DINOSAURCOAST
MANAGEMENT GROUP

Let's go dinosaur tracking!

Family activities to use along with the 'What to look for' publication:
https://www.dinosaurcoast.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/What-to-look-for.pdf

On the beach

Watch the tides

Broome has some of the biggest tides in Australia, with the water at times rising to 10 metres. These tides are powerful – they can cover tracks with sand or break them apart. They also mean you need to check tide charts and be careful when looking for tracks.

As a rule, only visit tracks when tides are 3.5 metres or lower and keep an eye on the incoming tide.

Spot tracks

When you start looking there are quite a few tracks to be found – especially the large rounded sauropod tracks.

Become a palaeontologist and decide if you are looking at a rock pool or a dinosaur track!

Get measuring

Measure the width of any print then multiply it*.

This will give you a rough idea of the height of that dinosaur to the top of its hip!

*For Sauropods multiply by 3.1
*For Theropods multiply by 4

How much taller was this dinosaur than you?

Measure time

Find a striated rock wall at the back of the beach. Can you see the thousands of layers that have formed it? Each layer was created millions of years ago by the sediment deposited, each day, by rivers and tides. Only more recently have the ancient rock layers been eroded, revealing their secrets, like dinosaur tracks.

What causes erosion What else might we find as the layers erode

Travel through time

You can't travel back 130 million years – but you can imagine what it was like: Look inland and imagine distant mountains covered in thick pine-like trees and ferns. Look to the sea – it was 5-10 kilometres further away. Where you're standing was a wide, flat, sandy plain with temporary rivulets that flowed from the mountains to the sea. And… there were herds of dinosaurs' mainly sauropods and a few theropods.

Make tracks

Don't leave the dinosaurs to have all the fun – make some tracks for yourself.

Use the sand as a canvas and create some interesting dinosaur tracks for somebody else to find, or simply draw a dinosaur

Can you do it to scale?

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On the beach or back at home

Care for tracks

1. Do not remove sand from the tracks
2. Do not step in or on the edges of the tracks
3. Do not drive over the tracks

What makes the dinosaur tracks so special?

Why do we need these rules?

Name tracks

Just to confuse things, the identifying names of dinosaur tracks are different to the name of the dinosaur that made them.

Have you found a *Megalosauropus broomensis* track?

These are three-toed theropod prints and the name translates to 'Big lizard-foot of Broome'.

What will you call the tracks you find?

Know your fossils

Fossils are the preserved remains of a living thing from the past, such as bones or shells, usually found in rocks.

Trace fossils are details left and preserved in rocks that provide evidence about living things in the past, for example tracks or burrows.

What different types of information about dinosaurs can we learn from trace fossils as opposed to fossils?

Get funny

Q: *What do you call a dinosaur with bad eyesight?*

A: *Do-you-think-he-saurus*

Share your own dinosaur jokes…

Get creative

*There once was a dinosaur
Who left a track with its paw…*

Use rhyme and rhythm to express your thoughts about all things prehistoric. Or try an acrostic poem instead:

*D …
I …
N …
O …*

Pay respect

The dinosaurs died out millions of years before people came along. Nonetheless, for many thousands of years Aboriginal people have come across the mysterious tracks.

Today, local Aboriginal groups still share stories which explain the location and significance of these tracks.

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