



Eagle photos/Angel Carpenter

Hikers enjoy the sights of the Blue Basin Trail in the John Day Fossil Beds Sheep Rock Unit.

HIKE

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Hikers should stick to the trail, and if a fossil is found, they can take a picture of it and show a ranger. Taking fossils or rocks is prohibited.

Another route at the trailhead, the Blue Basin Overlook, is a 3.25-mile loop with a spectacular vista. It is considered a moderate to strenuous hike with a 600-foot elevation gain and loss.

Directions: Travel west on Highway 26 from Dayville 6.9 miles to the Highway 19 junction in Picture Gorge. Turn right at the junction. The Thomas Condon Paleontology Center and Cant Ranch is 2.1 miles

north. Approximately 3 miles farther, clearly marked with a brown metal sign, is the Blue Basin Trailhead, which includes paved parking, a picnic area and restrooms, but no water.

Traveling a short distance farther north is the breathtaking Cathedral Rock and, shortly after, the Force Area's Flood of Fire and Story in Stone trails.

The Flood of Fire (0.4 miles round trip) has a gravel trail with a viewpoint overlooking the John Day River Valley and a colorful rock formation similar to Cathedral Rock.

The Story in Stone (0.3 miles round trip) trail, which is partially paved, skirts above a small basin of blue-green claystone. Like the Blue Basin, the formation contains fossils of animals that lived in there 25 million to 30 million years ago.



A hiker looks at information about the types of fossils that have been discovered at the Blue Basin Area.



The end of the trail at the Blue Basin Island in Time hike.



John Day Fossil Beds Park Ranger Marissa Humphreys is ready to give hiking tours of the Blue Basin Area.

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