

Some of nature's most amazing designs have existed for millions of years. Use your senses to go on a plant hunting adventure. Help us take care of our plants by asking your adults before you touch. Remember some of these plants are seasonal – they might not always be easy to spot.

Giant redwood

These are the tallest trees on earth. Step up close to feel the furry bark. They existed as far back as 65 million years ago – the end of the Cretaceous period – when Tyrannosaurus rex walked the earth.

Ginkgo

Ginkgo trees are 270 million years old. Look up at the leathery leaves, what does the shape remind you of? This kind of tree is known as a 'living fossil' because it is so old.

Monkey puzzle tree

We think this was a main food source for herbivore dinosaurs during the Jurassic period, 200 million years ago. The height of the tree might be why the Diplodocus evolved to have such a long neck. Stretch up tall like a Diplodocus to admire this tree.

Tree fern

Step inside the glasshouse and smell the scented plants. In here, you will find tree ferns from Australia that grow to 15 metres in height! These were snacks for herbivore dinosaurs who ate 500kg of plants a day.

Magnolia

This ancient tree existed during the Cretaceous period, 142 to 65 million years ago. Magnolias were around before bees existed, so beetles pollinated the flowers. Their sweet smell attracts many pollinators – can you spot any insects?

Dragonflies

Dragonflies are predators – can you spot any hunting at the water's edge? Fossils of their enormous ancestors have been discovered with wingspans of 75cm. Prehistoric insects were bigger because of the extra oxygen in the earth's atmosphere.

Wollemi pine

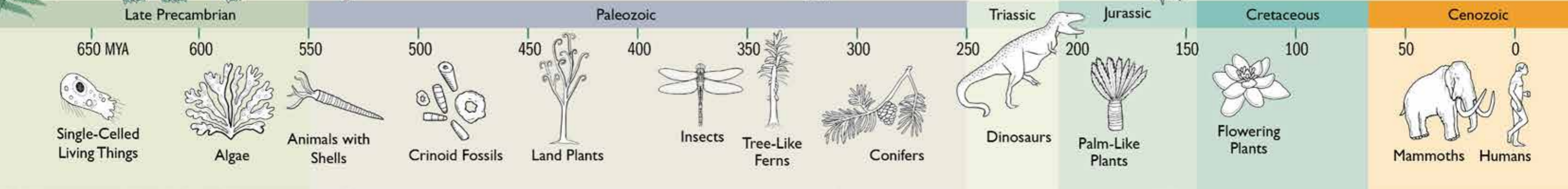
Can you spot the small Wollemi pine? These trees date back to the Jurassic period 200 million years ago. They were thought to be extinct - like dinosaurs - and then they were rediscovered in 1994!

Gunnera

Can you think of a large herbivore dinosaur who would have eaten these enormous leaves? This plant has the nickname 'Dinosaur Food' – it's been around for over 150 million years.

Crinoid fossils

Look for the rock stacks at the centre of the Rock Garden. These are packed full of crinoid fossils. Touch the surface of the fossils – how do they feel? Crinoids look like old nuts and bolts but they were marine animals that lived 300 million years before dinosaurs.



Use this trail to follow the footsteps of dinosaurs and discover prehistoric plants in Stand Wood.

Share photos of your plant hunting @chatsworthofficial #chatsworthexplorers

Grit stone edges

As you walk along the trail, look out for the grit stone edges. Can you spot the rocks that form an archway with a small cave beside it? These rocks were formed from silt deposits 350 million years ago.

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Fern

Ferns have existed for up to 350 million years. Ferns were one of the first plants to evolve on land and make oxygen. This helped other life forms exist out of water. Carefully look on the underside of the fern fronds. Can you see the dots? These are called spores – flowerless plants use them to reproduce.

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Hart's tongue fern

Can you spot this unusual plant? It's the only fern without divided leaves. Its name comes from the leaf being compared to a deer's tongue (deer were once called harts). Ferns are related to plants that appeared over 300 million years ago. Carefully turn the leaf over to see the bright orange spores.

Horse tail grass

Take a look along the path. Can you find something that looks like a toilet brush? These strange plants were around in the late Cretaceous period, 145 to 100 million years ago. They were a tasty snack for a Triceratops.

You've reached the end of the trail. When you get to the Hunting Tower, take a quiet moment to enjoy the sounds of Stand Wood. You can find more activities at the farmyard: join our big fossil dig and take part in roarsome crafts.

Find out more about our family activities at: chatsworth.org/family-activities

We'd love to keep in touch. Subscribe at: chatsworth.org



Prehistoric Explorers