

## Paleontological resources management

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As the beginning of the twenty-first century and the third millennium approaches, paleontology is more popular than ever. It is one of the forces driving the renewed interest in the exploration of Mars. Here on Earth, it is rapidly becoming a major component of eco-tourism. There is a dark side to this popularity, however. In early September 1998, a trio with a rented U-Haul trailer from Buffalo, New York, attempted to remove Late Precambrian fossils from the vicinity of the Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve, using a pivotable rock saw. They were thwarted by concerned locals, who are currently developing eco-tourism proposals based on the

fossils. As a direct consequence of the incident, the province is currently revising the Historic Resources Act to include protection for fossils; currently, fossils are only protected under the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act. The challenge is to identify present and future paleontological resources worthy of protection, provide effective, flexible legislation without introducing undue bureaucracy, and maintain a balance between the interests of science, education, eco-tourism, etc. Paleontological resources management is greatly enhanced when the local populace are informed and on-side.