

## FOSSIL COLLECTING AREAS IN IOWA

The following list, although far from complete, includes a few of the better fossil collecting areas in Iowa.

1. Rockford, Floyd County (¼ mile south and ¼ mile west of the Rockford Brick and Tile Company pit, on county road "D"). Well preserved brachiopods, gastropods, and corals are most abundant in the yellowish shales that overlie the blue-gray beds. The fossils occurring here are known as the Hackberry fauna and have been described by C.L. and M.A. Fenton in a book entitled, "The Hackberry State of the Upper Devonian," published by the MacMillan Company in 1924.

2. Bird Hill, Cerro Gordo County This is near the center of the north line of section 24, T 95N, R.19W, about 3½ miles west and ¼ mile south of the Rockford Brick and Tile Company Plant. The Hackberry fauna can be collected here also.

3. Elgin-Clermont area, Fayette County In the Elgin Member of the Maquoketa Formation large trilobites and both straight and coiled cephalopods are found. Fragments of trilobites are common, but whole specimens are rare. Road cuts along the new highway between Clermont and Elgin, the dry stream bed along county road "Y" east of Clermont, and the high-road cuts along the Turkey River southeast of Elgin are all good collecting sites. References for this area are: (1) Slocum, A.W., "Trilobites from the Maquoketa Beds of Fayette County, Iowa," Iowa Geological Survey Annual Report, Volume 25; (2) Walter, O.T., "Trilobites of Iowa and some Related Paleozoic Forms," Iowa Geological Survey Annual Report, Volume 31; (3) Ladd, H.S., "Stratigraphy and Paleontology of the Maquoketa Shale of Iowa," Iowa Geological Survey Annual Report, Volume 34. These volumes are out of print but are available in many public and school libraries.

4. Graf Station, Dubuque County At the little I.C.R.R. station of Graf the Maquoketa Formation is exposed and is literally crowded with straight cephalopods. Graf is located on a county road about 8 miles west of Dubuque and about 1½ miles north of Highway 20. This site is described in reference #3 of area #3.

5. Bellevue, Jackson County Along Mill Creek, (about 1,000 feet upstream from the highway bridge), in the thin, dark shale just above the rock in the stream bed, is found what is known as the "depauperate fauna". This is an assemblage of small, phosphatic fossils that are about ½ normal size. The inexperienced collector must look carefully to find them. This fauna is described in reference #3 of area #3.

6. LeGrand, Marshall County Some of the finest crinoid specimens in the world have been collected at the LeGrand quarries about 1 mile north of where Highway 30 enters the west city limits. These are difficult to find, however, and many hours of work are required to prepare the specimens that are obtained before they are ready for study or display. Reference: Laudon, L.R., and Beane, B.H., "The Crinoid Fauna of the Hampton Formation at LeGrand, Iowa," University of Iowa Studies in Natural History, Volume 17, No. 6.

7. Gilmore City, Pocahontas County Both corals and crinoids are found in the Gilmore City Formation in several quarries just northwest of town. As with the specimens collected at LeGrand, a great deal of work is required to prepare the crinoids. Reference: Laudon, L.R., "The Stratigraphy and Paleontology of the Gilmore City Formation of Iowa," University of Iowa Studies in Natural History, Volume 15, No. 2.

8. Quasqueton, Buchanan County Good horn corals can be found in abundance 2 miles west of Quasqueton in the talus along the bluff south of the Wapsipinicon River.

9. Southeast Iowa The Mississippian rocks of southeast Iowa provide a variety of good fossil specimens. In the Burlington Formation, near Burlington, Denmark, or Augusta, one can find large brachiopods, fish teeth, crinoids, and blastoids. Collecting here is not as good as at locations 1 and 2, but careful searching will reward one with excellent specimens. References: (1) Van Tyle, F.M., "Stratigraphy of the Mississippian System in Iowa," Iowa Geological Survey Annual Report, Volume 30. (2) Laudon, L.R., "Stratigraphy of the Kinderhook Series of Iowa," Iowa Geological Survey Annual Report, Volume 35.

10. Vinton, Benton County Large *Spirifers*, *Atrypa* and the colonial coral *Hexagonaria* can be collected at the B.L. Anderson quarry northeast of Vinton in SE cor. Sec. 10, T.85N., R.10W. The coral is often cut and polished and is called "Birds-eye marble."

11. Red Oak-Stennet area, Montgomery County A band of brown to black chert generously peppered with the small white fusulinid *Triticites* occurs in the quarries near these towns. This specimen is paleontologically interesting and the chert polishes nicely.

12. Thurman, Fremont County For those interested in collecting fossil plants there is a good collecting area located along Plum Creek in NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , sec. 31, T.70N., R.42W. This is 1 mile east and 1 mile north of the town of Thurman.

13. St. Charles, Madison County In SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , sec. 13, T.75N, R.26W, an abundance of *Chonetes* and *Crurithyris* can be found in an argillaceous limestone of the Westerville Formation.

