

AMAZING ATTRACTIONS

A Castle of Love

Monuments may cease but never does love. Coral Castle is definitely an exception as it is a monument depicting a love story in true glory. It's an engineering marvel consisting of over 1,100 tons of carved coral rock located in Homestead, Florida.

Who built the monument?

Latvian immigrant Edward Leedskalnin carved and sculpted the Coral Castle out of coral rock using only rudimentary tools as a tribute to his beloved 16 year-old fiancée Agnes Scuffs in Latvia who jilted him just a day before their wedding.

How was the castle built?

Leedskalnin originally built the castle around 1923 and took approximately 30 years of Leedskalnin's life. After moving the Castle to Homestead from Florida City in 1936, he worked on it till his death in 1951. After his death, Coral Castle was changed to Rock Gate Park and was turned into a tourist attraction. In 1984, The National Register of Historic Places added Coral Castle to its list of historic places.

Touring the castle

The entire Castle consists of 1,100 tons of stones in the form of walls, carvings, furniture and a castle tower. The Castle is made of oolitic limestone – a sedimentary rock composed of fossil shells and coral. The stones are fixed firmly in such precision that no light passes through the joints and make up perimeters of uniform height. Besides the Castle tower, there's an accurate Sundial, a Polaris telescope, a barbecue, a water well, a fountain, celestial stars and planets, a heart-shaped table, 25 rock chairs resembling crescent moons, a bathtub, beds and a royal throne.

What's the most remarkable feature?

The most notable feature is the 8.2 ton revolving gate which was documented in

television programs like "That's Incredible!" The gate is carved precisely within a quarter of an inch of the walls on both sides and is balanced in such a way that it can be opened just with the push of a finger.



ECO TALK

Bio-Plastic



- Bio-plastics are made from renewable, natural resources such as plant starch, sugar cane, vegetable oil, corn starch or pea starch rather than fossil-fuel plastics which are derived from petroleum.
- Bio-plastics are also called organic plastics. Once disposed off, they will safely and naturally biodegrade.
- Some bio-plastic products can even be composted in ordinary compost piles.
- Bio-plastic is available in a wide range of products today, from food packaging to car parts. Scientists are even working on converting certain bio-plastics into fuel.
- Even though they degrade naturally, they are necessarily good for the environment.
- Bio-plastics require less than 10% of the agricultural resources used by bio-fuels.
- Biodegradable plastics will only break down under specific conditions including the presence of sunlight, soil and micro-organisms.
- Biodegradable plastics and paper have similar characteristics and will essentially have the same reaction to the surrounding environment.

RED ALERT

Thermal Pollution

What is thermal pollution?

Thermal pollution is a temperature change in natural water bodies caused by human influence. It is basically the degradation of water quality due to change in water temperature.

What are the effects of thermal pollution?

Heat and hot water result from many industrial processes. They are in particular by-products of the activity of the power stations. This water ejected into the marine mediums has harmful effects, primarily on marine animal-life.

What causes thermal pollution?

The major sources of thermal pollution are electric power plants and industrial factories where

heat is produced by burning coal, oil, natural gas or by nuclear fuels undergoing fission releasing huge amounts of energy. This heat turns water to steam spinning turbines to produce electricity. After this process the spent steam is cooled and condensed back into water that is dumped back into the lake, river, stream or ocean.

What are the effects of Thermal pollution?

The change of temperatures in water affects aquatic organisms by decreasing oxygen supply, killing fish juveniles which are vulnerable to small increases in temperature and affecting ecosystem composition. The release of very cold water from the base of reservoirs severely affects the fish, especially the eggs and larvae and river productivity. The dead and decay-

ing algae make the water look, taste and smell unpleasant.

What control measures can reduce Thermal pollution?

Instead of discharging heated water into lakes and streams, power plants and factories can pass the heated water through cooling towers or cooling ponds, where evaporation cools the water before it is discharged.

