonies and the inner bark was only ingested as a part of this ceremony. I feel that the limited num-

ber of these trees (relative to the Ute population) corroborates the idea of their use in ceremony for the following reasons.

The Tabeguache Band of the Ute that was historically resident in the Pikes Peak area generally numbered about 1200 to 1500. Even a small family band usually numbered about 100 to 150. The groves where the Medicine Trees stand are mainly old growth, orange-bark trees. However, only select trees were peeled, not the entire grove. The entire inventory of Peeled Bark (Medicine) Trees is less than 100, which is hardly enough trees to have fed even a family band. Also, these trees are dispersed over a large geographic area, making it unlikely that they were peeled at the same time and for the same band.

The second largest group of Ute culturally scarred trees at the Monument is the Prayer Tree. This is usually a ponderosa sapling that is bent parallel to the ground and tied in this position with yucca ropes bound to ground stakes. As the tree grows, it naturally bends upwards, toward the sun, giving it a distinctive "elbow" shape. These trees are hundreds of years old, and almost always aligned with a sacred site, such as Pikes Peak ("Tava" or Sun in the Ute language). Once formed, they serve as the focus of ceremony; the Utes believe that the Spirit within the tree will hold their prayers. They also feel that each wind that blows is the breath of Creator, giving their prayers new life for the 600 to 800 years that the tree lives. Even today, when the Ute people return to their ancestral lands at Pikes Peak, they immediately seek out a Prayer Tree for ceremony.

Shadow Stones, Stone Trees, Medicine Trees, and Prayer Trees – all of these artifacts and living artifacts provide a rich, tangible connection with the early inhabitants of the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. Plan to come and celebrate the Ute Culture on August 13, 2005, when the Pikes Peak Historical Society and the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds collaborate to bring the Tabeguache Ute Dancers for their annual performance at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument.

## Aspen Tree (Continued)

**Fall:** This is perhaps the aspen's finest hour! The beautiful yellow, gold, and orange coloring of aspen leaves mixed with the dark green conifers, bare rock outcroppings, and often brilliant white snow are breathtaking. Back in Wisconsin where I'm from, the fall colors are incredible, with reds, browns, and yellows in a myriad of shades mixed together, but the Rockies can

be just as breathtaking with the contrast between the greens, yellows, golds, and bare rocks. Also, most of these colors are in a vertical landscape, so you can see them for miles.

We can thank early gold miners for our widespread aspen groves. Aspens are opportunistic, taking advantage of open areas in the forest where they don't have to compete with conifers. The miners needed vast amounts of wood for mine shoring (where timbers are used for support in mines), buildings, railroad

ties, and fuel to keep pumps operating. Early logging was extensive, opening up large areas of forest that the aspen soon filled.

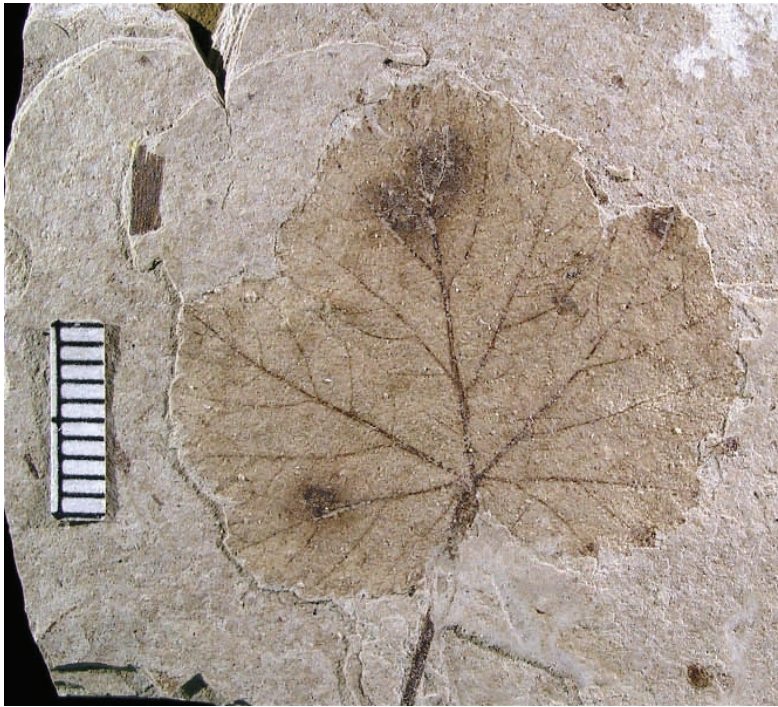
Next time you are hiking in the forest or driving local roads, appreciate the character and beauty of our aspen trees. And, while you're at it, look at all the other natural wonders that we so often take for granted.



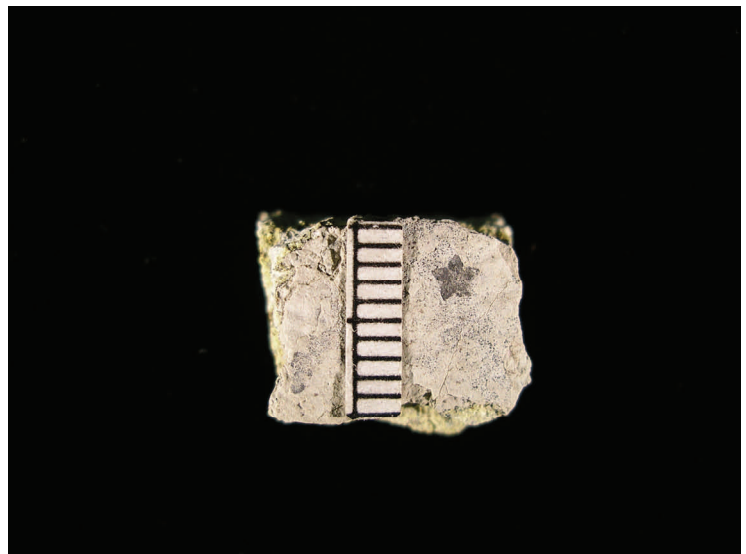
Circles show where a bear climbed an aspen tree at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. 2004 by S.W. Veatch



## Fossil Photos



*This fossil leaf is from a currant (*Ribes errans*)*  
*Photo Credit: Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument specimen no. 4497*  
*Photo date 2005 by S. W. Veatch*



*Fossil specimens at the Florissant fossil beds range from this very small and delicate flower to giant redwood stumps.*  
*Photo credit: Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument specimen no. 4486.*  
*Photo date 2005 by S. W. Veatch*

# Florissant Fossil Beds

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Florissant Fossil Beds  
National Monument



## Summer Seminar Series

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument offers seminars that allow teachers to earn graduate credits through Adams State College, Division of Extended Studies in Alamosa and recertification credit through BOCES. These one day seminars bring expert instructors from the region to educate teachers and the public about natural history, geology, and cultural history. The seminars are a mixture of hands-on activities, lecture, and experiences in the field.

Schedule	Date	Time	Topic	Instructor(s)
	June 18, 2005	8:30 - 4:30	Natural history of the Florissant Valley	Richard and Linda Beidleman
	June 25, 2005	9:00 - 5:00	Messages in Stone	Vince Mathews
	July 2, 2005	9:00 - 5:00	Mammals of the Montane	Pat Grove Scott Davis
	July 9, 2005	9:00 - 5:00	Homesteading in Colorado	Kathy Studevant Julie Eddy-Jones Walt Stark
	July 17, 2005	9:00 - 5:00	From Florissant to Guffey: Styles of Volcanism and the Shape of the Land	Bud Wobus
	July 23, 2005	9:00 - 5:00	Ancient Life and Landscapes of Florissant	Herb Meyer
	July 30-31, 2005	8:00 - 5:30	Geologic History of the Goldbelt Byway	Herb Meyer Woody Henry
	August 6, 2005	9:00 - 5:00	Teacher Workshop: Using Florissant Fossil National Monument to Teach Paleontology and Geology	Jeff Wolin
	August 20, 2005	9:00 - 5:00	The Cripple Creek Mining District	David Vardiman Steve Veatch

## Contact Information

For more information about prices, logistics, signing up, or any other questions, please contact Jeff Wolin at (719) 748 - 3253 or [jeff\\_wolin@nps.gov](mailto:jeff_wolin@nps.gov) AFTER APRIL 1, 2005. Reservations will not be taken until after May 1, 2005.

The seminar series is sponsored by the Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds, Inc.

# Lake George Gem and Mineral Show

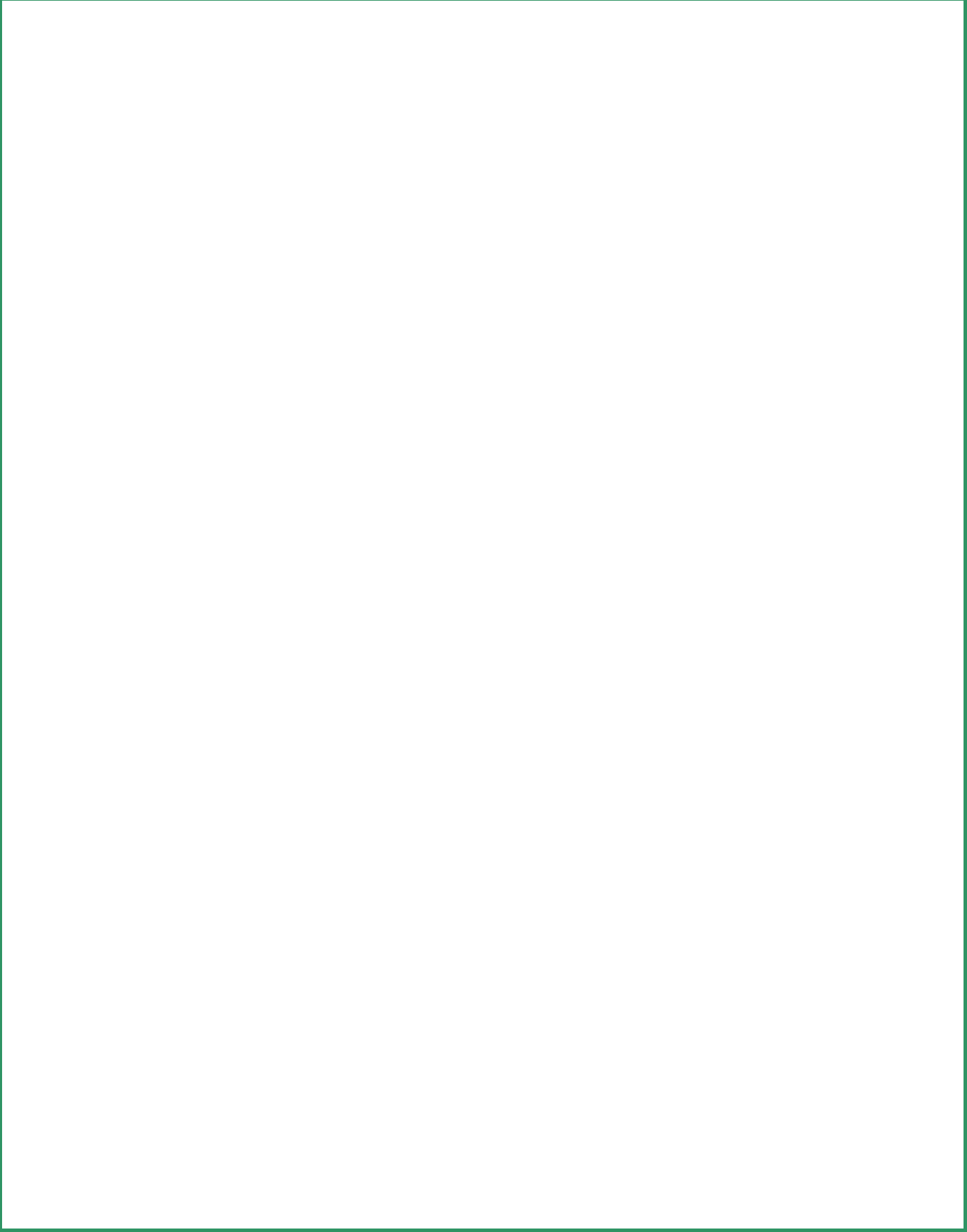
In Beautiful Lake George, Colorado  
38 miles west of Colorado Springs on U.S. 24

Friday, Saturday, Sunday  
August 19 - 21, 2005

*Minerals*  
*Fossils*  
*Local Specimens*  
*Jewelry*  
*Lapidary*  
*Field Trips*

Free admission - Free Parking!

**Contact Richard Parsons**  
303-838-8859/tazaminerals@att.net



# J.J. Huie Joins the Newsletter Staff As An Assistant Editor

I have a long-term relationship with Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. My first experience of the Fossil Beds was on cross-country skis when I was a youngster, and I remember visiting during a field trip in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In the summer of 2003, I was fortunate to be an interpretive intern at the Monument. Like so many others who have a love for national parks, I enjoy a variety of outdoor pursuits, including running, hiking, snowshoeing, and mountain biking.

Currently I'm working at an independent bookstore in Colorado Springs. I decided to help out with the Friends Newsletter because I would like to maintain my connection to one amazing place and gain experience in editing material having to do with nature in general. Between my many years of reading nature/outdoor literature and my academic background in science, I figured that I could make positive contributions to the newsletter and enjoy myself at the same time.

## Advertising Rates

Business Card Size:	\$6.00
¼ Page	\$12.00
½ Page	\$24.00
Full Page	\$48.00

You may submit advertisements to: Steven Veatch, P.O. Box 5938, Woodland Park, CO 80866 or via email: [sgeoveatch@att.net](mailto:sgeoveatch@att.net)

## Email Addresses Wanted

Please send your current email address to [fossilbeds@yahoo.com](mailto:fossilbeds@yahoo.com). This will allow us to send you reminders or events and important news items as they occur.

Please provide us with feedback on the newsletter or any topic you are interested in. We would also like to know who is interested in serving on various committees or on the Board. You can reach us at the address to the left or by email at [fossilbeds@yahoo.com](mailto:fossilbeds@yahoo.com).

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Jonathan Huie, Assistant Editor  
Don Miranda, Production manager

**Send contributions via email as a Word document or in rich text format to Steven Veatch at [sgeoveatch@att.net](mailto:sgeoveatch@att.net)**

The Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds newsletter is published quarterly by the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds and is governed by the by-laws of the Friends. Articles appearing in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Monument, officers, members, or sponsors of the Friends.

## About Our Organization...

In 1987, the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds, Inc. was organized by a group of dedicated individuals interested in assisting the National Park Service in its mission to preserve and protect our national treasures. As a non-profit organization, the Friend's mission is to secure resources to help preserve the fossils and promote programs activities that enhance the Monument's educational, research, and scientific objectives.

Friends' groups help many of the National Park service areas in a variety of ways. Membership fees and donations to the Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds are used for:

- Environmental education programs
- Field seminars
- Year-round interpretive programs
- Jr. Ranger programs
- Paleontological and geological resources
- Natural history resources
- Publications

Past accomplishments and ongoing support by the Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds includes:

- Major funding of the yurt shelters
- Travel and research funding for the Monument's paleontologist
- Assistance in the purchase of an all-terrain wheelchair for handicapped visitors
- Financial support for the University of Denver's (fossil data) Digitization Project
- Purchase of furniture for the seasonal rangers and intern housing
- Funding for other special Monument related celebrations and special events (such as the dedication of the new stump exhibit area May 11, 2002)
- Planning, funding, and coordinating the Monument's 30th Anniversary Celebration (1999) and 35th Anniversary Celebration (2004)
- Funding for the Monument's newspapers each spring
- Funding and coordination of annual Summer Educational Seminars Program

**FRIENDS OF THE FLOISSANT FOSSIL BEDS**  
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