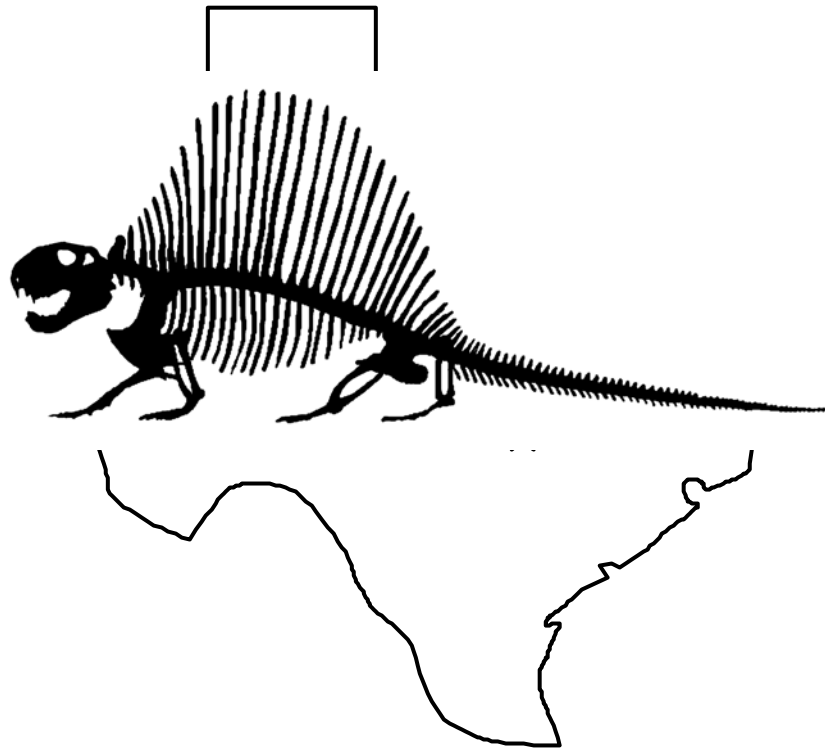


Paleo Footnotes

Newsletter of the
Paleontological Society of Austin

Austin and Central Texas



Volume 2, Number 7
July 2007

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

The battle sounds of the 4th are still underway. I hope you had a good holiday. Prior to the July meeting, I've been off to New Mexico for some fishing and fossil collecting.

Here's my take on last month's field trip. I have only one complaint about the June field trip to Oklahoma. It was about 30 days too short. Other than that, Ed and Dr. Sprinkle did a great job of leading the group around southern OK. The high water presented some challenge, but other roads lead to the same localities. As the saying goes, "experience adventure"! I came away with a desire to know about all those special crinoids we were finding.

It last month's regular meeting, Kathleen Howard made a motion to adopt the proposed "Code of Ethics and Conduct" document that was published in the June newsletter. The motion was seconded by Erich Rose, and a verbal vote passed it.

I imagine the July field trip down the Brazos River will be more than tweaked since most rivers in Texas seem to be in flood stage for the moment. Come to the meeting to see where will go. And come hear the speaker that Diann has lined up!

-- John

Next Meeting - July 17 Gulf Coast Echinoids

7:00 PM, AGMS Clubhouse

Our next speaker for the July 17 meeting will be Louis G. Zachos, PhD candidate from The University of Texas. He is researching the theoretical morphology of echinoids. He first started collecting fossils when he was a kid in Florida and through the years spent a lot of time in the numerous rock quarries in that state. This was the start to a continuing interest in the geology of the Gulf Coast, the Tertiary in general, and echinoids in particular.

Louis will speak on the Oligocene-age coral reef exposed in the abandoned quarry at Damon Mound, Texas, just a few miles southwest of Houston. This unique exposure is the result of the rare coincidence of 3 factors: the formation of a coral reef over an active piercement salt dome, its preservation in caprock through over a mile of uplift, and its excavation and exposure by quarrying operations. It is no coincidence, of course, that echinoid fossils are found in the reef.

Thank you very much, Diann

June Field Trip Report 2007 Paleozoic of Oklahoma

In the middle of all the recent rains, sixteen members met at the Callixylon tree in Ada for a relatively dry weekend. Rain was all around us but the only rain we saw was while driving – not collecting. Very lucky indeed. Oklahoma has received the same excess that Texas has and we were prevented from getting to a Silurian road cut I had been looking forward to. Raging low-water crossings look the same there as here.

