

## CRATER OF DIAMONDS STATE PARK

Among the tall pines of Southwest Arkansas visitors from around the world search for diamonds in a 37-acre field. Here, a massive volcano brought diamonds to the surface of the earth. This world famous site is the only diamond-producing area in North America open to the public.

Over 75,000 diamonds have been found at "the Crater," an eroded volcanic pipe. On average, more than 700 diamonds are found each year, including such notable finds as:

- ◆ 1924 ~ The Uncle Sam. At 40.23 carats, the largest diamond found in North America
- ◆ 1956 ~ The Star of Arkansas - 15.33 carats
- ◆ 1975 ~ The Amarillo Starlight - 16.37 carats
- ◆ 1981 ~ The Star of Shreveport - 8.82 carats
- ◆ 1997 ~ The Cooper Diamonds - 6.72 & 6.0 carats
- ◆ 1998 ~ The Dickinson-Stevens Diamond - 7.28 carats
- ◆ 2006 ~ The Roden Diamonds - 6.35 carats
- ◆ 2006 ~ The Sunshine Diamonds - 5.47 carats
- ◆ 2009 ~ The Arabian Knight - 5.75 carats

In 1998 The Strawn-Wagner Diamond, a cut white Crater diamond weighing 1.09-carats, was graded by the American Gem Society (AGS) as a "D" Flawless 0/0/0 perfect diamond. A "one-in-a-billion diamond," stated Peter Yantzer, Laboratory Director for the AGS. This spectacular diamond is on display in the visitor center.

Although genuine diamonds are the chief attraction to "the Crater," other semi-precious stones can be found. Amethyst, agate, jasper, quartz, calcite and barite are but a few of the gems and minerals that make this Arkansas State Park a rock hound's delight.

### HISTORY

The first diamond was found here in 1906 by John Huddleston, who owned the property. The Crater of Diamonds changed hands several times over the years and many unsuccessful attempts were made at commercial mining. All such ventures are shrouded in mystery; lawsuits, lack of money, and fires are only a few of the reasons for failure. The mine was operated by private interests as a tourist attraction from 1952 to 1972 when it was purchased by the State for development as a state park. Over 28,000 diamonds have been found by park visitors since 1972.



### DIAMOND-HUNTING TIPS

1. Look for a small, well-rounded crystal. The average diamond is about the size of a kitchen match head. A diamond weighing several carats may be smaller than a marble.
2. Diamonds have an oily, slick outer surface that dirt or mud will not stick to, so look for clean crystals.
3. If you think you have a diamond, hold it carefully or place it in a small paper sack, available at the visitor center and Diamond Discovery Center.
4. Diamonds may be any of several colors. The most common found at the Crater are clear white, yellow and brown.
5. Bring any stones you find to the Diamond Discovery Center for free identification and certification.

### FACILITIES

This unique state park comprises 911 pine-covered acres along the banks of the Little Missouri River. The park offers 47 Class AAA campsites with 50 amp, water and sewer, five tent sites with water only, bathrooms, picnic areas, the Diamond Springs Water Park, an enclosed pavilion with air-conditioning, amphitheater and wildlife observation. A gift shop, exhibits, object theater, rest rooms, and offices are located in the visitor center, with a seasonal restaurant and picnic area close by. Check with the visitor center for hours of operation for the restaurant. Tool rental, diamond and geology exhibits, a classroom and restrooms are located in the Diamond Discovery Center. Motels, hospitals, and other conveniences are available in nearby towns. The park is open year-round (hours change seasonally).

### INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

Programs are offered at the Diamond Discovery Center. During the summer months, evening programs covering a variety of subjects including nature, geology, diamond searching methods, and history are available to all park visitors. Organized groups may request special programs to meet specific interests, if scheduled in advance. A unique set of curriculum-oriented programs is available for schools.

