

Scarred Earth

North American Impact Craters

Upheaval Dome

This crater, located in Canyonlands National Park, is sometimes referred to as Utah's belly button. Within the crater, seven different rock formations are exposed. The central uplift contains the oldest rock, dating back to the Permian Age approximately 300 million years ago. The layers decrease in age from the central uplift outward. Some of these layers were once buried a mile underground and cannot be seen anywhere else in the area.

Image Source: photos.wikimapia.org Info Source: geology.utah.gov, nps.gov

Barringer

Barringer Crater, perhaps better known as Meteor Crater, is one of the most famous craters in North America and a popular tourist destination. The crater is named after Daniel Barringer and is well preserved due to its location in the desert. When the 300,000 ton meteorite travelling at 26,000 miles per hour created this crater, a force 150 times that of the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima was released. The crater is on private land, but visitors are welcome, and have the opportunity to stand on the rim of a crater appearing very extraterrestrial in origin.

Image Source: hdwallpapersinn.com Info Source: barringercrater.com



Projection: Albers Conformal Conic

Central Meridian: -107.313

Meteor Data Source: Earth Impact Database

Raster Data Source: Natural Earth

Author: Calla Little

12/19/13

0 200 400 Miles

New Quebec

Diameter: 3.44 km
Age: ~1.4 ma

This crater, located in northern Québec, also goes by the name of Pingualuit in Inuktitut. The rim of the crater is the highest point in the region, rising 520 ft above the surrounding land.

The lake inside the crater is 1,300 ft deep, one of the deepest in North America, and holds some of the purest water in the world, with a salinity of less than 3 ppm. In comparison, the salinity of the Great Lakes is 500 ppm. The crater lies within Pingualuit National Park and can be visited anytime, but only is free from ice three months of the year.

Image Source: nunavikparks.com Info Source: nunavikparks.com, atlasobscura.com

Serpent Mound

Diameter: 8 km
Age: ~320 ma

This crater has been the topic of debate for some time. It was believed to be the result of a volcanic eruption before recent advances in technology confirmed it as the result of a meteorite.

The image above shows Serpent Mound, the world's largest prehistoric effigy mound. It lies on the southwest rim of the crater. There are many theories as to why it was built. Some believe it is a calendar, a representation of an eclipse, or Halley's comet. Another theory is it represents the "Horned Serpent" from Native American culture. Whatever its purpose is, the mystery surrounding it may be the most fascinating part.

Image Source: strangehistory.org Text Source: arcofappalachia.org, dnr.state.oh.us

Chicxulub

Diameter: ~150 km
Age: ~ 65 ma

The image to the left is an artistic rendition of "the crater of doom". It was discovered by Glen Penfield while he was surveying the area for a Mexican oil company. It is believed that the meteorite responsible for this crater was approximately 10 km wide. When it struck Earth's surface, dust filled the atmosphere and it became too dark to see for up to six months. In addition, toxic vapors were released, further darkening and cooling the planet and later falling as acid rain. Initially large forest fires were started when ejected debris fell back to Earth through the atmosphere. It is believed these conditions resulted in the K-T extinction event. Impacts of this size occur on earth about every 100 million years.

Image Source: Detlev van Ravenswaay Info Source: atlasobscura.com, lpi.usra.edu