

Colorado State Symbols Scavenger HUNT



Can you find all nine of these Colorado state symbols?

LEVEL 1

GEMS AND MINERALS

- **State Gemstone: Aquamarine (adopted in 1971)**
This is the largest known pocket of aquamarine ever discovered, and it came from Colorado's own Mount Antero! Aquamarine crystals range in color from light blue to deep blue-green and are made up of a mineral called beryl. How many aquamarine crystals can you count in the display?
- **State Mineral: Rhodochrosite (adopted in 2002)**
The world's largest rhodochrosite crystal is on display here at the Museum, near the beginning of the hall. It is called the "Alma King," named after the Sweet Home Mine in Alma, Colorado, where it was discovered. Rhodochrosite is composed of manganese carbonate. How many rhodochrosite crystals can you spot?

INSECTS

- **State Insect: Colorado Hairstreak Butterfly (adopted in 1996)**
The Colorado hairstreak has purple wings with black borders, orange corners, and a blue underside. Why do you think the Colorado hairstreak is that color? Which butterfly is your favorite? Why?

LEVEL 2

EDGE OF THE WILD

- **State Animal: Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep (adopted in 1961) Bighorn Sheep diorama**
Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep are found only in the Rockies, usually above timberline in rugged mountainous areas. They are known for agility and balance—and for males butting heads! Feel the sheep horn. Can you feel the rings or ridges? The number of rings or ridges is about how old the bighorn sheep is.
- **State Grass: Blue Grama (adopted in 1987) Pronghorn diorama**
Blue grama grass, native to Colorado's prairies, is known for distinctive "eyelash" seed heads. It grows in bunches, with

LEVEL 2 (cont.)

- thick roots that hold it in the soil and keep it from blowing away in strong winds. Does it look blue to you? How is blue grama different from the grass planted at your school or your neighborhood park?
- **State Tree: Colorado Blue Spruce (adopted in 1939) Elk diorama**
The Colorado blue spruce is known for its stately, shapely form and its beautiful silver-blue color. Look for some in the background painting. There is a seedling—a young tree—on the left side of the diorama too.

LEVEL 3

PREHISTORIC JOURNEY

- **State Fossil: Stegosaurus (adopted in 1982)**
There are only six *Stegosaurus* skeletons on display in the United States, and one of them is right here! Why do you think its name means "lizard with a roof"? This skeleton was discovered by a teacher and students from Cañon City High School and unearthed by Museum scientists.

EXPLORE COLORADO

- **State Bird: Lark Bunting (adopted in 1931) Plains Grassland/Short-Grass Prairie diorama**
Lark buntings migrate to the plains and mountains (up to 8,000 feet high) in April. They fly south again to warmer climates in September. The male bird performs a spectacular courtship flight, during which he warbles and trills a distinctive song. Can you trill a song? Why do you think the male birds do this?
- **State Flower: Columbine (adopted in 1899) Subalpine Forest diorama**
The Rocky Mountain columbine became the state flower when Colorado schoolchildren picked their favorite flower in the late 1800s. The colors remind us of Colorado: lavender is a color from the sky, white represents snow, and yellow reflects Colorado's gold rush. Do these colors remind you of other things in our state?