The River Trail (1.2 miles) winds its way through the woods to the scenic Little Missouri River. It provides a relaxing 1-hour walk over level terrain, half of the trail is paved barrier-free with exhibits.

The Prospector Trail (1.2 miles) offers visitors a first hand view of the park's unique geological features.

### FEES

**Mine Admission** ◆ Nominal entrance fees to the diamond search area and Diamond Springs Water Park (open seasonally) are charged to adults and children.

**Group Rates** ◆ Any organized group of 15 or more may search for diamonds at one-half the regular fee. Advance notice must be given to obtain reduced group rates. Special programs can be scheduled at this time.

**NOTE:** Campers must register at the visitor center before occupying a campsite. All sites may be reserved up to one year in advance. Please call to check availability.

### LOCATION

Two miles southeast of Murfreesboro on Arkansas Highway 301.

For further information on park hours and fees, contact:

**Crater of Diamonds State Park**

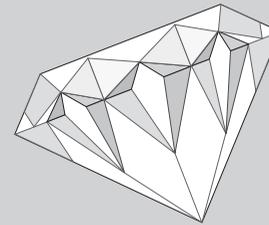
**209 State Park Road**

**Murfreesboro, AR 71958**

**Telephone: (870) 285-3113**

**e-mail: crater@arkansas.com**

**www.CraterofDiamondsStatePark.com**



For further information on Arkansas's other fine state parks, contact:

