



# Marks-Kucher Award 2026 Student Bursary

Dinosaur Provincial Park • UNESCO World Heritage Site

INFORMATION PACKAGE & APPLICATION FORM



## Marks-Kucher Award

The Marks-Kucher Award is a bursary to provide an introductory experience in vertebrate palaeontology fieldwork for students in graduate or undergraduate palaeontology programs. Students pursuing acceptance into a postsecondary palaeontology program may also apply.

This bursary consists of financial support to cover the program costs of a 3-day Guided excavation and prospecting experience in the beautiful badlands of Dinosaur Provincial Park. The Marks Kutcher Bursary provides opportunities to gain valuable field experience with traditional excavation and mapping techniques in one of the richest fossil locales in the world. Candidates will also partake in field prospecting and surveying activities in the surrounding badlands. They will learn skills including GPS use, field note taking, identifying local geology, and fossil identification.

In association with the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology, and with an experienced palaeontological technician as your guide, the practical knowledge and insights you gain will be of value to you for the rest of your career.



## 2026 Program Timeline

- ❖ Apply by June 1st. Submit the attached application form, which **must include the signature of a faculty sponsor**.
- ❖ Successful candidates will be contacted by June 3rd at the latest.
- ❖ Participants will **attend the 3-day program from June 26th – June 28th, 2026**.

## A Typical Day on Guided Excavation

Participate in an authentic and systematic excavation of a ceratopsian bonebed that provides specimens for ongoing research at the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology. They will then participate in a day of palaeontological prospecting. A regular program day is 7 hours long (9:00am – 4:00pm) and requires participants to be outdoors for the majority of that time. Please check the weather forecast and bring a variety of apparel to ensure you are dressed comfortably and appropriately for our semi-arid climate.

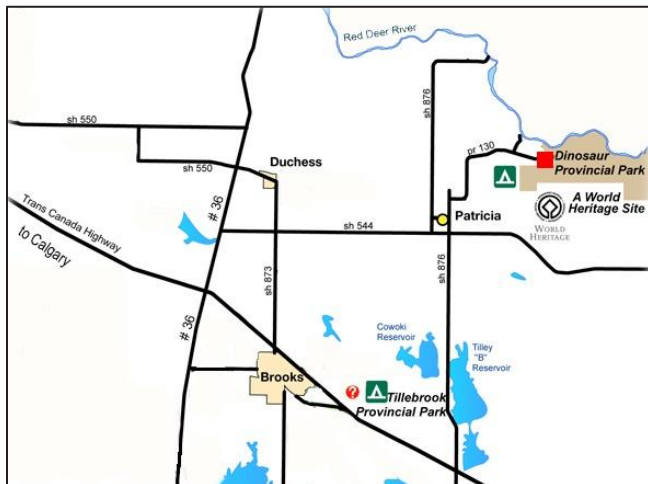
The program begins at the Visitor Centre where you will be met by Andre Mueller (palaeontological technician and program leader) for an orientation to the Park, our fossils, and the research project. You will also receive training for proper techniques before your work in the quarry begins. One program day will be devoted to prospecting, which includes hiking and searching for new fossil finds. Tools and equipment will be provided.

## What the Bursary Does (and Doesn't) Cover

Successful candidates will be contacted by email by June 3rd at the latest and will be informed if they have qualified for the 3-day program. For each successful candidate, the bursary covers onsite accommodations for three nights. A single room in a shared residence unit will be provided from June 25-28. Each residence unit has a shared kitchen with cooking equipment, pots, pans, utensils, dishware, etc.

Participants are required to bring their own bedding, food, toiletries, and bath towels. Transportation to the Park, food, and any other related expenses are the responsibility of the student. The student is expected to arrive anytime on June 25th to settle in, enjoy the Park, and be fully prepared to start the program at the Visitor Centre at 9:00am the following morning.

Dinosaur Provincial Park is located 48 km northeast of Brooks, Alberta. More information about the Park can be found online at [www.dinosaurpark.ca](http://www.dinosaurpark.ca).



