



Paleo Footnotes

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President's Note

Erich Rose
PSoA President

Now we all know we need rain to make the flowers grow, and more importantly to wash away the dirt and expose pretty new fossils. While Mother Nature does her best, I am catching up on identifying and cataloging last winter's finds. So far, I have identified at least one new urchin for the collection as well as a handful of bivalves and gastropods. The sun will soon return and the mud will stiffen up and I'll be back on the rocks.

We had a great auction last month and, from what I gather, the Club raised some funds for its initiatives. I'm just sorry that, despite being there, I had to work and didn't get to take part other than eating some nice food and briefly chatting with some members. It was a beautiful day and the Preserve was busy.

We will be discussing a few outreach possibilities again this month. One in particular is the Camp Fire Nature Celebration, May 30, 9 a.m. until noon. I believe this will be happening at the Mueller community here in Austin. It was a great event last fall, but we need volunteers to staff a table and tell folks all about our club and collecting fossils in Central Texas. If you are interested, drop me a line or see me at the meeting.

Upcoming Presentation

Ron Root
PSoA Program Chair

Club members will discuss their trip to Lake Valley in New Mexico and the Lower Mississippian fossils they found there. Club members who made the trip include: Gary and Kathy Rylander, Ron and Janet Root, John Hinte, Mike Smith, Paul Hammerschmidt, Gary Vliet and Kathleen Howard.

Upcoming Field Trip

Hunting the Pennsylvanian near Brownwood

Ed Elliott
PSoA Field Trip Chair

Once again we are heading north for Paleozoic fossils. The area around Brownwood is well known for an abundance of Pennsylvanian to Permian age material. We will certainly be visiting the Wilson Clay Pit where you can easily spend the entire day collecting and may make a stop at another site near Brady.

The Club will meet at 8 a.m. in Early at the Heartland Mall (300 Early Blvd, Brownwood, Texas 76802). From the mall we will caravan to the first site. Be there on time and ready to go as we will have another 30-40 minute drive to the first collecting site.

Most of what we will be collecting will be small to hand-sized. But there can be some nice stuff to chisel free of large slabs, so bring plenty of small to large containers, a hammer/pick, chisels, eye protection and stuff to wrap delicate fossils. The terrain is rugged, so wear sturdy shoes and appropriate clothing. Bring food, plenty of water and whatever else you'll need, as we will probably be out in the country all day. It's a long drive back to town, so plan accordingly. There is no restroom. Depending on the site we may be in full sun for hours, so bring sunscreen and appropriate clothing. Don't forget to check the weather.

Early is north on Hwy 183 from Austin. As you approach Early and Brownwood (about 2.5 hours from central Austin) Hwy 183 will make a left turn. From there, the mall will be about 1 mile farther on the right. Look for a group of cars in the parking lot (We'll be the only ones there that early).

Next Meeting

Tuesday, May 19 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane
Austin, Texas

Field Trip Report

Two days in Oklahoma

Ed Elliott
PSoA Field Trip Chair

Meeting me near the Callixlon tree on the East Central University campus in Ada were Bob McDonald, Cathy and Gary Rylander, Ron Root, Mike Smith and Kevin. It was a perfect day for collecting and there had been a great deal of recent rain – we wasted no time getting to our first site. The Bluff is Bois d'Arc Formation of the Hunton Group, Devonian. We met our host, Mark, rather unexpectedly and he took us in by a different and much easier route. He proceeded to show us a couple of other places we might hunt and later treated us to a great lunch! Above and beyond anything we might expect from a host. Mark certainly wins the “Host of the Year” award. At the end of the day, he led us to a spot where we could pick up the crinoid bulb *Camarocrinus* (probably from the Silurian crinoid *Scyphocrinites cinctus*). These weren't as well preserved as ones we have gotten from our other site, but still a nice collecting addition. We collected the numerous brachiopods, corals, bryozoans, gastropods, trilobites and echinoderms. The rains didn't help as much as expected. I think that I picked up the only camerate crinoid here – small and about 90 percent complete. I know that Mike and I both picked up a very small cup, but I don't know the names of them. Many of us picked up the usual small *Pisocrinus sp.* Trilobites also didn't materialize in numbers. Gary got some slabs with some large, possibly complete, specimens. I picked up a few small ones, and I'm sure others did as well. It was a wonderful day and we all had a great time collecting lots of fossils – just not the bonanza we had hoped. After our late and unexpected lunch, we didn't feel the need for our usual big dinner, and just a few of us went out for something small.

