

Paleo Footnotes

Newsletter of the
Paleontological Society of Austin

Austin and Central Texas



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President's Note

I hadn't done any collecting since the Oklahoma trip and was really jonesing for a change of scenery and the sight of fossils that weren't on my shelves, so the other morning I went out just as the sun came up. I'm still vertically challenged, so I chose a site where I could park close and just lay on the ground and pick up small but very interesting specimens. By 11:00 the dark grey ground was hot enough that it was burning my arms as I lay there. I had a great time, but I would have stayed longer except for the heat. Sound familiar? One of these days we will experience normal temperatures again. And it might even rain. It could!

A week ago I was contacted by a man who said that he was involved with a program in Cedar Park called (?) Walking with the Dinosaurs. I took no notes because he said that he'd e-mail me all of the information --he hasn't yet. One of the things he wanted from us was to lead a group of kids on a field trip maybe in September. I hope to have better info soon. If you know of a good local site for kids (older than 9) that could sustain a group for a while please contact me. I have a few, but I'm open to new ideas. The parents will be bringing them, so parking would be a consideration.

I hope everyone is going to show up at the Brazos River for the field trip. Those who don't have boats -- kayaks can be rented rather cheaply by the day. It's not a walk in the park, but neither is it that difficult. And it's certainly a lot of fun! I wish that I could go as it's one of my favorite trips. I'm looking forward to seeing what is found this time.

See you at the meeting. Ed

Next Meeting – Tuesday August 18, 2009

"The Latest in Ptychodus"

By David Lindberg

David started out when he was young with an interest in finding buried treasure. Although he never did find any chest filled with pieces of eight, he eventually did find another treasure to hunt for - rock collecting. After he moved to central Texas, he developed an interest in more "lively" buried treasure, fossils. Occasionally, a particular type of fossil will pique his interest because of its uniqueness and/or mysterious qualities. This happened with Ptychodus, those flat toothed sharks we know almost exclusively from their teeth. Recent finds have advanced our understanding of Ptychodus. David will talk about Ptychodus in general, the kinds of Ptychodus we find in the area, and how these recent discoveries have advanced our understanding.

Please bring your Ptychodus teeth for everyone to look at.

Next Field Trip August 22, 2009

Brazos River The Lower Brazos for Pleistocene Fossils

Meet at the Stephen F. Austin statue parking lot in the S.F.A. State Park in San Felipe, at 8:00AM. Traveling east on I-10, just east of Sealy, take 1458 north (left) to the park. Bring whatever you would need for a day on the water. Food, lots of water, a canoe or kayak, hat, collecting materials-some finds are fragile, etc. Wear clothing that you won't mind getting in the red water. This trip is always a lot of fun!

PSoA July Meeting Minutes

SPEAKER

Diann Strout encouraged members to consider sharing their knowledge of fossils by volunteering as a speaker.

Mike Smith presented "Lyme Regis - Part of the Dorset and East Devon - World Heritage Site." Dorset is located 155 miles from London on the English Channel. If you go, stay in Lyme Regis, but do your collecting in Charmouth. At this locality you can find Ichthyosaurs (9 species), Plesiosaurs (5 species, best of this age anywhere in the world), Pterosaurs, fish (46 species), dinosaurs (armored and plated), ammonites, pentachrinus, belemnites and insects.

MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 8:10pm by President Ed Elliot.

OLD BUSINESS

Accounts: Treasurer David Lindberg reported \$4924.26 in the checking account. Joan Crane noted there is \$9705.07 in the old APS account.

Mike Smith is looking for more book reviews.

NEW BUSINESS

Mineral Wells issue - Erich Rose and David Lindberg mentioned since the Mineral Wells Town Council approved the fossil park project, there will be a period of time where the Mineral Wells site will not be open while improvements are being made. PSoA made a donation of \$500 to the park project.

Newsletter/Emails - Mike Smith requested individuals to contact him via email (msmith17@austin.rr.com) if they have not been receiving the newsletter (via email or mail). Also, contact Mike if you prefer to receive an online copy of the newsletter rather than a hard copy.

PSoA Directory - Mike Smith will print a PSoA directory and bring to the next meeting. This directory will not be published online.

Core Samples - Marilyn suggested that members reach out to any contacts in the oil business and see if they want to get rid of their core samples containing fossils. You never know what you may find! Marilyn was given a core sample that contained a Texas Devonian trilobite which came from

8600 feet down south of Lubbock. Another core sample contained an ammonite from the San Andreas formation take southeast of Midland or west of Wichita.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, July 25 at 9am - Meet at the Non-vertebrate Paleontology Lab located at the J.J. Pickle Research Campus, building 122. Members will collect afterwards at a location to be determined.

Saturday, August 22 - Brazos River

FOSSIL SHOWS

Fossilmania - This year's show will be held October 30 through November 1 in Glen Rose, TX. Joan Crane announced that 62 tables have sold so far!

Wildflower Center Nature Night - (The family Nature Nights program introduces the public to ancient life in Central Texas and more explicitly the diversity of fossils found in our local region.) Erich Rose, Ron Root, Suzanne and Riley Galligher manned the PSoA booth on Thursday, July 9 from 6 - 9pm. The booth featured hands-on fossil display, local area fossil collections, tools, informational books, PSoA Fossil Fest flyers and fossil give aways. There were crafts, a scavenger hunt and lots of other fun stuff for the kids.

Fossil Fest - Please collect extra fossils - wherever you go - for teacher kits and Fossil Fest. If anyone has the Fossil Fest banner, please contact Erich Rose or bring it to a meeting.

July Field Trip Report Non-Vertebrate Lab University of Texas

Our trip for July was to UT's Non-Vertebrate Lab and was hosted by our good friend Dr. Ann Molineux. In attendance were Tom and Beverly Trunick, Bob McDonald, Dennis and Morgan Stock, Constance Wood, Dianna Fry, Melvin Noble, Adam Velasquez and myself. We owe her special thanks for showing up after a long week completing a difficult grant proposal. A great deal of her funding derives from such grants.

We had a long informative talk concerning the collections with a great many questions asked and wonderfully answered. Ann is a great educator and has always shown enjoyment when sharing her knowledge with us. She then demonstrated the somewhat new UT website PaleoCentral.

This places all of the Type specimens in all of the collections (UT, WSA, BEG, NPL, etc.) with a BEG site (with geo-locators) on a geologic map. One of the neat applications is that it can interface with Google Earth to show a satellite image of the same spot, again with geo-locators. There are beautifully done photographs of some of the Type specimens -- more are to follow as they are able to shoot them. This site was created as a research tool and is a work in progress. The Home page gives good directions for usage. Many other fun sites can be found by searching "Paleomaps" or "Quicktime Animation Paleomap Project". Some of the animations done by Dr C.R. Scotese are really interesting in showing the movement of the earth's plates

through time

Ann then gave a tour of the new temperature and humidity controlled room housing the Type Collection. One of the main problems facing this collection is the difficulty in finding the original papers describing the Types. Researchers, or someone wanting to describe a similar species, need not only the specimen but the original description as well. So many of these were described so long ago and the papers stored at so many schools, labs, state buildings, etc.

One thing that was repeatedly obvious was how much help is needed. Most universities with a collection of this size

would have five full time employees. Ann is the employee. She has to inventory and curate the five million plus collection, handle all grant proposals, work on the Type Collection, assist in photographing the Types, handle all new acquisitions and collections, do personal appearances, write professional papers, etc., etc.. When she starts up the mass inventory again in the fall, I encourage everyone who can to volunteer some of their time.

Thanks again to our good friend Ann for giving up her Saturday to answer so many questions and to enrich our understanding of the workings of the UT collections.

15th Annual Gem & Mineral Show Jasper, TX

August 22nd/23rd

The 15th Annual Gem & Mineral Show will be held on Saturday, August 22nd from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday, August 23rd from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at The Event Center on Highway 190 West.

The show is sponsored by the Pine Country Gem & Mineral Club in Jasper, their website is www.pinecountrygms.org

The show will feature jewelry, gemstones, rocks, fossils, and minerals from around the world on display and for sale.

There will also be demonstrations, prizes and a silent auction, as well as prizes for children.

Admission is \$2.00 for adults, and students and children get in FREE.

The purpose of the **Paleontological Society of Austin**, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is the scientific education of the public, the study and preservation of fossils and the fossil 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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The Paleontological Society of Austin is a member of and affiliated with:

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DATED MATERIAL – MEETING NOTICE

FIRST CLASS MAIL