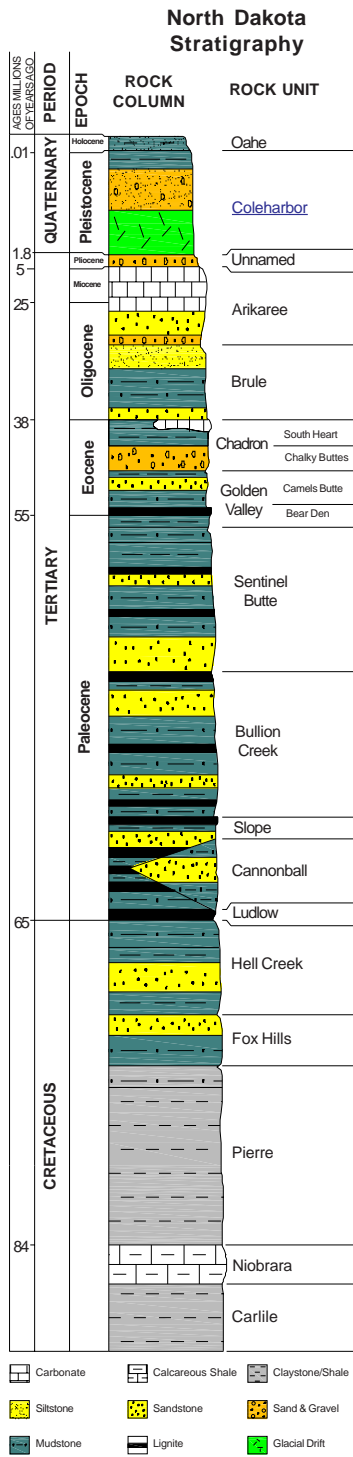


Bison latifrons



Common Name:
Giant Ice Age bison

Classification:
Class: Mammalia
Order: Artiodactyla
Family: Bovidae



This specimen, the only *Bison latifrons* skull ever found in North Dakota, was discovered by Kent Pelton of Watford City on U. S. Army Corps of Engineers administered land within the Fort Berthold Reservation near New Town. Bone from this fossil was radiocarbon dated indicating that it is over 47,500 years old. It is on display at the North Dakota Heritage Center in Bismarck. Funding for restoration of the skull was provided by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, Garrison Project. Skull is 2.2 m wide. ND State Fossil Collection.

Description:

The scientific name *Bison latifrons* is derived from the Greek language and refers to this bison's broad cranium and large horns. They were huge animals, the largest of all North American bison with horn cores that spanned over 200 cm compared with horn core spans of about 65 cm for the living North American bison. They were about 25% larger than the living bison. *Bison latifrons* lived in North Dakota during the last Ice Age at the same time that mammoths and mastodons lived here. *Bison latifrons* inhabited forest openings and woodland areas unlike the grassland-dwelling modern bison. They lived in small groups unlike the herding modern bison. *Bison latifrons* became extinct during the last Ice Age several thousand years ago.



Bison latifrons. Painting by, and courtesy of, Dorothy S. Norton.



Locations where fossils have been found

ND State Fossil Collection

[Prehistoric Life of ND Map](#)

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