Our first stop was Jennings's Quarry which is Haragan Formation, Hunton Group, Devonian. Digging for crinoid bulbs was hot, humid work and backhoes were much a topic of conversation. Quite a few bulbs were found, some very nice. Mr. Jennings received a check for \$62 (we pay per bulb) so I'd say we were successful. Some brachiopods and nautiloid pieces were also found.

The next stop was a favorite – Yellow Bluff. This is Bois d'Arc Formation, Hunton Group, Devonian. We had to do a little wading in Bois d'Arc Creek, but it wasn't enough to slow us down. Trilobites, crinoids, corals and lots of brachiopods were found. Our guest Mike Murphy from Ardmore had a fist full of trilobites. I found a large one that was unusual in that it was ventral side showing. The variety of brachiopods at this location always amazes me. I have to say thanks to Dr. James Sprinkle for again being our "what's this?" guy. I can't guess at how many questions he answered. Collecting with Dr. Anne Molineux was also quite nice. I hope she comes out in the field with us again.

Sunday morning we met again and devoted some time trying to reach the P-7 Silurian site. When that was successful, I turned the trip over to Dr. Sprinkle. He took us back to the Wrigley Quarry first. This is Bromide & McLish Formations, Simpson Group, Ordovician. While it was mostly parts and pieces – we picked up edrioasteroids, rhombiferans, holdfasts of several types, lots of echinoderm plates, bryozoans, brachiopods and trilobites from the Bromide. Gastropods, nautiloids and brachiopods were found in the McLish.

Our next stop was near Bromide, and again, of the Bromide Formation. The road cut yielded brachiopods, echinoderm plates, and lots of bryozoans. Dr. Sprinkle picked up two nice bivalves which he said was rather unusual.

I think we all had a good time and I am already planning next year's trip. Possibly new sites all around. I can't wait to go.

We will have to discuss this month's trip at the meeting. I don't think a float trip on the Brazos would be very productive at this time. Not without scuba gear.

Ed Elliot

Fossil Fest Show Committee Meeting Report

May 29, 2007

On May 29, 2007 we had a show committee meeting with Linda McCall, Erich Rose, Jamie Young, Ron Root, Ed Elliott and John Hinte in attendance.

The GOOD news was that we had 3 dealers confirmed for the show. The BAD news was.... that we had only 3 dealers confirmed for the show!

Since I am kinda phobic about calling people on the phone (I do very well in person, though), dealer names were parceled out among those present who were comfortable calling, and the results are this:

Ron got us the Siste's

Jamie confirmed that Danny would be taking a booth again this year John got us Glen Kuban, Mike Marlow & John Reitzlaff & we picked up Earth's Treasures in the interim

SO... we now have 9 dealers confirmed for this year's show!

We still need 1 or 2 small table dealers and 2 or 3 big table dealers, depending on what Danny and Glen are taking.

Erich Rose has offered to help with labels, etc. for the fossil teacher kits and questionnaire and we will be having a workshop later in the summer to get that going in time to be ready to hand out at the beginning of school.

We discussed again moving the show next year to a different time. April still leads the field and research into a likely date is ongoing. Remember - we would probably have to skip a year to do it. Probably next year, so be thinking about it.

This year is still going to be a challenge, but things are looking up.

Magazine, etc. mailers were sent out on May 31, 2007.

Next meeting will be July 11, 2007 at 7:00pm at my house to work on teacher kits! Donations for the kits are welcome. Show meetings are open to all club members so - see you there!

Sierra Vieja Project

April - 2007

One of my Gem & Mineral Society friends- Gordon May invited me to have lunch with a UT Geologist in early April. While meeting Jon Kalb, a geologist working at UT. Jon asked us if we would be interested in excavating a Rhino. No obligations preventing it- I said ok.

Jon has done work in Africa studying Primate fossils in the Afar region, which he wrote the book, "Adventures in the Bone Trade". As well as research over a considerable portion of N. and S. America. Over lunch he explained the basic geologic Rio Grande rift feature and work done by Rowe/Wilson, Paterson and his personal ongoing Project.

After an April- Marfa, TX rendezvous we headed to the private land of volcanic ash beds to pull the fossil. The area is similar to Big Bend before any roads were paved. The only real road is restricted to 15 mph speeds, dodging ruts, stream crossings and washouts. ----
----That's the good road!

