

Joggins Fossil Cliffs, Canada

Key facts

- Recommended by IUCN for inscription on the World Heritage List in July 2008 at the World Heritage Committee in Quebec City, Canada, for its coal age fossils.
- The Joggins Fossil Cliffs have been termed the “coal age Galápagos” and are the world reference site for the Coal Age.
- The site bears witness to the first reptiles in Earth’s history, which are the earliest representatives of the amniotes, a group of animals that includes reptiles, dinosaurs, birds, and mammals.
- Upright fossil trees are preserved at a series of levels in the cliffs together with animal, plant and trace fossils. These provide environmental context and enable a complete reconstruction to be made of the extensive fossil forests that dominated land at this time, and are now the source of most of the world’s coal deposits.
- The property has played a vital role in the development of seminal geological and evolutionary principles, including through the work of Sir Charles Lyell and Charles Darwin, for which the site has been referred to as the “coal age Galápagos”.

Key quotes

- *“This is a fascinating site where you can literally see a slice of history,” says **Tim Badman, World Heritage Advisor of IUCN’s Protected Areas Programme.** “The Joggins Fossil Cliffs contain the best and most complete known fossil record of terrestrial life in the iconic Coal Age. You can actually see the remains of the first reptiles in the history of the Earth, as well as fossil trees, animals and plants.”*

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Photos

- For photos of the Joggins Fossil Cliffs, please visit <http://data.iucn.org/temp/wh2008/>. Please note the images are copyright protected and can only be used to illustrate press releases in relation to IUCN’s recommendations to the World Heritage Committee.



Reptile footprints at the Joggins Fossil Cliffs, Canada © IUCN/Wesley Hill