



**SUE: The *T. rex* Experience**

# Exhibition Details

**Size:** 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup> (465 m<sup>2</sup>)

**Ceiling Height:** 14 ft (4.27 m)

## **Content Specialists:**

Thomas Cullen, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Researcher

Bill Simpson, Head of Geological Collections

Az Klymiuk, Ph.D., Collections Manager, Paleobotany

The **core exhibition** features a new, fully articulated cast skeleton of SUE with added gastralia, full-scale replications, touchable models, mechanical and digital interactives, large media elements and videos—including a one-of-a-kind SUE light show—and a gallery-wide soundscape.

The optional **add-on package** contains four cases of real fossils from the Field Museum's collections—including real pieces of SUE and a *Triceratops* skull.

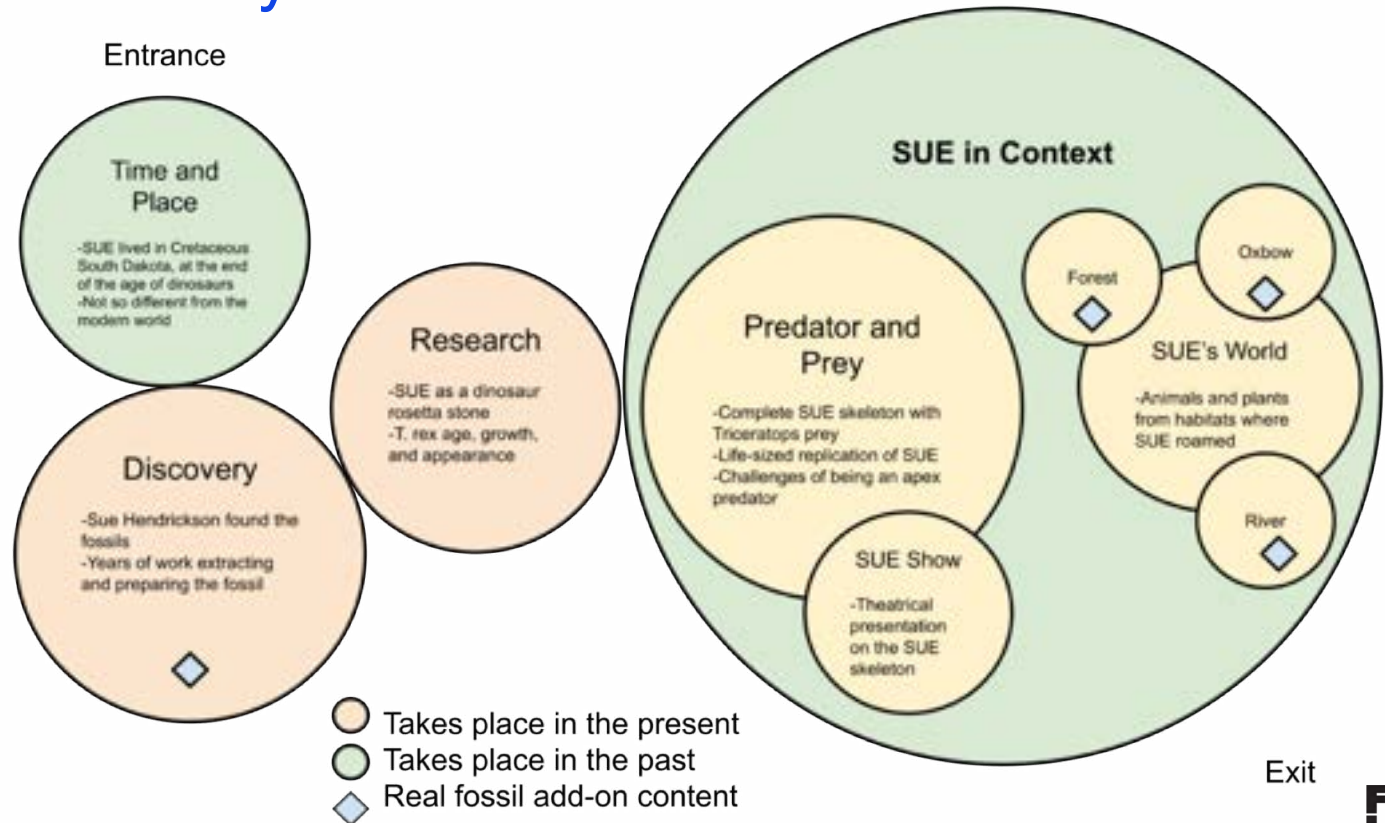
## The Big Idea

An extraordinary encounter with SUE the *T. rex*, apex predator of the Cretaceous world.

