



# World heritage Messel Pit



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Messel Pit Fossil Site inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1995

INVESTITIONSPROGRAMM NATIONALE UNESCO WELTERBESTÄTTEN

Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung



Hessisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst



## Messel Pit Treasures



Treasure chamber



Darwinius masillae

Fossils from the Messel Pit are as precious as rare diamonds. And what setting could be more appropriate for such gems than a treasure chamber? Here, the unique beauty of these fossil jewels is displayed to full advantage. Take a step closer, and prepare to be fascinated by the perfect preservation, the detail and the aesthetic beauty of these skeleton finds of former living creatures from a distant time and a distant world!

One of the great celebrities here on display is IDA, the fossil of a young, female basal primate. The history of her discovery and the research surrounding the find made waves around the world.



Hassianycteris messelensis



Allaeochelys crassesculpta

The Time and Messel Worlds visitor centre is open all year round

except for: 23<sup>rd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> Dec; 30<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> Dec, and 1<sup>st</sup> Jan.

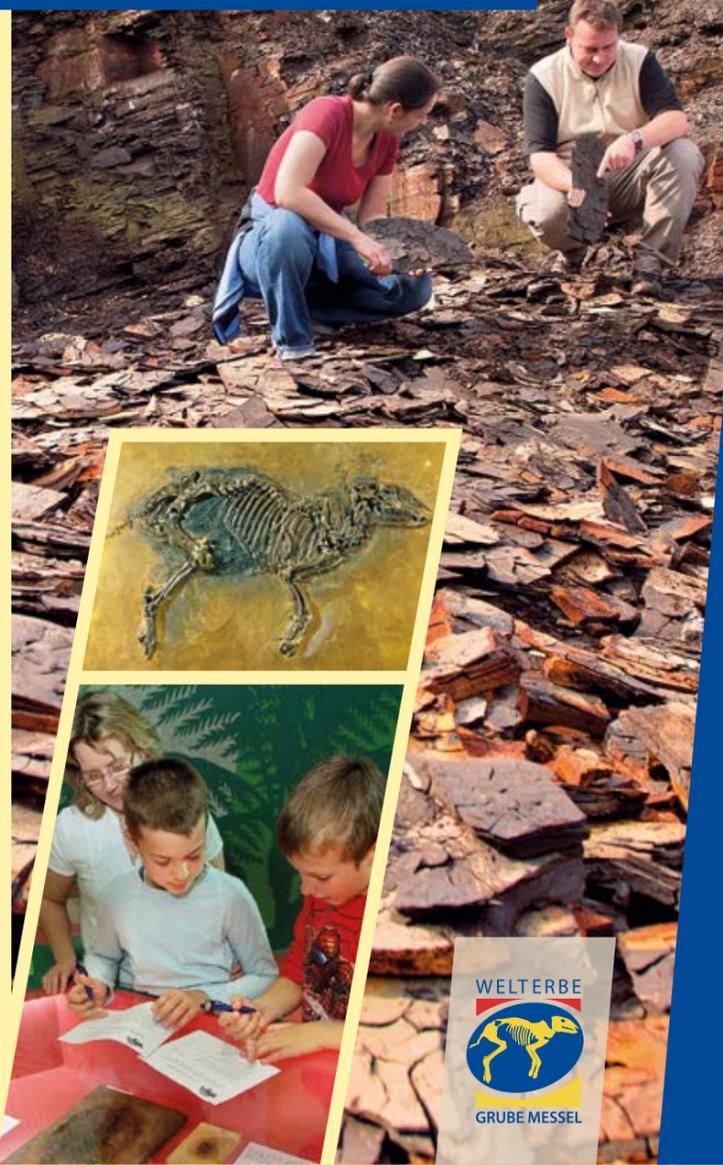
The gate to the visitor centre premises is locked each evening at 6pm.



Arrival by bus: daily bus line U (Darmstadt-Kranichstein-Messel); Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, bus line OF 96  
Arrival by train: Messel train station, 15 mins walk along Roßdörf Street



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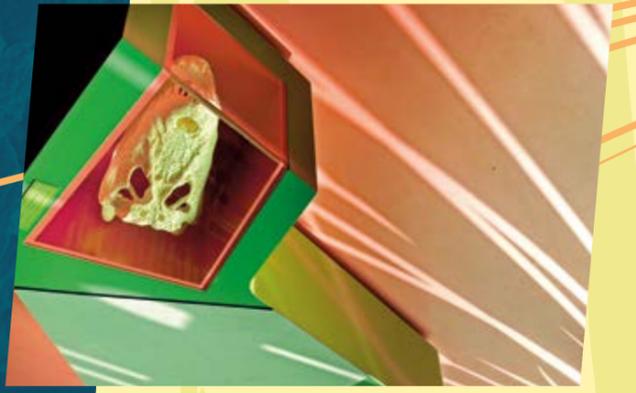
For more than 50 years, scientists from the Senckenberg Society for Nature Research have been working hand in hand with the Hessian State Museum in Messel Pit. Watch the taxidermists at their fascinating work, and ask any questions you may have!