Arkansas State Parks

One Capitol Mall, 4A-900

Little Rock, AR 72201

Telephone: (501) 682-1191

www.ArkansasStateParks.com



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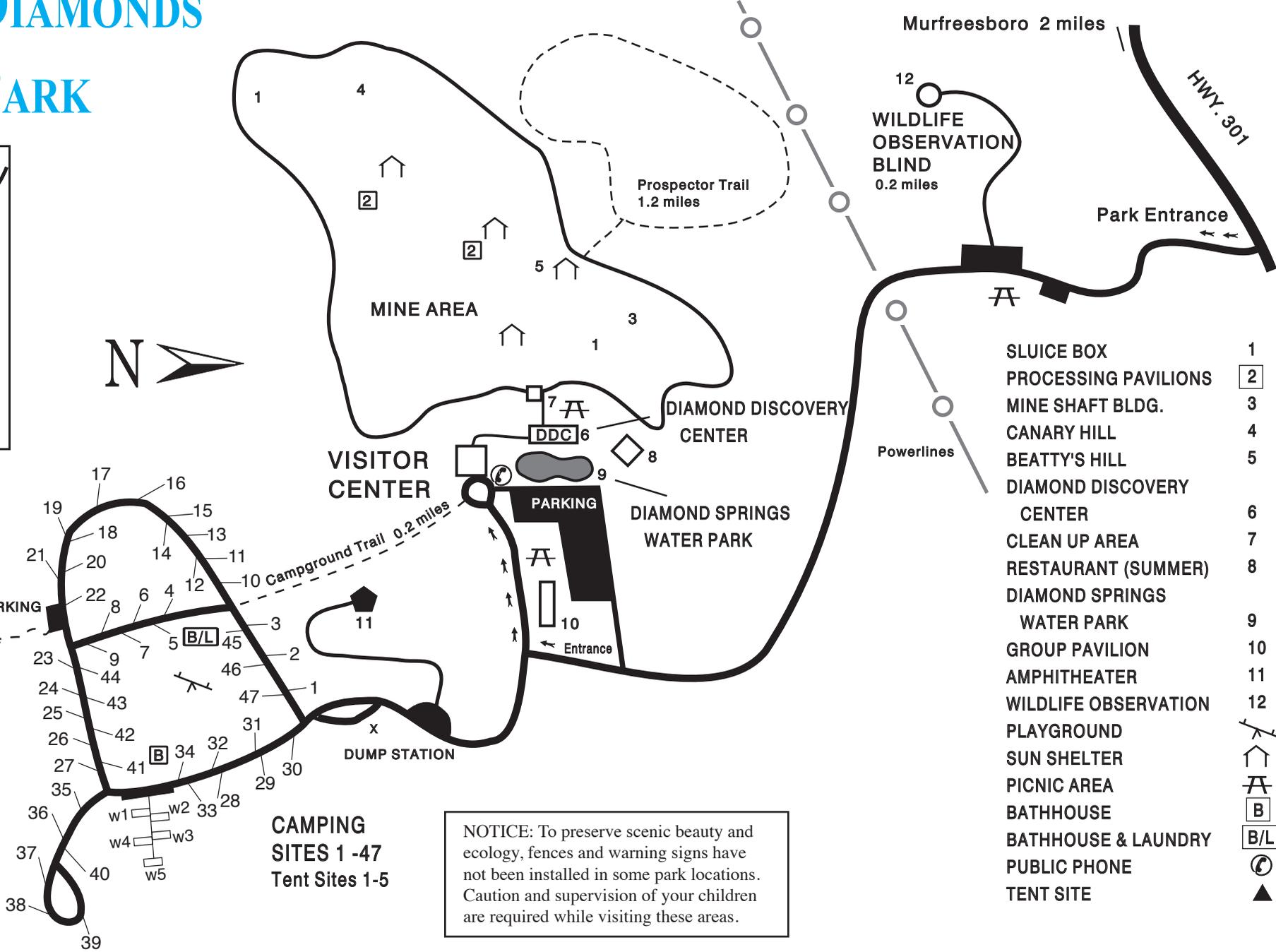
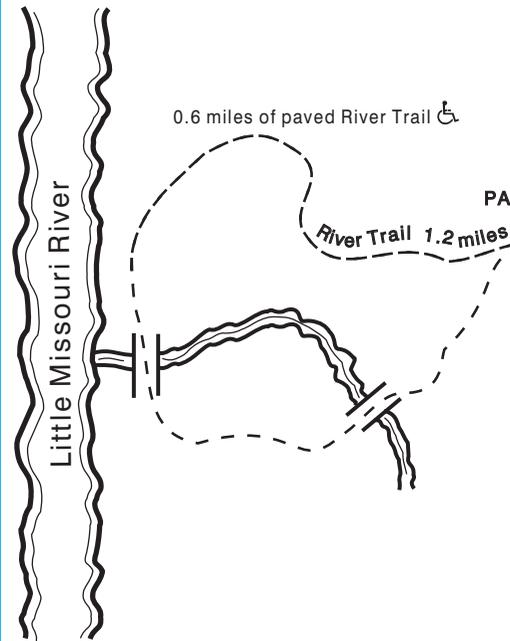
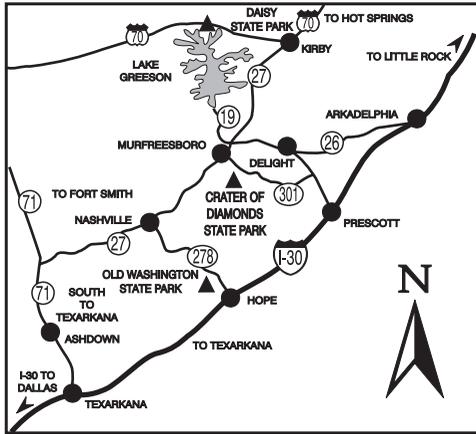
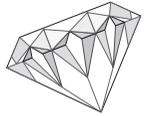
Arkansas State Parks 2011