Encounter SUE—the most complete, best preserved *Tyrannosaurus rex* ever found—and the world SUE lived in. *SUE: The T. rex Experience* is a journey through Hell Creek, SUE's home and one of the most well-documented communities from the age of dinosaurs. Visitors will get to know SUE as an individual that lived a challenging and dangerous life, but survived to old age against the odds.

# Exhibition Summary

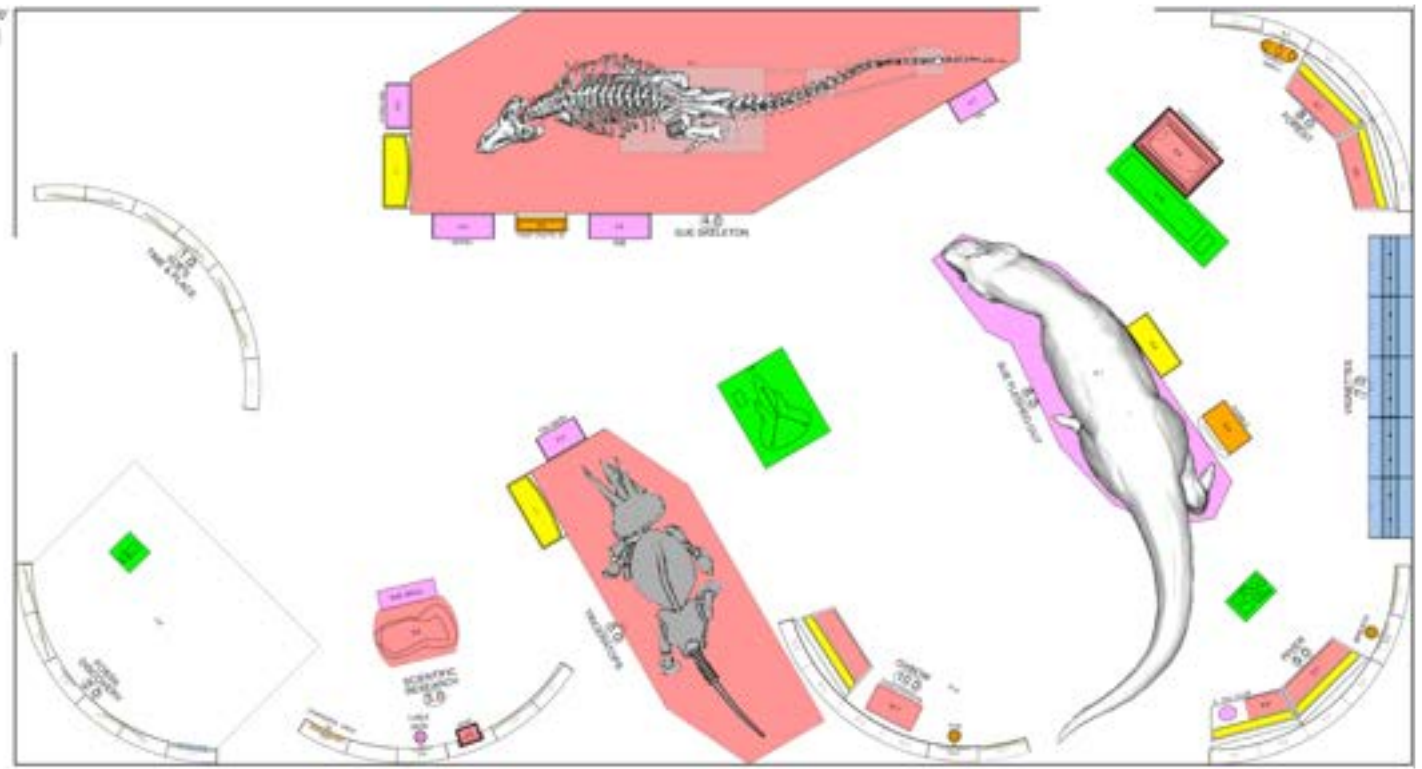
The bubble sizes in this diagram represent the relative weight of sections in the experience.



# Experience Map



- CAST OBJECT
- INTERACTIVE
- REPLICATION/TOUCHABLE
- MEDIA
- ADD-ON PACKAGE



# Section 1: Time and Place



Welcome to the world of Tyrannosaurus rex

Bienvenido al mundo del Tyrannosaurus rex



**Weight of the head**  
22 MILLION  
15,000 LBS



**Range of the head**  
15 MILLION  
10,000 LBS

Informational text panel with a map of North America.



Informational text panel with a map of North America.



Informational text panel with a close-up image of a dinosaur head.

Visitors entering the exhibition encounter a large, detailed mural of a landscape teeming with life. This is Hell Creek, South Dakota: one of the best-understood ecosystems from the Age of Dinosaurs. Reigning over this world was SUE the *Tyrannosaurus rex*, an apex predator that impacted the entire community. Near the mural, visitors see punchy graphics that establish where and when SUE lived.



# Section 1: Time and Place



- Newly commissioned mural of SUE's world by artist Beth Zeiken
- Graphic introduction to time and place: timeline, map, etc.

# Section 2: Fossil Discovery



Moving forward in the exhibition, visitors enter a paleontological excavation. Graphic panels tell the story of Susan Hendrickson's discovery of SUE in modern-day South Dakota, and a large photo mural shows the Hell Creek Formation today. Visitors can trek across a life-sized reproduction of the hand-drawn map created at the SUE quarry, and inspect some of SUE's fossilized bones.

## Section 2: Fossil Discovery

- Life-sized quarry map on the floor
- *T. rex* discovery media piece
- Graphic timeline of SUE's journey



# Section 3: Scientific Research

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**Studying SUE**  
The SUE team has been working on the SUE specimen for over 10 years. The team has been able to extract DNA from the specimen and has been able to identify the species of dinosaur. The team has also been able to determine the age of the specimen and has been able to determine the diet of the dinosaur.

**Estudiando a SUE**  
El equipo SUE ha estado trabajando en el espécimen SUE durante más de 10 años. El equipo ha sido capaz de extraer ADN del espécimen y ha sido capaz de identificar la especie de dinosaurio. El equipo también ha sido capaz de determinar la edad del espécimen y ha sido capaz de determinar la dieta del dinosaurio.



**It's covered in mud but gives us a look**  
The SUE specimen is covered in mud, but this gives us a look at the dinosaur's skin and feathers. The mud is made of a special mixture of clay and water, and it is used to preserve the specimen. The mud is applied to the specimen in a way that allows us to see the details of the skin and feathers.

**El espécimen está cubierto de barro, pero nos da una mirada**  
El espécimen SUE está cubierto de barro, pero esto nos da una mirada al dinosaurio y sus plumas. El barro está hecho de una mezcla especial de arcilla y agua, y se utiliza para preservar el espécimen. El barro se aplica al espécimen de una manera que nos permite ver los detalles de la piel y las plumas.



**Este SUE tiene un esqueleto de T-Rex**  
Este SUE tiene un esqueleto de T-Rex. El esqueleto está hecho de huesos que se han preservado en el barro. El esqueleto está en un estado muy bueno, y nos permite ver los detalles de los huesos.

**¿SUE tenía plumas o piel?**  
SUE tenía plumas y piel. El barro que cubre el espécimen nos permite ver los detalles de la piel y las plumas. El barro está hecho de una mezcla especial de arcilla y agua, y se utiliza para preservar el espécimen.



In this section, visitors understand SUE's importance as a research specimen. As the most complete and best preserved *Tyrannosaurus rex* ever found, SUE is a rosetta stone for dinosaur biology. Visitors follow along with recent Field Museum research, including how fast *T. rex* grew up, how old SUE was at death, and why we currently think that *T. rex* had scales, not feathers. A touchable replica of SUE's skull as it was found lets visitors investigate the fossil in detail, including SUE's serrated teeth and holes in the jaw caused by a parasitic infection. Visitors can also test their knowledge with a digital quiz hosted by a quirky cartoon SUE.



## Section 3: Scientific Research

- Crushed skull cast, as found in the field
- Baby and juvenile *T. rex* jaw casts
- *T. rex* skin touchable
- Quiz digital interactive
- Graphical overview of research on SUE



The final sections of the exhibition occupy the majority of the floorplan, and visitors can circulate through them freely. A naturalistic soundscape and shifting hall-wide lighting contribute to the dynamic, immersive experience.

