

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

Field Trip Orientation

Thank you for your interest in visiting Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument! Depending on staffing availability, your visit will likely be self-guided. Please read through the following information to ensure your visit is safe and enjoyable for students and chaperones.

A self-guided field trip can be scheduled by emailing the park at FLFO_Information@nps.gov or by calling (719)748-3253. An Educational Fee Waiver will need to be completed before your field trip date.

Florissant Fossil Beds has a comfortable Visitor Center with interactive exhibits, park film, and indoor restroom facilities. Near to the Visitor Center and bus parking areas, there are outdoor restrooms and picnic areas with accessible tables. A total of 14 miles of hiking trails will be available to all visitors, but our three interpretive trails are best suited for school groups: the 1-mile Petrified Forest Loop, the ½ mile ADA accessible Ponderosa Loop, and the 1-mile Geologic Overlook.

Teachers are encouraged to show students the park film *before* visiting: [**Shadows of the Past – Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument**](#)

Self-guided lesson materials are available to borrow during your visit. A backpack with an itinerary, lessons, hands-on tools, and activities will be available at the front desk when your group checks in. Lessons are written to accommodate 3-4 groups of approximately 30 students per group during a standard 3-hour visit. The itinerary includes time for restroom breaks and lunch. The lessons take place in the Visitor Center Museum, at the main outdoor amphitheater, and on the 1-mile Petrified Forest Loop. Accommodations can easily be made for accessibility needs or time constraints.

The Monument has an elevation of 8500ft. Mountain weather can be highly variable at all times of year. Please come prepared for any weather conditions! Encourage students and chaperones to wear layers, closed-toed shoes, sunscreen, and to bring plenty of water.

Refillable water bottles are encouraged. The Monument does have a water bottle filling station and water fountains but does not sell food or beverages.

All National Park sites practice a Leave No Trace philosophy. Please remind students and chaperones to “pack it in, pack it out!” Especially in the picnic areas. This philosophy includes not disturbing wildlife, picking flowers, or collecting rocks, fossils, or artifacts. Please visit the [Leave No Trace Seven Principles](#) website for more information.

The Monument is 35 miles West of Colorado Springs. Traffic delays on Highway 24 are common. Please plan on delays when scheduling your trip.