On Sunday, we headed out for Amsdens' P-7 roadcut. This site is the Henryhouse Formation of the Hunton Group, Silurian. We picked up brachiopods, corals, and a few “trilo-bits”, and some of the *Pisocrinus sp.* Since the fence went up, much of the site is not available. Kevin picked up a beautiful, complete camerate crown. I've never seen anything like it from this site. Kudos! We next went to an Ordovician outcrop on the road south of Fittstown. While little was found other than a few brachiopods, we enjoyed walking a site we hadn't visited since the 1990s. From here we went the short distance to Wrigley Quarry and collected several gastropods, nautiloid pieces, brachiopods, echinoderm plates and bryozoans. After cleaning a bit, I believe, based on a guess from a photo, that I found a partial rhombifera – a pleurocystitid. It was a really picturesque locality to hunt on such a lovely day. Nearly everyone left for home at this point. Kevin and I stopped at a couple of Ordovician sites on the way. At the first, he picked up three paracrinooids, *Oklahomacystis tribrachiatas*. At the second, after much rock breaking, we found a few graptolites and one brachiopod – *Lingula sp.* It was a truly beautiful weekend with lovely weather, pretty countryside, wonderful companions, and excellent fossil sites. I can't wait to go back. See you in Brownwood for the next one.

PSoA Annual Auction Recap

Dale Vargo
PSoA Secretary

The Club met for its annual auction on a warm, sunny day at West Cave Preserve surrounded by many fellow nature lovers enjoying the Preserve's natural beauty. A wide array of exceptional items awaited the bidders, including high-quality dinosaur vertebrae and teeth, local ammonites, fine Texas petrified wood, books, maps, unique local and not-so-local fossils, and even American Indian artifacts – some made from fossils. A mixture of meeting regulars and members who we don't see as often came out to the auction. We began with our customary pot luck feast and then dove right into the auction. With enthusiastic bidding and good-natured competition, the auction included great conversation, applause, and comradery. The auction was a success for our organization, raising more than \$1,100 for our outreach and educational activities. Kudos to Mike, our auctioneer, David, our geekified results-keeper and cashier, and bidders who made this auction an exceptional event.

Upcoming Educational Outreach Opportunities

Suzanne Galligher
PSoA Vice President and Show Chair

Camp Fire Nature Celebration

Camp Fire is hosting its Nature Celebration to introduce children and families to the natural beauty of Texas. Each station will feature a different summer camp theme so families can experience “a day at camp.” This free event is a day of fun, education and celebration of the natural world! By having fun at the Camp Fire Nature Celebration, you will support sending kids to Camp Fire Summer Camp through scholarships. In Camp Fire, children identify their sparks, lift their voices, and discover who they are. Activities include: identifying insects with the Austin Nature & Science Center, water conservation education with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, angler fishing, enviroscape models with Texas Parks and Wildlife & Keep Texas Beautiful to illustrate healthy, eco-friendly living, learning bird calls with the Wild Turkey Federation, building cob structures with the Zilker Botanical Garden, fossil dig with PSoA... and more!

Join us for this family-friendly event in Mueller Park on Saturday, May 30 from 9 a.m. to 11:00 am. The Club will sponsor a fossil touch table and dig pit. We'll need three volunteers to interact with the general public and introduce them to common fossils found in Central Texas. Children will have an opportunity to dig and take home a few fossils in our gravel dig pit, so donations of any small fossils would be greatly appreciated. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Ron Root (programchair@austinpaleo.org) and Erich Rose (president@austinpaleo.org). Remember, you don't have to be an expert. You just have to be willing to share your passion for fossils with others.

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 on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building located at 6719 Burnet Ln. in Austin, Texas. The public is welcome to attend. Visit austinpaleo.org for more information.

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

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