# CRATER OF DIAMONDS STATE PARK



ARKANSAS  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & TOURISM

# CRATER OF DIAMONDS STATE PARK



- 1 SLUICE BOX
- 2 PROCESSING PAVILIONS
- 3 MINE SHAFT BLDG.
- 4 CANARY HILL
- 5 BEATTY'S HILL
- 6 DIAMOND DISCOVERY CENTER
- 7 CLEAN UP AREA
- 8 RESTAURANT (SUMMER)
- 9 DIAMOND SPRINGS WATER PARK
- 10 GROUP PAVILION
- 11 AMPHITHEATER
- 12 WILDLIFE OBSERVATION
- PLAYGROUND
- SUN SHELTER
- PICNIC AREA
- BATHHOUSE
- BATHHOUSE & LAUNDRY
- PUBLIC PHONE
- TENT SITE

**NOTICE:** To preserve scenic beauty and ecology, fences and warning signs have not been installed in some park locations. Caution and supervision of your children are required while visiting these areas.



EXPLORE THE BEAUTY & HISTORY OF ARKANSAS!

# Crater of Diamonds State Park



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## ♦ DIGGING FOR DIAMONDS

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### Digging for Diamonds

**Where can diamonds be found?** The answer might surprise you. Arkansas's [Crater of Diamonds State Park](#) is the only diamond-producing site in the world where the public can search for diamonds. And the policy here is "finders, keepers," meaning the diamonds you find are yours to keep.

To hunt for diamonds you will search atop a 37 1/2-acre plowed field, the eroded surface of an ancient, gem-bearing volcanic crater. You will access this field through the Diamond Discovery Center, an engaging interpretive center featuring exhibits and an A/V program explaining the three most popular methods of searching for diamonds. The park staff provides free identification and certification of diamonds found here.

A few facts about diamonds in Arkansas: The [first diamond](#) was found here in 1906 by John Huddleston, the farmer who owned the property at that time. The [Crater of Diamonds](#) has changed hands several times over the years and several unsuccessful attempts have been made at commercial mining. All such ventures are shrouded in mystery. Lawsuits, lack of money, and fires are among the reasons suspected for these failures. This site was operated privately, and later as a tourist attraction, from 1952 to 1972. In 1972, the State of Arkansas purchased the Crater of Diamonds for development as a state park. The park is open throughout the year except for Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

Pets are allowed in all park facilities, with the exception of the park gift shop, [Diamond Springs Water Park](#), and [Kimberlite Cafe](#), as long as they remain on a leash under the owner's control at all times.

The diamond-bearing soil in the diamond search area is plowed periodically when weather allows to help bring more diamonds to the surface. Plowing is unscheduled but generally takes place once a month during spring, summer, and fall. Historical structures, old mining equipment, washing pavilions, and sun shelters are located on the field. Diamond mining tools are available for rent or purchase at the park.

#### Fees to search for Diamonds

Adults:	\$8
Children (ages 6-12):	\$5
Children under 6 years old:	FREE

Admission is good for the entire day. You may come and go throughout the day on the same admission fee. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, tickets purchased after 6:00 p.m. are still good for admission the following day.

Organized groups of 15 or more may receive half price admission if the park is notified **in advance** of visit. From Memorial Day through Labor Day tickets purchased after 6 p.m. are also good for the following day. NOTE: Organized groups do not include large family groups.

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#### What Should I Bring?

Where can diamonds be found within the park? Visitors have found plenty of gems both on top of and in the soil. Tools are not necessary for diamond seeking, and a good way to search is to walk up and down the rows looking for diamonds lying on top of the ground. However, most diamond hunters like to dig in the soil. Therefore, you have the options of bringing your own tools from home, or you may purchase or rent tools here at



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the park.

You may use anything that is not battery or motor operated for transporting equipment in and out of the search area. Park visitors bring anything from small flowerbed trowels to full size shovels for digging. Some choose to make their own sifting screens and bring them.

[VIRTUAL TOUR](#)



[IFIX Diamond Field](#)

If you choose to get tools at the park, you may purchase small flowerbed trowels and cultivators at the park. If you prefer renting tools, the park offers several different size shovels and screens from which to choose. The most commonly rented items are listed below. Along with the rental fee, a deposit is charged on each item. This deposit is refunded when the equipment is returned in good

condition.