## Preserved as a valuable legacy for humanity.



Species come and species go; some have been around for millions of years. For each new generation of a population, new opportunities arise in the competition to survive by adapting to changed food conditions and environmental conditions.

In the evolutionary model, we look at successful models for finding food, the fossils of which were found in Messel Pit.



## Climate archive and the cradle of life

On the exciting "2001: Borehole Expedition", you can experience a virtual drilling expedition deep into the earth. Decode the messages that prove Messel Pit is a maar!

Witnesses to climate change are the proof: a crocodile on the banks of a lake. Step closer - these powerful jaws can do you no harm! It last drew breath some 47 million years ago - during an era in which the weather was humid and warm all year round. Why did the climate change so radically? Exotic smells and a plethora of colours, shapes, patterns and levels made the rain forest a vibrant place. Isn't that a primate swinging through the trees?



In the exhibition in the visitor centre, a few small steps will take you back millions of years, and transport you kilometres deep into the heart of the earth.

## The result of a volcanic eruption ...

Volcanic activity is one of the most impressive spectacles of nature. Its destructive - yet also constructive - force and its unpredictability leave traces which geoscientists can read like a book. Messel Pit was once a maar, or volcanic crater! What caused it to erupt? How great was the impact?

Join the scientists on their voyage of discovery! Climb into a DHC-2 Beaver and fly over the powerful eruption of the Ukinrek maars in the year 1972!



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YTONG/Xella factory

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11

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A4\*

A3\*

A2\*

4

5

A1\*

3

2

1

Gate to the area

Gelsenrot company

13



6



10



World heritage oil shale. Book of geological history

- 1 Car park
  - 2 Time and Messel Worlds visitor centre entrance
  - 3 Time garden with time bridge to lookout point 1 and adventure islands made of rock
  - 4 Themed gardens
  - 5 Worlds garden with Messel Pit lookout point 3
  - 6 Observation platform
  - 7 Pit entrance with guide only
  - 8 Deponie Street
  - 9 Scientific excavation areas
  - 10 Quarrying levels
  - 11 Base of pit
  - 12 Ponds / wet areas
  - 13 Slag heap
- \* Lookout points A1, A2, A3, A4

## Range of offers



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### GM-A1 Visitor centre guided tour

Looking behind the scenes  
(1-hr professional guided tour through the themed rooms)

### GM-A Standard offer

GM-A2 Messel Pit introductory tour: First time travel through Messel Pit (1 hour)

GM-A3 Pit hike: Following the crocodile trail (2 hrs, also available as group event)

### GM-B Focus events

GM-A4 Research highlights: You're an explorer! (3 hrs, also available as group event)

GM-B1 Excavation impressions: Watching the scientists at work (2 hrs)

### GM-C Children and family offers

GM-C1 Family guided tour: Discovering the world heritage together (2 hrs, also available as group event)

GM-C2 Children's birthday parties: A special day out in the UNESCO World Heritage site, with children's safari menu (2 hrs)

GM-C3 Children's rainforest expedition: Following the trail to a lost world (2½ hrs)

### GM-D Group offers

GM-D1 Pit tours: Pit walk, pit hike, research highlights, family guided tour and on request

GM-D2 Panorama tour: looking down into Messel Pit (½ hr)

GM-D3 Messel Pit plus Messel Museum of Fossils & Local History

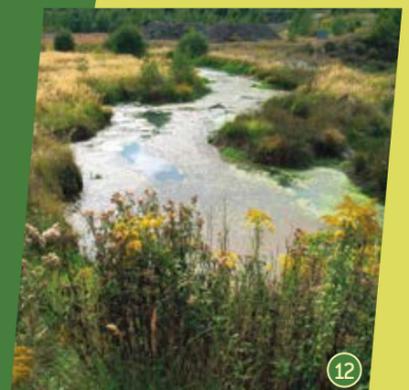
### GM-F Special events see annual programme of events

Guided tours available in foreign languages on request.

[www.grube-messel.de](http://www.grube-messel.de)



2



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- Sturdy footwear required!
- No smoking.
- Visitors are not permitted to dig or excavate.

When planning your tour, please remember that you will be descending roughly 60m into an open pit mine, and must be able to manage the same ascent at the end!

Guided tours are held all year round, weather permitting.

