

Life on the Water



Nature of Ohio introduces many modern and ancient animals that have made their homes in Ohio's waterways. In Gallery 1, you'll also encounter artifacts from Ohio's canal system and steamboat era.

Look for these in *Nature of Ohio*:

- Glacial grooves in bedrock
- Sedimentary rocks
- "Changing Waterways"
- Beavers
- Mollusks
- Trilobites

Look for these in Gallery 1:

- Canal lever
- Ferry boat wheel
- Steamboat lantern
- Boat whistles



An Enormously Eager Beaver

Today, beavers are North America's largest rodents but during the Ice Age, they weren't even the largest rodents living in Ohio. That distinction belonged to the now-extinct giant beaver, known to scientists as *Castoroides ohioensis*. It was named for the state where it was first identified—we hope you can guess which one!

The species was discovered in 1837 when workers digging the Ohio Canal uncovered fossil remains near Nashport, northwest of Zanesville. At the end of the Ice Age, Ohio's wetlands were home to both giant beavers and the smaller beavers we know today.

There are several giant beaver skulls on exhibit at the Ohio History Center. How many do you see?



Spot the Trilobite



Modern Ohio's lakes, rivers, and streams are great examples of freshwater ecosystems, but did you know that in the distant past Ohio was covered by saltwater? During much of the Paleozoic Era this area was a rich marine habitat.

Trilobites are a group of long-extinct invertebrates that once called Ohio home. One famous type of trilobite, called *Isotelus*, became the state invertebrate fossil of Ohio in 1985 after middle school students from the Dayton area lobbied their state representatives.

Can you find an *Isotelus* trilobite in the *Nature of Ohio* exhibit?



Keep exploring!

Continue along the Lake Erie to Ohio River Trail to more Ohio History Connection Sites:

- Campus Martius Museum
- Fort Ancient Earthworks & Nature Preserve
- Fort Meigs
- Johnston Farm and Indian Agency
- Museum of Ceramics
- John Rankin House

And if you love historical maps, be sure to browse the digitized plat maps from Ohio canals on Ohio Memory, our statewide digital library!

<https://ohiomemory.org>