# Section 4: Predator and Prey







The centerpiece of the exhibition is a 40-foot cast of SUE's skeleton facing off against *T. rex*'s nemesis, *Triceratops*. Pairing SUE with *Triceratops* reinforces SUE's heroic persona: this individual survived longer than any other known *T. rex*, and did so while tangling with huge, imposing prey on a regular basis. Visitors can walk around both dinosaurs, and touch casts of SUE's bones. A digital interactive lets visitors explore 3D models of SUE's injured bones and see how the mounted skeleton has been updated according to new research. A life-sized replication of SUE stands nearby, with a small *Edmontosaurus* dangling from its jaws. Visitors can walk around and touch this detailed model.

Visitors who linger here will be treated to a narrated show. Illuminated bones on the skeleton and dramatic lighting tell SUE's story: this was a top predator that lived a challenging and dangerous life, but survived to old age against the odds.





## Section 4: Predator and Prey

- Cast of SUE skeleton
- Cast of *Triceratops* skeleton
- Narrated SUE light show
- SUE vs. *Edmontosaurus* fleshed-out replication



# Section 4: Predator and Prey

- Bronze touchables
  - SUE miniature relief
  - SUE arm
  - SUE rib
  - SUE tail vertebra
  - *Triceratops* skin
- Digital rail



# Section 5: SUE's World



### Wisconsin's Remarkable at the end of an Era

It was a remarkable time in the history of the Earth. The Wisconsin coast was a lush, green landscape with a variety of plants and animals. The climate was warm and humid, and the land was covered in a dense forest of trees. The dinosaurs were still around, and the plants were still growing. It was a time of great change and discovery.

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### Flowers bloomed in hardwood forests

*Leaves from the Wisconsin Dinosaur State Park*



### Small dinosaurs foraged among the trees

*Wisconsin Dinosaur State Park*





*What lived in rivers and ponds?  
What about on the river's edge?*

Armored  
Acrosso





Animated scenes of Cretaceous South Dakota play on a giant projection screen, imbuing the space with continuous life and movement. Extended periods of calm are punctuated by exciting moments of dinosaur action. Nearby, visitors can explore SUE's world in detail. Three displays representing the three locations depicted in the animations (forest, river, and oxbow) contain fossils from the animals and plants that lived there. In addition to dinosaurs large and small, visitors meet surprising oddities such as a paddlefish and the opossum-like *Didelphodon*. Visitors can investigate smell stations (a pleasant-smelling cedar forest contrasts with SUE's rancid breath), feel reproductions of dinosaur skin, and sense the infrasonic rumble of a vocalizing *T. rex* at a touch table.



## Section 5: SUE's World - Forest

Newly evolved flowering plants changed the landscape—and the herbivores that ate them

Replications:

- *Edmontosaurus* skull cast
- *Pachycephalosaurus* skull cast
- *Anzu* jaw cast
- 3 plant fossil casts

Interactives: *T. rex* rumble table and forest smell station



## Section 5: SUE's World - River

Hell Creek was lush and wet,  
similar to the American  
southeast today

Replications:

- *Ankylosaurus* skull cast  
(touchable)
- Paddlefish and sturgeon  
fossil casts
- Turtle skull cast

Interactive: SUE's breath  
smell station



## Section 5: SUE's World - Oxbow

The nearby inland sea influenced the landscape and fauna of SUE's world

Replications:

- *Didelphodon* skeleton cast
- *Palaeosaniwa* jaw and arm bone casts
- Palm frond cast

Interactive: "*Didelphodon*" fur touchable



REST YOUR ELBOWS ON THE PLANTER  
AND CLAP YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR EAR.  
APPLY THIS SIMPLE FORM OF RESONANCE FOR AN  
MOMENT OF STUNNING SOUND AND ILLUSTRATION  
TO LIFE!







# Add-On Package

## Section 2: Fossil Discovery

Real pieces of SUE:

- “Float” fragments
- Sun-bleached rib





## Section 5: SUE's World - Forest

*Edmontosaurus* articulated tail and fossil leaf slab (“Edmonto-food”)



## Section 5: SUE's World - River



### Fossils found with SUE

- *Cobbania* and other plant fossils
- *Myledaphus* tooth
- *T. rex* tibia
- *Thescelosaurus* hip
- *Archeroraptor* tooth

### Tiny fossils, big stories

- Crocodile armor
- Gar fish vertebra and scale
- Ornithomimid toe bone
- Turtle shell fragment
- Marsupial partial jaw

## Section 5: SUE's World - Oxbow



*Triceratops* skull



***SUE: The T. rex Experience* was organized by the Field Museum and is part of the Griffin Dinosaur Experience, made possible by generous support from Kenneth C. Griffin.**

Field Museum – Traveling Exhibitions

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