Rental equipment is available at the Diamond Discovery Center and includes the items listed below. Rental prices are per day and tax is not included.

#### Rental Equipment Available Throughout the Year

Equipment	Daily rent plus tax	Deposit
Small wooden box screen	\$2.50	\$20
3.5 gallon plastic bucket	\$2.50	\$10
Folding army shovel	\$2.50	\$10
Knee Pads	\$2.50	\$5
Screen Set	\$3.50	\$20
Saruca (finishing screen)	\$3.50	\$40
Basic Diamond Hunting Kit	\$8	\$35
(folding shovel, screen set, 3.5 gallon bucket)		
Advanced Diamond Hunting Kit	\$11	\$60
(folding shovel, screen set, 3.5 gallon bucket, saruca)		

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### What Should I Wear?

**Digging for diamonds** can be messy. If the dirt in the search area is wet, you will need some old shoes or boots because the field will be very muddy. In the summer, a hat and sunscreen are recommended.

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### What Do Diamonds Look Like?

How do you know if you've **found treasure in our Arkansas diamond mine**? First study the basic attributes of diamonds found at the Crater:

**Shape:**

Diamonds found at the Crater are typically smooth and well rounded. Their shape resembles a polished stone with smooth sides and rounded edges.

**Size:**

The average size of a diamond is about the size of a paper match head, approximately 20-25 points weight.

Points are a measurement of diamond weight. There are 100 points in a carat. Look for something small. A 1-carat diamond is about the size of a green pea, based on its crystal shape.

**Appearance:**

Diamonds feel like they have an oily film on them. This characteristic prevents diamonds from being dirty. Diamonds have a metallic luster like new steel or lead. They will not be clear like glass. They do not have a solid dull look like the jasper. Diamonds are





translucent. You can typically see into them but not through them.

**Color:**

The colors of diamonds found here are white, brown, and yellow, in that order.

The park offers free rock and mineral identification at the Diamond Discovery Center. Diamonds are weighed and certified free of charge for the finder.

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### What is a Carat?

This unit of weight for precious stones is equal to 200 milligrams. It is thought that the name carat was derived from the carob tree. Carob trees are native to the Old World (Asia, Africa, and Europe) and are known for their uniformly-sized seeds. Gemstones, including diamonds, were weighed for years against these seeds. A diamond weighing less than one carat would be measured in points. One hundred points equal one carat. A diamond weighing more than one carat would be listed as the whole carat number, plus the number of points. For example, a diamond that was one carat and 25 points would be listed as 1.25 carats.

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### How Do I Search for Diamonds?

How you search for diamonds usually depends on how much time you have to search or weather conditions at the park.

There are three methods of diamond searching. Surface searching consists of walking up and down the rows of dirt looking for diamonds lying on top of the ground. This is the most productive method following a hard rain. Rain washes the soil away, leaving diamonds and other rocks and minerals exposed on the surface.

Most visitors like to dig in the soil and screen for diamonds. This usually involves searching through the first six inches to one foot of soil. Visitors can turn the soil over with a small hand tool while looking in the loose soil. Some visitors like to use a screen to sift the soil.

The third method of diamond hunting requires a lot of hard work, and previous experience is helpful. This method is usually preferred by the repeat or regular visitor, and involves digging deep holes, removing the right type soil, washing the soil in a series of screens and patiently hand sorting the concentrated gravels from the screens. Some searchers look for low areas in the field where diamonds may have settled out over the years, or for tailings from the earlier commercial mining plants of the 20's and 30's. Tailings are the waste gravel that went out of the plant. Over the years, these tailing piles were covered by topsoil. The experienced regular hunters look for the tiny gravel, dig it up and wash it again by hand, looking for the small diamonds.

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### Are the Diamonds Valuable?

