

Black Hills Petrified Forest

Fee

Piedmont SD (near Rapid City)

Travel west on I-90 from Rapid City and take exit 46 east about one mile to a privately owned petrified forest. According to Arthur Manning book *Petrified Wood in the USA*, this is one of the top 10 petrified wood sites in the USA. Some of the logs are large, over 100 feet long. This is also the sight were they found the brontosaurus, today called an apatosaurus .

This is a small mom and pop operation. . The self-guided tour begins with a short evolutionary movie on the formation of the Black Hills. Then you meander through the woods to view some **25 stations** of petrified wood. Petrified wood pieces lie where they were found.

How did these pieces of wood petrify if sediment slowly covered it over millions of years, would not it have rotted away before it was completely covered? Tree today do not die and become petrified instead they rot away. It takes very special conditions for a piece of wood to petrify.

Petrified wood

Evolution would want you to believe that it takes millions of years for wood to petrify or turn to stone. It doesn't take a long time for wood to petrify. It takes the right chemical conditions for wood to become petrified. For example, a farmer's fence posts below the ground dating from the mid-1800's, were found totally petrified! The top portion had rotted away while those in the ground had petrified! A piece of wood was dangled in Yellowstone's silica hot springs for a year and was found to be substantially petrified! Petrified wood can be found at the chapel of Santa Maria de Salute in Venice, Italy. This massive stone block chapel was built in 1630 to celebrate the end of the Plague. The city of Venice is built on water saturated sand and clay, so the chapel's foundation was reinforced with 180,000 wooden pilings. How have these wooden pilings remained firm for some 400 years? They are petrified! The once wooden pilings have turned to stone! It does not take a long time to petrify, just the right conditions. Petrified wood is not as rare as you may think. In fact it is an abundant fossil and found worldwide. To make petrified wood, wood needs to be buried in oxygen-poor sediment. Water then percolates through the ground bringing with it minerals. Cell by cell, the original wood is completely dissolved away and replaced. The ideal environment for wood to become petrified is burial by volcanic ash. This provides the needed minerals and hot water for the wood to petrify. The color of the petrified wood depends on the minerals in the water. Arizona's petrified wood is famous for its yellows and reds (from the iron minerals) and

green and blues (from the copper). The petrified wood of the Dakotas are usually very light brown or cream colored.

The Flood of Noah's day would have had the right conditions in order for wood to petrify; the trees had to be buried quickly before decomposing. Living trees that die and fall in the forest will decompose from fungus, bacteria and other creatures. Flood waters would have percolated down into the soil extracting minerals and depositing them in the wood. Petrified wood is abundant and worldwide, yet it rarely occurs today because of the special conditions required. What event in history would have worldwide deep burial of wood in a water saturated ground? The Flood of Noah's time provides the answer.

So the next time you pick up a piece of petrified wood, realize you are holding a piece of evidence for a worldwide flood, the Flood of Noah's day.

1. Ham, Ken, ed. 2010. *The New Answers Book 3*. Master Books: Green Forest, AR. p. 96.
2. Morris, Dr. John. 2002. *Geology*. Master Books: Green Forest, AR. p.71.
3. Snelling, Dr. Andrew. September 1995. "Instant Petrified Wood". *Creation Magazine*, p. 38-40.