

Koreanosaurus boseongensis

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The 11th MTE Organizing Committee

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The international Geoheritage strategies and aspirations of Paleo Safari and JuraPark

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Paleo Safari (formerly the Dinosaur Safari Project) is an umbrella organization recently established to protect Geosites, especially vertebrate tracksites. Paleo Safari also coordinates paleontological museum development, exhibit and research work. This project was originally initiated in Poland by the Polish Geological Institute and is now continued by JuraPark. JuraPark, in turn, is an organization developed by Delta Association, a non-profit educational organization supported by a Polish corporation known as Publima Concern.

At present Publima, Delta Association and JuraPark have been responsible for creating three open air museums in Poland at Baltow, Solec and Krasiejow. These three sites, look like dinosaur parks, but they do much more than showcases large dinosaur models. They bring in a cumulative annual total of ~800,000 visitors, and are regarded (and supported) by the European Union as exemplary models of regional development. They are organized to include museums where important specimens are protected and displayed for the public. For example, at Baltow, where Delta Association has reduced unemployment to zero, a large collection of Early Jurassic tracks rescued from the active Szydlowek Quarry, are now permanently displayed in a reconstructed quarry named Sabathowka (in honor of the late Karol Sabath). The tracks include a very-well-preserved set of squatting dinosaur tracks (Gierlinski et al., 2009) and hundreds of other well-preserved footprints attributable to Grallator, Eubrontes, Anomoepus and Moyenosauripus. This makes the Sabathowka collection (at Baltow) the Polish equivalent of the famous Early Jurassic Edward Hitchcock footprint collection at Amherst College, Massachusetts, or the Early Jurassic tracks collection at the St. George Dinosaur Discovery Site, in Utah. The Krasiejow site is built around the type locality for the Late Triassic proto-ornithischian dinosaur or dinosauromorph Silesaurus.

In addition to these three large parks, a number of smaller 'satellite' sites fall under the Paleo Safari umbrella. These include two sites in the Holy Cross Mountains: the Lower Jurassic, sauropod-theropod dinosaur tracksite, at Soltykow and the Late Jurassic theropod-ornithopod tracksite at Jewish Gully. Another satellite site is the Guciow exhibit in the far east of Poland where Late Cretaceous ornithopod and theropod tracks are on display. In summary, therefore, there are three major parks and three additional satellite exhibits under the Paleo Safari umbrella.

Paleo Safari (and JuraPark) has extended its partnerships in Europe and internationally. At present European partners include Museo de Jurasico de Asturias (MUJA) in Spain. Dinosaur Ridge Colorado is also a partner, as is the University of Colorado at Denver Dinosaur Tracks Museum. Partnership activities include the exchange and construction of specimens and exhibits, and collaborative scientific research and publication. The latest project is called Moab Giants, in development in eastern Utah, and involves further partnership with the University of Colorado Denver.

References

Gierliński, G. D. Lockley, M. G., Niedźwiedzki, G. 2009. A distinctive crouching theropod trace from the Lower Jurassic of Poland Geological Quarterly 53: 471–475.