

Dr. James I. Kirkland received a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado and spent two years teaching at the University of Nebraska and nine years as paleontologist with the Dinamation International Society before joining the Utah Geological Survey. He has spent the last 18 years as the Utah State Paleontologist. He issues permits for paleontological research on Utah state lands, keeps tabs on paleontological research and issues across the state, and promotes Utah's paleontological resources for the public good. <http://ugs.academia.edu/JamesKirkland>

An expert on the Mesozoic, he has spent forty years excavating fossils across the southwestern United States and Mexico and has authored or co-authored more than 80 professional papers. Some of his interests include the reconstruction of ancient marine and terrestrial environments, biostratigraphy, paleobiogeography, paleoecology, and mass extinctions. He has discovered and described numerous new dinosaurs including several new armored dinosaurs, bipedal plant-eaters, the oldest truly horned dinosaur, North America's first sickle-clawed therizinosaurid, and the giant dromaeosaur [raptor] *Utahraptor*. His research of the middle Cretaceous of Utah indicates North America separated from Europe about 115 million years ago, followed by a period of isolation, and the origins of Alaska with the first great Asian-North American faunal interchange occurred about 100 million years ago, which his numerous trips to Europe, China, and Mongolia have substantiated.

The J/K boundary dinosaur extinction and recovery are taking up much of his attention lately.