The park staff can identify and provide facts about diamonds; however, they are neither trained nor have the equipment to assess the value of a diamond. Generally, the monetary value of a diamond rests in the possibility of the diamond being cut. For example, the 3.03-carat Strawn-Wagner Diamond found at the park in 1990 was cut and graded D Flawless, the highest grade a diamond can achieve. Should you [find a large diamond](#) suitable for cutting, you will want to locate a jeweler and/or gemologist who can serve as your agent to work with a diamond cutter.

Most diamonds found here at the park are generally too small to be cut. However, they will be valued and unique souvenirs of your trip to Arkansas's diamond site. Diamonds from the park are often mounted in jewelry in their natural uncut form. When diamonds are left in their raw form, one popular method of displaying a rough diamond is to have it mounted in a pendant to be worn around the neck.

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# Crater of Diamonds State Park



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## HISTORY

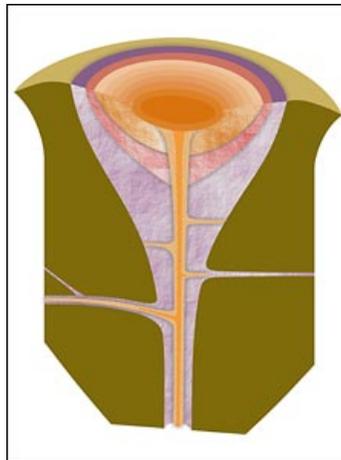


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### How are Diamonds Made and Why Can They Be Found at Crater of Diamonds?



We get a lot of questions at [Crater of Diamonds State Park](#), such as "How are diamonds made?" "Why are they found here in Arkansas?" and "How old are the diamonds found here?" If you've ever wondered why the earth produces diamond sites and why we have a field in Arkansas where diamonds are found, we have answers. The **geology of diamonds** found at the Crater of Diamonds State Park goes back more than three billion years with the formation of diamonds as the stable form of carbon in the earth's mantle. At the tremendous pressures and temperatures some 60 to 100 miles below the earth's surface, diamond crystallized from carbon, and under those conditions it remained stable.

During the past three billion years, many geologic changes have taken place on the surface of the earth. Crust formed and was destroyed, continents formed and migrated, and mountain ranges were built and eroded away. About 300 to 250 million years ago, the continent we now call South America collided with the southern portion of present day North America. This collision formed the Ouachita Mountains from sediments that were deposited in a deep ocean environment. The Ouachita's began to erode and during the Cretaceous Period (144 to 66 million years ago), the southern area of this eroded mountain range was covered by seas and the area of the Park was near-shore, but under shallow seawater. About 100 million years ago, instability in the Earth's mantle caused the movement of gas and rock to the surface. This volcanic vent, known as the "Prairie Creek" diatreme by geologists, rose rapidly through the upper mantle and crust, carrying with it fragments of mantle and crustal rocks and minerals, until it came near enough to the surface to explode due to the release of gases. When it exploded, it created an 83-acre funnel-shaped crater with sides sloping inward at about 45 degrees. Much of the airborne material formed by the initial explosion fell back into the vent. The speed of rise of the mass allowed the diamonds to be preserved in this material.

Geologists calculate that only about 160 feet of the original vent has been eroded away, concentrating the heavy minerals, including diamond, in the present day soil. At the Crater, [diamonds are often found](#) loose in the soil, having been released during the rapid weathering of this unstable mantle rock.

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#### Kimberlite versus Lamproite

The original host rocks, described from Africa and other sites around the world, including those of the Crater of Diamonds were first described as kimberlite and peridotite. But since the discovery of diamonds in Australian "lamproite rocks," many of these localities have been reevaluated. The rock types at the Crater have been found to more closely resemble lamproite than was previously known, therefore, we now refer to them as "lamproite rocks." Differences are subtle and only by detailed scientific studies can they be determined. You can research these rock names on the Internet to learn more about the geology of diamonds.

