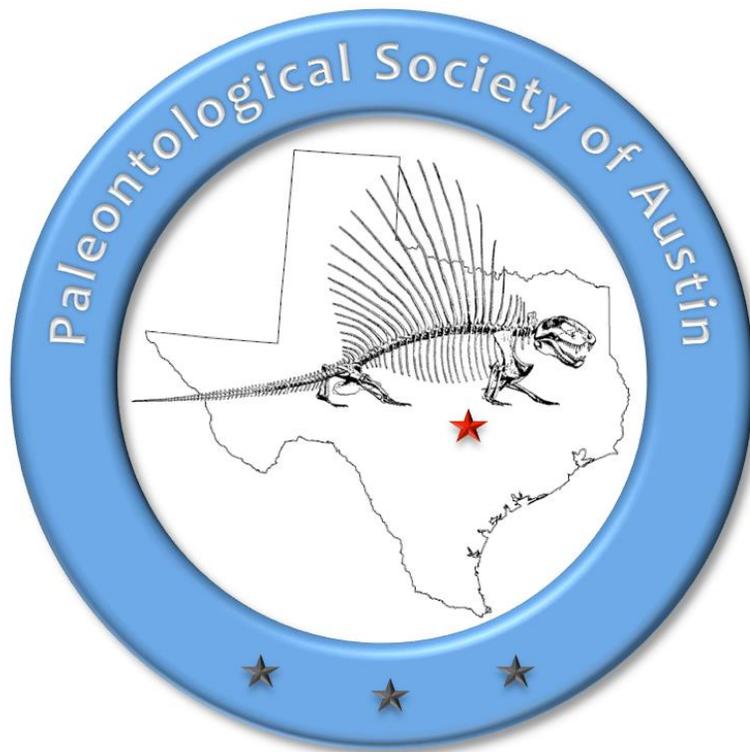


# Paleo Footnotes

Newsletter of the  
Paleontological Society of Austin

Austin and Central Texas



Volume 9, Number 12  
December 2014

## President's Note

Time to catch up on things. Between my various jobs, family *and* Fossil Fest the last few newsletters have been incomplete. This last one for the year will attempt catch up on things such as meeting minutes and field trip reports.

You will also see that our Decemeber meeting will in fact be our annual Holiday White Mammoth Exchange and potluck dinner. This is always the best way to finish up the paleo year.

We had an incredibly succesful Fossil Fest this year. And in no small part that was because of the hard work that Suzanne, Melinda, Frederick, Dale, Ron, Dax and *everyone* else put into planning it and then making it happen. Check out the meeting minutes for more.

One other item of business, we need to elect new officers for next year. At the November meeting we asked the current officers if they wanted to stay on and for nominations of those interested in running. Pretty much everyone was still game except Frederick who would love to take a break from the treasurer's position. Next to show chair it is probably the most involved. Our club's books are not complicated with the biggest chunk of accounting being Fossil Fest. In addition Dax Gonzales has offered to take over the newsletter from me.

See you Tuesday,

-- Erich



**Next Meeting**  
**Tuesday December 16, 2014**  
**7:00 p.m. at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building**  
**6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX**

## **Annual Holiday Party**

### **Potluck Dinner & White Mammoth Gift Exchange**

Please join us for the annual PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN WHITE MAMMOTH HOLIDAY POTLUCK! The main dish and soft drinks will be provided. Bring your favorite side dish or dessert (please let us know what you will bring when you RSVP to avoid duplicates). You are welcome to bring wine or beer for yourself or to share.

If you would like to participate in the "White Mammoth" gift exchange, please bring a gift-wrapped fossil-related item. We suggest around \$10-15 value or just something you think would be fun to have. Obviously fossils, and paleo-themed books, toys, games, etc. will all work nicely.

Rules for the exchange will be explained after the dinner.

RSVP via Evite or to Suzanne at [showchair@austinpaleo.org](mailto:showchair@austinpaleo.org) or (512) 751-1351



## 24th Annual Fossil Fest Show Report by Suzanne Galligher

This year's 24th Annual Fossil Fest, Discover Ice Age Texas, was a tremendous success! For me personally, it was one of the most fun-filled and enjoyable Fossil Fests that I have attended since I joined PSoA in 2006! Much of this may have to do with moving the show two weeks earlier and getting it over with before Thanksgiving and leaving plenty of time to prepare for the holidays. We'll be back to celebrating Christmas at my house this year rather than Grinchmas!

Nearly 1,600 individuals attended the show over the November 15th & 16th weekend at Old Settlers Association in Round Rock. This represents a 130% increase in attendance compared to our 2013 show (aka Freeze Fest) and a 54% increase compared to 2012. These attendance numbers are unrivaled with the exception of long gone days when bus loads of school children attended Fridays of our 3-day show. The Show Committee's strategic decision to invest in advertising this year definitely paid off! What else changed this year? The time and effort put into public relations and spreading the word about Fossil Fest and promoting all aspects of our educational program. More specifically...

- TV spotlight - We were picked up on Time Warner Cable News' *On the Town* (formerly the Austin Arts Minute) on November 12th and the CBS morning show *We Are Austin* on November 14th.
- Social Media - We posted Fossil Fest flyers, info & links to the Facebook pages of major news outlets, travel websites, events calendars, special interest publications, community news, area attractions, higher ed orgs/groups, family & nature groups and etc.
- Digital & Print Media Event Calendars - We posted Fossil Fest flyers, info & links to the websites of previously mentioned groups, as in prior years, adding many new community news & info sources. We were given a nice write-up with photos by Community Impact Newspaper.
- Email Service Provider (ESP) - We nearly quadrupled the number of emails sent out via our ESP this year to area teachers & homeschoolers (beginning the week before school started), past FF attendees, SCFMS clubs and board members, past and present PSoA members - essentially every one in our database.
- We printed more tear pads this year and sent them to our exhibitors and as many local libraries as people were willing to deliver in addition to the the usual area attractions, higher ed and museums.
- Our educational outreach to K-12 schools and at other public events leading up to FF increased significantly over prior years.
- We joined CiNCA (Children in Nature Collaborative of Austin) and gained exposure in the local nature movement.

All of these actions together added to the increased attendance numbers and the feedback we received from our exhibitors was phenomenal!

Fossil Fest is only possible due to the work of many, many individuals, all working together toward the common goal of educating the public about paleontology and the fossils in our backyard. Reflecting on the enormous team effort of everyone for this

article reminds me of my competitive sailing days at college. Boat handling is all about teamwork - each individual has a very specific job, with specific responsibilities. One individual steers the boat. Another trims the sails to make the boat sail fast. Others hoist and drop the sails at the right instant, and everybody keeps an eye out for traffic. Each role is critically important to getting the boat underway. However, once underway, the boat will only reach its destination through good communication and teamwork of all aboard. As the skipper of that boat, I'm ultimately responsible for the strategy, planning and tactical navigation; although, the execution requires everyone's involvement equally to succeed. This year's achievement is directly attributable to each and every person that volunteered at Fossil Fest or at one of the many activities leading up to it. Everyone should be proud of what we've accomplished this year! I'm extremely grateful for the commitment and dedication of each person in making this one of the best shows we've had in recent memory and certainly the most fun I've had skippering this boat.

Tremendous appreciation goes out to each individual and the role they filled on the team:

- The Show Committee (strategic steering) - Dax Gonzalez, Kathleen Howard, Melvin Noble, Ron Root, Erich Rose and Mike Smith
- PSoA Board Members & Chairs (the sturdy & dependable mast that's always there) - Ed Elliott (fossil ID's), Frederick Falk (banker & admissions desk manager), Melvin, Ron, Erich, Mike (membership & grand door prize tix), and Dale Vargo
- Public Relations (the boat that keeps us afloat) - Gordon Galligher, Jimmy Hendricks, Melvin, Natures Treasures, Susan Postlethwait, Ron, FF Show Committee, CiNCA, all who dropped off tear pads & flyers, volunteered at K-12 or public outreach events throughout the year, stuffed fossils into ziploc bags, and everyone else who helped to spread the word
- FF Education (the mainsail which begins the journey when filled with wind) - Dava Butler from Waco Mammoth Site (mammoth education), Frederick (desktop publishing, printing & assembly of Paleo Passport), Melinda Falk (Paleo Passport, TEKS Correlations, ice age slideshow, mini-workshops), Kenny Harrison from ACC Geology (fossil & mineral use talk to Boy Scouts), David Lindberg (teacher kits, microscope), Alan Peters (Fossils Talk! Hear their Stories, geology talk to Boy Scouts), Mike (fieldtrip fossil talk, ice age content review)
- Exhibit Cases (the jib sail which increases the boats speed) - Ed, Dax, Paul Hammerschmidt, Danny Harlow, David, Jason Petersen, Erich, Mike and Dale
- Ask the Paleontologist from UT (the spinnaker sail flies high in front when sailing downwind and makes the boat fly) - Kenneth Bader, Chris Garvie, Will Gelnaw, Josh Lively, Adam Marsh, Alicia Power & Lily, Chase Shelburne, Kelsey Stilson
- Fossil Donations & Set-Up/Tear Down (the indispensable riggers that outfit the boat to make it operable) - Don Denzin, Ron and Erich (load/unload AGMS display cases & trailer); Dax, Bill Hill, John Hinte and Gary Vliet (storage unit); Jeanne Bowman, Gordon, Ryan G., Paul, Eric Henry, Bob McDonald, Melvin, Mike, Dale and everyone who donated fossils
- Fossil Fest Kitchen (The Galley which keeps attendees, exhibitors and volunteers fed & happy) - Merrily Jones and Dale

- Dealer Dinner (The equivalent to dining at the Captains table for exhibitors & volunteers) - Cathy & Craig Brandt
- Volunteers not previously mentioned - (the wind that fills the sails and propels the boat) - Christine Bennett, Kevin Bills, Lonnie Childs, Valarie Childs, Tim Clark, Jeanne Denzin, Kevin Gillespie, Jaime Hirtz, Nancy Podio, Christina Price, Cathy Rylander, Gary Rylander, David Silver, and Rene Wojcik

As you can see, a successful Fossil Fest takes all hands on deck! Thank you so much to everyone involved - looking forward to next year!

## **Meeting Minutes for Austin Paleo Society 10.21.2014**

The meeting began at 7:03 when Ron introduced tonight's speaker: She is Kelsey Stilson, who presented her work from the University of Oregon, focusing on the development of rhino arthritis over fifty million years. She described some of these early rhinos, which are classified as odd-toed ungulates, from the fossil record: Hyrachus 50mya, Trigonias 32m, Menoceras 26m, Diceratherium 20m, Aphelops 18m, and Teleoceras 6m. She also described the modern rhinos, which are known as the Black Rhino, White, Indian, Sumatran, and Javan. And some of these large rhinos were in Texas during the Miocene Period. Kelsey explained that rhinos are very active and heavy and their bones distinctly respond to stress, with arthritis often as a result, and she has extensively studied this condition in the fossil record and in modern rhinos. She detailed the aspects of the rhino's joint wear and analyzed it over many samples of ancient and modern specimens. She showed us many drawings and photos of these creatures. She displayed her analysis and conclusions, which is that arthritis in rhinos has slowly increased over time, as the animal size has increased, but size is not the only factor in arthritic increase. Kelsey Stilson is now working on producing a paleopathology workshop and dissection studies. She took some questions. Mike then announced the refreshment break.

When we resumed the meeting, Suzanne substituted in Erich's absence, and she noted the new people at the meeting, John and Jean, Jamie, as excited as a 12-year-old about fossils, Rose and Dan, who told an interesting rhino saga. Approval of the minutes was postponed due to an incomplete version in the newsletter. The Treasurer's report was given. Then Suzanne reported on the recent outreach events, with Mike and Gary filling in details. It was noted National Fossil Day is coming up soon at TMM. Suzanne reported the Fossil Fest vendor lineup is already completely sold out and we are having to turn away other vendors. She emphasized that we all need to sign up and fill the various volunteer slots at Fossil Fest. We are getting rid of the old wood FFest signs. Ed then went over the details of the field trip to Lake Texoma and reviewed the existing strata there. Bob talked about the imminent filling of the new lake at the North Sulphur River Basin and how this will result in many fossils being submerged permanently. Suzanne said there is no new business and Mike thanked Gordon for our new projector. Suzanne announced that coming up, we have outreach involving Cinca and Campfire Girls at Mueller Park. Kathleen reminds us of AGMS' meeting on Thurs at pm. There were Ron's comments about CT scans of mummies, and talk of the rescue of artifacts exposed due to water level fluctuation. The door prizes are wood, bryozoan and pyrite fossils, won by Cathy, Jamie and Dale. Then the meeting adjourned.

## **Austin Paleo Society Meeting Minutes for 11.18.2014**

Erich welcomed the meeting open at 7:06. One of our members, Dr. Jim Sprinkle, University of Texas, then presented his subject for tonight, which covers Early Ordovician Stromatolite mounds and reefs in the Ibex area of western Utah. Stromatolites are marine structures, built up and preserved layers of algae and sediment. He spotlighted evidence there of these early fossil algal life forms, along with sponges, crinoids, blastozoans, bryozoans and corals, and their contribution to reef building. Stromatolites account for some of the earliest preserved life forms on Earth and they had a major role in building up the first reefs, a stable marine structural environment that sheltered rapidly expanding life forms. Sprinkle showed graphs detailing the different reef-building eras and the dominant reef builders of those periods, covering 500 million years. He noted how climate affects reef building, the warmer periods producing more. He showed the stratigraphy of the Ibex area and located these stromatolite reefs within it. He showed photos of the stromatolite fossils' various outcrops and their preserved structures, their reef components and the information that the fossils revealed upon study. Dr. Sprinkle told that because the algal structures had built the earliest reef environments, that they had contributed to their own demise by providing a safe environment for subsequent life forms who actually fed extensively on the algae itself. Dr. Sprinkle concluded with a cool anecdote about his fortunate discovery of a super-long crinoid stem during his fieldwork there and the committed diligence and work over the years he and his peers have taken to reassemble the scattered fragments of it. He then took questions, and noted some active stromatolites today, at Shark's Bay, in Bermuda and the Great Salt Lake. Erich then called for a short break and we then returned for the meeting's discussion of the just-concluded 2014 Fossil Fest.

There were many comments by members throughout the night's recounting of the details of this year's banner event. The previous month's minutes were not published yet and their approval was delayed until later. Frederick gave a detailed Treasurer's report of the receipts from Fossil Fest and the net monetary results. We continued to give and listen to many positive comments about the various details from different aspects of Fossil Fest. Suzanne told of the positive reports from the vendors too. She also recounted the various advertising and publicity strategies used to produce such a great turnout for the event. Lively reporting on 2014 Fossil Fest continued for a while. Frederick proposed that FFest paleo passports be given to teachers beforehand next year. T-shirts were mentioned. A well-deserved round of applause was given Suzanne and the successful event. And Suzanne announced that next year's FFest theme is Monster Marine Reptiles. Ed spoke about the upcoming field trip to Harker Heights, and the club breathed a sigh of relief when Ed agreed to stay on as field trip chair if he got help with writing the field trip reports. Erich spoke of the process of electing new officers for 2015. Erich agreed to be president for 2015. Dale offered to stay on as Secretary again. Suzanne is staying in her position as show chair and on the board. Frederick would prefer to vacate his Treasurer position. Dax will take the newsletter editor position for 2015. Mike helped explain the board's organization. Erich called for the newsletter items asap, and encouraged people to step up and serve on the board. The annual Christmas Party will be at the regular 3rd Tuesday meeting time December 16<sup>th</sup> 7pm. The party is a pot-luck and White Mammoth gift exchange so everyone is encouraged to bring things to eat and give. The door prizes were won by John, Frederick, Don, James and Dale. Then the meeting was adjourned.

## Field Trip Report October 2014

What a beautiful morning at Eisenhower State Park! Waiting with me for a great time at Lake Texoma were John Hinte, Mike Smith, Melvin Nobel, Cathy and Gary Rylander, Dax Gonzalez, Felice Moreno, Gary Vliet, Ron and Janet Root, Thaddeus Zaharas, Bob McDonald, Rose and Mike Farmer, Rene and Dan Wojcik.

We caravanned on to our first stop, which has a variety of formations exposed. To the left of where we start is the Paw Paw Formation. The area we start is the Weno Formation. Not too far to the right the Denton Formation and on down the beach where the "white" limestone starts to crop out is the Ft. Worth Formation. All of these are in the Washita Group. Having the lake stay low for so long created an obstacle for our collecting, a forest of thick, tall weed growth. Very difficult to look through. Certainly didn't stop us from finding fossils. Many of our newer members picked up small slabs and solitary specimens of *Rastellum* and *Texigryphaea*, as well as some of the *Peilinia quadriplicata* from the gravels. There were many ammonites of various species picked up from the Ft Worth area. And lots of the larger *Macrasters* and quite a few *Holasters*. I saw a small slab of nice *Pinna* from the Weno. And Gary picked up a very pretty piece from the Paw Paw, it had 5 identifiable ammonites with nacre on it. Dax found a large (1 1/2 -2 inch) shark vertebra. I instigated a sit down. I enjoy collecting the gravels between the Ft Worth and Denton areas. Lots of small pretty stuff. There were six of us doing it late in the afternoon. Many small oysters, a *Dentallium*, shark teeth, two species of *Plicatula*, several very pretty gastropods and more. After dark we met for our traditional dinner at Wendys' in Oklahoma.

Sunday we went to Lowes' Highport for some more Ft Worth Formation collecting. Lots of small to medium ammonites, *Macrasters* and *Holasters*. Quite a few of the big *Amphidonte walkeri* "oysters" were found. I picked up a nice (needs lots of cleaning) *Lopha subovata*. At the end of the day I stumbled upon a broken block containing 26 shark vertebrae. They weren't stacked, just throughout the block and from the one tooth present probably came from some kind of sand shark. Never know what you'll find on an outcrop.

Another great trip to Texoma. Lake Randell is still closed, so we didn't get to go there as planned. Great weather, wonderful people and lots of fossils, what more could you want? I'll see you at the next one. ---Ed



Happy Hunting at Lake Texoma



Ed's awesome block of vertebrae.

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. See web site for April & December dates.

Annual Dues: \$18/individual, \$24/family and \$12/associate (non-voting, receiving newsletter) Send to: Treasurer, Paleontological Society of Austin, PO Box 90791, Austin, TX 78749-0791

PSA Web Site: [www.austinpaleo.org](http://www.austinpaleo.org)  
Web master: Michael Smith: [webmaster@austinpaleo.org](mailto:webmaster@austinpaleo.org)

2014 Officers:

President	Erich Rose
Vice President	Suzanne Galligher
Treasurer	Frederick Falk
Secretary	Dale Vargo
Field Trips	Ed Elliott
Programs	Ron Root
Editor	Erich Rose
Web master	Gordon Galligher
Show Chair	Suzanne Galligher

<a href="mailto:president@austinpaleo.org">president@austinpaleo.org</a>
<a href="mailto:vicepresident@austinpaleo.org">vicepresident@austinpaleo.org</a>
<a href="mailto:treasurer@austinpaleo.org">treasurer@austinpaleo.org</a>
<a href="mailto:secretary@austinpaleo.org">secretary@austinpaleo.org</a>
<a href="mailto:fieldtripchair@austinpaleo.org">fieldtripchair@austinpaleo.org</a>
<a href="mailto:ron@grassrootstrader.com">ron@grassrootstrader.com</a>
<a href="mailto:editor@austinpaleo.org">editor@austinpaleo.org</a>
<a href="mailto:webmaster@austinpaleo.org">webmaster@austinpaleo.org</a>
<a href="mailto:showchair@austinpaleo.org">showchair@austinpaleo.org</a>

Science Advisors:

Ann M. Molineux, PhD.	<a href="mailto:anm@mail.utexas.edu">anm@mail.utexas.edu</a>
Pamela R. Owen, PhD.	<a href="mailto:powen@mail.utexas.edu">powen@mail.utexas.edu</a>
James T. Sprinkle, PhD.	<a href="mailto:echino@mail.utexas.edu">echino@mail.utexas.edu</a>

Permission to copy material printed herein is granted provided proper credit is given to the author and source.  
The Paleontological Society of Austin is a member of and affiliated with:

**South Central Federation of Mineral Societies & American Federation of Mineralogical Societies**



**PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN**

Erich Rose, Editor  
807 The Living End  
Austin, TX 78746

DATED MATERIAL – *Next Meeting June 17th.*

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**