



Collect them all!

Receive a souvenir pin on your Burgess Shale adventure.

Learn more!

The Burgess Shale Online Exhibit on **Google Arts & Culture** provides an easy-to-understand introduction to the Burgess Shale.

For more information or to book a hike:



parks.canada.ca/burgessshale
1-888-773-8888

reservation.pc.gc.ca or
1-877-RESERVE (1-877-737-3783)



Burgess Shale Fossil Guided Hikes



Parks Canada offers guided hikes to three unique Burgess Shale locations in the mountains of Yoho and Kootenay national parks.

Mount Stephen: Stone bugs galore

Explore everything trilobite. Journey through steep terrain and discover more fossils than you believed possible! This historic site is where railway workers reported finding 'stone bugs' in the 1880s.

DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	ELEVATION	DURATION
Difficult	9 km	795 metres	7.5 hours

Walcott Quarry: Classic expedition

Start at the spectacular Takakkaw Falls and enjoy views of Emerald Lake from high in the mountains. Learn about the weird and wonderful Burgess Shale creatures, how they were fossilized and came to be found at the top of a mountain.

DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	ELEVATION	DURATION
Difficult	22 km	825 metres	11 hours

Stanley Glacier: Kootenay fossils revealed

Experience the ancient links to modern life on this family-friendly hike. Travel through fire-swept forest and get up close to the Stanley Glacier, learn about new fossils discoveries being unearthed in nearby quarries.

DIFFICULTY	DISTANCE	ELEVATION	DURATION
Moderate	10 km	385 metres	7.5 hours

Guided hikes run from June - September.

Small group sizes allow for plenty of opportunities to ask questions about geology or the local plants and animals.

Due to the length and difficulty, not all hikes are suitable for all ages. Children and youth up to 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. Please refer to website for more details.

Lifeforms were simple.

PRECAMBRIAN

CAMBRIAN PERIOD

(539 - 485 million years ago)

Complex life began.



The Burgess Shale fossils preserve animals from a critical time in the history of life – **the Cambrian Explosion.**

For billions of years most living organisms were very simple. During the Cambrian Explosion, animals evolved to have complex parts like legs and eyes. They started moving around and eating other animals. Life forms quickly changed and began to look like some modern marine animals do today. These fossils help to understand the evolution of life on Earth.



TIME OF THE DINOSAURS

(250 - 65 million years ago)

ROCKY MOUNTAINS FORMED

(140 - 65 million years ago)



PRESENT DAY

New discoveries are still being made today!



TO PROTECT THE FOSSILS, visitors can only access the main Burgess Shale sites through guided hikes or by special research permit.

The Burgess Shale fossils are...

OLD – Over 500 million years old. Way older than dinosaurs!

WELL PRESERVED – You can see all kinds of details. Not only bones like most fossils, you can also see eyeballs, guts, brains and more!

YOUR RELATIVES – Our ancestry can be traced back to these diverse ocean creatures.

The Burgess Shale fossils are some of the oldest and most complex on earth. These fossils are still impacting the way we understand early life and evolution.



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture



Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1984
Parcs des montagnes Rocheuses canadiennes inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en 1984

The Burgess Shale are recognized as a key part of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks UNESCO World Heritage Site.



WAPTA



MARELLA

Scientists have unearthed over 200 distinct species from the layers of the Burgess Shale, offering a window into the explosive diversity of the Cambrian Period.



STANLEYCARIS



OTTOIA



OPABINIA