One of the Ranch owners graciously offered us a place to spend the evening in his old Adobe house. Going into the old flat roofed house I was expecting primitive furnishings for such a remote residence on the Rio Grande. A perfect billiard table & Satellite TV were so unexpected I didn't play or watch TV till the second trip. Which is another story. I can relate if anyone is interested?

The next day we set up camp in the ash beds. Finding a Mammal jaw section and some teeth. The next day I made a hike into virgin territory and came up with a very unusual molar(undetermined), a small jaw(undetermined) and a lot of Brontothere skull fragments with teeth. We revisited the site in May and I found a small mandible which is also beyond the realm of the Paleontologist to identify, currently.

The next day we packed up and headed to the Rhino fossil location. Going 3-10 mph over the two tracks makes it hard to judge distance and I didn't know where we were! It's taken 3 months to get a good idea. Gordon had brought 2- 6' sections of electrical conduit, 2- 3' Juniper branches and a 3' x 2' piece of plywood. To construct a gurney for moving the fossil from the excavation site to the vehicle.

Using chisels, 2-3lb hammers, rock picks and a cordless hammer drill we extracted the mandible after several days of work. It was such a large chunk we would not have been able to carry it between the two of us without Gordon's homemade gurney!

We all split up and I headed down the loong stretch of Hwy 10 for home. Bringing all the fossils we collected to the UT Vertebrae Paleontology Lab.

While we were bumping down the dirt roads while in the field fossil hunting; Jon asked me if I wanted to prepare the Rhino. Not having done anything of the sort it sounded interesting and I am currently preparing what turned out to be a new genus of Brontotherium. Wann Langston had an April copy of the Berkeley Paleo publication lying in the Lab. I picked up; noticing it had a Brontothere article in it. What a bonanza! In it, was the detailed description of a new genus:

Eubrontotherium Clarnoensis
Paleo-Bios 27. April 30, 2007
-Mathew C. Mhlbachler, AMNH

The mandible I am working on is almost an exact match in dentition with the exception of it having the non matching singular premolar on the opposite side of the jaw, Muhlbacher describes.



The Texas mandibles stubby- globular incisors are uniquely odd with the huge canines being ground half way- due to wear. It was an immense old beast! What looks like a rodent chew mark- has taken a neat chunk out of one of these large diameter canines. Which came to light while preparing the fossil with air tools.

Thanks to the guidance of VPL Lab's Bob Rainey, which has contributed a wealth of information on fossil preparation techniques for the Project; which is ongoing.

-June 10, 2007

-James Lopez



The spare tires are still in the back of the Toyota 4 Wheeler- minus the tread. It has been locked in the section of road Jon Kalb got stuck in during this past winter. We revisited the section in May.

Places to Be... Things to Do

August 25 & 26 **Pine Country G & M Society**
VFW Hall; FM 2799 West, Jasper, Tx

September 21-23 **Houston G&M Society Show**
Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy, Humble, TX

September 30 & October 1 **Texoma Rockhounds**
Senior Citizen Center; 531 Chestnut, Denison, Tx

September 29 & 30 **Pleasant Oaks G & M Society**
Ellison Miles Geotechnology Institute (EMGI) Bldg
Brookhaven College 3939 Valley View Lane, Farmers Branch, Tx

October 17-20 **Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Annual Meeting**
Hilton Austin, Austin, TX

Oct 27-29 **FOSSILMANIA**
Somerville Expo Center, Glen Rose, TX

Nov 3-5 **Fossil Fest**
Old Settlers Association Headquarters, Hwy 79, Round Rock, TX

Nov 30-Dec 2 **Austin G&M Society Show**
Palmer Events Center, Austin, TX

The purpose of the **Paleontological Society of Austin** is the scientific education of the public, the study and preservation of fossils and the fossils record and assistance to individual, groups and institutions interested in various aspects of paleontology.

Meetings of the **Paleontological Society of Austin** are held the third Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building, 6719 Burnet lane, Austin, TX. The public is cordially invited to attend.

Annual Dues: \$15/individual, \$20/family and \$10/associate (non-voting, receiving newsletter)

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PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

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DATED MATERIAL – MEETING NOTICE

FIRST CLASS MAIL