## Extending Your Stay

Camping and Comfort Camping facilities are available and bookable at [www.reserve.albertaparks.ca](http://www.reserve.albertaparks.ca). There are also hotels and B&Bs in Brooks and elsewhere in the County of Newell.

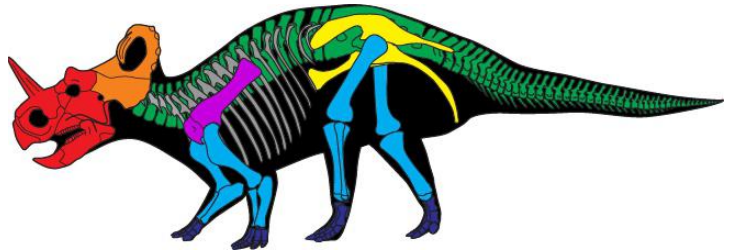
Arrangements for additional tours or extended stays are the responsibility of the student. Students interested in camping for additional days may also request use of the VIP Campsite to reduce associated costs.

## What to Bring for Your Program

- ❖ Sturdy hiking boots or good running shoes
- ❖ Comfortable, loose-fitting clothing
- ❖ Hat with a full brim
- ❖ Backpack
- ❖ Minimum 2 L water/day
- ❖ Notebook
- ❖ Packed lunch and snacks
- ❖ Sunscreen, sunglasses, insect repellent
- ❖ Rain jacket
- ❖ Camera (optional)

Questions may be directed to:

[andre.mueller@gov.ab.ca](mailto:andre.mueller@gov.ab.ca)





# Marks-Kucher Award 2026 Student Bursary

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The Marks-Kucher Award provides introductory experience in vertebrate palaeontology fieldwork for current or prospective students in postsecondary palaeontology programs.

**Application deadline:** June 1, 2026

**Email to:** [andre.mueller@gov.ab.ca](mailto:andre.mueller@gov.ab.ca)

**Applicant's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**University:** \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT PROGRAM		INTENDED PROGRAM (if applicable)	
<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>Year</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Palaeontology	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Palaeontology	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Biology	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Biology	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
<input type="checkbox"/> Geology	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Geology	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 4+	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 4+
<b>Graduate</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Graduate</b>	<b>Type</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Vertebrate palaeontology	<input type="checkbox"/> Master's	<input type="checkbox"/> Vertebrate palaeontology	<input type="checkbox"/> Master's
<input type="checkbox"/> Invertebrate palaeontology	<input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D.	<input type="checkbox"/> Invertebrate palaeontology	<input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D.
<input type="checkbox"/> Palaeobotany		<input type="checkbox"/> Palaeobotany	

### Check the amount and types of previous fieldwork experience

- |                                   |  |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> none     | <input type="checkbox"/> Dinosaur                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Excavation  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 day    | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-dinosaur vertebrate         | <input type="checkbox"/> Prospecting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2–6 days | <input type="checkbox"/> Invertebrate or palaeobotanical | <input type="checkbox"/> Collection  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7+ days  | <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological                  |                                      |

**Briefly explain how this experience will support your academic and career objectives**

**Please read and initial the following statements**

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the Marks-Kucher bursary only covers the designated program fees and that meals, travel costs, etc. are the responsibility of the bursary recipient.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that this bursary cannot be transferred to anyone else.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the 3-day program is only offered on the dates of June 26 – June 28, 2026.

**Applicant's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Only successful applicants will be contacted by email by **June 3rd, 2026**. Transportation to the Park, food, and any other related expenses are the responsibility of the student.*

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**Supervisor's name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title/faculty:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below the faculty member certifies that, to the best of their knowledge, **the applicant is currently a student in or is applying for a palaeontology program**, and that the student would benefit from participating in palaeontological fieldwork. Each faculty member may recommend no more than two students per year.

**Supervisor's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



This opportunity is made possible through the generous support of the Marks-Kucher Bursary and the efforts of Alberta Parks. Guided Excavation is a program of Dinosaur Provincial Park UNESCO World Heritage Site, conducted in scientific partnership with the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology.