

for damaged painted surfaces, lost feathers, or missing beads can be extremely useful.

### Conclusions

The application of these new areas of concern to conservation have begun to clarify and expand the traditional basic considerations by requiring a greater interdisciplinary, cross-cultural and historic understanding than has previously been practiced. The Collections Assessment Program (CAP) and the Save our Sculptures (SOS) campaigns that are administered by Heritage Preservation have been tremendously successful in raising public awareness of conservation and providing outreach efforts to many small museums, historical sites and communities throughout the nation.<sup>4</sup> Creative application of these programs has begun to help tribal museums and cultural centers, archeological sites, and other cultural resource institutions to participate and benefit. As conservators of ethnographic and archeological collections grapple with the task of explaining the goals of conservation and how to choose a competent conservator, they must continue to consider a wider range of issues related to indigenous collections. A greater awareness of

relevant legal issues, the inclusion of revised ethical standards, and a willingness to learn and include new cultural perspectives have become major components to the practice of conservation in 2000.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Carolyn Rose, "Ethical and Practical Considerations in Conserving Ethnographic Museum Objects." In *The Museum Conservation of Ethnographic Objects*, edited by T. Morita and C. Pearson. *Senri Ethnological Series 23*. (Osaka, Japan: National Museum of Ethnology, 1988), 5-43.
- <sup>2</sup> A full text of NAGPRA, the rules, and minutes of the Review Committee meetings may be found at <<http://www.cr.nps.gov/aad/nagpra.htm>> and <<http://www.cast.uark.edu/products/NAGPRA/nagpra.dat/tgm005.html>>.
- <sup>3</sup> Information about the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works may be found at <<http://aic.stanford.edu>>.
- <sup>4</sup> Information about the programs of Heritage Preservation may be found at <<http://www.heritagepreservation.org>>.

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## Florissant Fossil Beds Creates Database of Non-NPS Collections

**P**aleontological collections of 34-million-year-old plant and insect fossils from the area around Florissant, Colorado, were made for about a century before the creation of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. These collections include the type specimens for about 1,500 new species that have been described in numerous publications. Some of the early publications did not illustrate these specimens, nor did they indicate the museums where they were to be kept. In some cases, entire museum collections were transferred to other museums, which then assigned new catalog numbers. Currently, the type and published collections of Florissant fossils are housed in at least 14 different museums throughout North America and Europe. Some of these museums do not maintain computerized databases. As a consequence of these factors, information pertaining to Florissant type and published specimens has become complexly scattered throughout the literature and among different museums.

I have been engaged in a project since 1995 to integrate all of the museum collection and publication data into a new database. More than a dozen museums from Berkeley to London have been visited to examine collections and acquire data on site. New photographs are being taken for all of these specimens, some of which have not been illustrated previously or were illustrated only by drawings. The equivalent of about one year has been spent on-site at these museums.

The illustrated database includes about 5,000 specimens. It will be made available as a web site—a virtual museum of the important fossils from Florissant. This will help lead researchers directly to the museums where these important fossils are housed.

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