



Cephalopod

- Cephalopod fossils resemble a mummy's finger.
- Cephalopods wore a cone-shaped shell, which was either straight or coiled.
- Cephalopods are the ancestors of today's squid and octopus.
- Fun Fact: Cave of the Mounds has a six -foot-long cephalopod fossil.



Crinoid

- Crinoid fossils resemble a screw, or stack of small disks.
- Crinoids are commonly known as sea lilies, though they are animals, not plants.
- Crinoids are closely related to today's sea stars, sea urchins, and brittle stars.
- Fun Fact: the longest crinoid stem fossil ever found was 130 feet long.



Gastropod

- Gastropod fossils resemble a cinnamon bun.
- "Gastropod" means "stomach-foot" as this creature moved around on its stomach.
- Gastropods are one of the few species that live in the ocean, freshwater and land.
- Fun Fact: Many species of Gastropods, such as the snail, are still living today.



Brachiopod

- Brachiopod fossils resemble a clam shell.
- Brachiopods may look like clams, but they are actually distinct creatures that were very common millions of years ago.
- Fun Fact: Today, Brachiopods can be found deep in the water of the polar regions.



Goniatite

- Goniatite fossils resemble a small squished spiral.
- This creature belonged to the ammonoid family, and was closely related to the cephalopods and gastropods.
- Fun Fact: Scientists believe that they were not great swimmers.



Shark Teeth

- Shark teeth fossils resembles brown/tan/black teeth.
- Shark teeth become buried in the sea floor, then sediments filled in the pore spaces turning them into fossils.
- Fun Fact: Sharks shed thousands of teeth in their lifetime.



Petrified Wood

- Petrified wood fossils resemble bark, trees, and firewood.
- When plant material is protected from decaying, over time minerals replace the organic matter, turning it to stone.
- Fun Fact: Oak and Pine trees are common petrified wood fossils.

Did you find something in your collection that is not on this chart? What a great opportunity for you to become a paleontologist! Ask your teachers for some resources they recommend to help solve the mystery.