Dinosaurs weren’t the only living things to leave behind fossils. Scientists called Paleobotanists have also been able to use plant fossils to get a better idea of what life was like in Prehistoric Time. Fossils also help in classifying plants based on their structure. Our fossil may have been formed when a fern branch fell into the soft mud along a riverbank. Over the course of a great number of years, the mud hardened and turned into a sedimentary rock. Even though the fern is gone, its impression remains.
Instructions

Materials List

Cone 5-6 Clay

Duncan® Cover-Coat® Opaque Underglazes
  • Assorted Colors

Duncan® E-Z Stroke® Translucent Underglazes
  • Dark Colors

Brushes & Tools
  • BR 593 Economy Glaze Brush
  • TL 401 Clean Up Tool

Miscellaneous Supplies
  • Sponge
  • Newspaper
  • Plenty of Leaves, Weeds, Dry Grass
  • 2 Boards of Equal Thickness to Use as Shims for Slab Rolling
  • Rolling Pin(s) for Rolling Slabs and Rolling Leavings

Tips for Success

1) Have students collect 10-20 types of leaves. This way, extra leaves can be shared with students who have none.

2) Leaves that are well-defined work better than very fine or small leaves. Look for leaves that have large veins or interesting textures.

3) If a student is having difficulty removing a leaf, just leave it in the clay. It will burn out in the firing.

Vocabulary

• Clay: A firm, fine-grained mixture of minerals from the earth that is flexible when wet and hard when dry.

For Best Results

Please read all instructions before beginning project. Refer to photo for color & design placement.

1) Place the 2 boards parallel to each other on either side of the clay so that the slab can be rolled to an even thickness.

2) Cut out an uneven edge for the fossil with clean up tool and rewrap the excess clay.

3) Apply 3 coats of a light colored Cover-Coat® to the slab, making sure that each coat is dry before the next is applied.
4 Arrange the leaves on the slab and lay a sheet of newspaper over the clay.

5 Carefully roll over with the rolling pin to press the leaves into the clay.

6 With the leaves still in the clay, carefully apply 2 coats of a darker colored Cover-Coat®. When the piece is completely dry, carefully remove the leaves and fire to cone 04.
7 After fired, sponge on E-Z Stroke® that has been diluted with water, wiping it back so that it stays in the depressions left by the leaves.

8 Fire to cone 06.