

# FLAT ROCKS SITE – PART 4 – THE VOLUNTEERS

Site #16 on the Strzelecki Taxonomy Map

None of the research work carried out in Victoria over the last thirty years would have been possible without the support of over 1300 volunteers, who gave their time and enthusiasm to keep the search for dinosaurs going. More than 400 volunteers braved the steep cliff climb and unpredictable weather conditions at Dinosaur Cove on the Otway Coast for 11 years from 1984 until 1994. Since the start of annual field trips to the Flat Rocks site in 1994, almost 900 volunteers from Victoria, interstate and world wide have joined the core of regular crew who just can't stay away. These numbers do not include the myriad of sponsors who have supported the Dinosaurs of Darkness and the Dinosaur Dreaming projects over the years. We must also not forget the enthusiasts who join Mike Cleeland on his regular prospecting trips along both the Otway and Bass coasts.

All these volunteers are bonded together by a passion for finding a dinosaur bone or a piece of turtle shell or even a fish jaw. It doesn't matter what they find, it is the thrill of being the first person in the whole world to see that particular fossil when the rock is split. It is a magical feeling and very addictive, which is why so many volunteers return each summer to "do it again".

Even though the work can be demanding and laborious, the experience of breaking rock hour after hour beside fellow fossil enthusiasts can be quite rewarding and long-term friendships have been made.



Top: Volunteers digging sand from above the fossil layer at the Flat Rocks site  
Bottom: Volunteers breaking rock in the back garden of the dig house.