



Paleo Footnotes

Volume 10, Number 8

August 2015

President's Note

Erich Rose

PSoA President

Why do my design clients always delay the projects so that instead of building cabinets in the spring or fall, I'm stuck working in the heat of summer or the chill of winter? It is hitting the mid to upper 90's in my garage shop right now and it is a challenge for sure. But the current project is a good one, and the delays were legit so what can I say. When it's done it will be a beautiful large display case with collection drawers and storage for Jacob's Well Natural Area in Wimberley, AND it will be full of fossils! So here I am cutting wood instead of cataloging fossils. Cataloging is what I prefer to do this time of year when it is too dang hot to be out on the rocks.

We will not have a speaker at this month's meeting. Instead we want to do a member show-and-tell. Have you been able to identify some of your better finds from the club trips? Did you travel and bring neat fossils back with you? Whatever you did and whatever you found please come share with us at the next meeting.

The clubs laptop will be available if you want to put something fancy together, but the setting is informal so rocks to pass around and a simple verbal presentation is just fine as well. You may also want to use this as an opportunity to bring in stuff you are not sure about and get the group's input. Mystery fossils are encouraged. Nothing better than a paleo puzzle to ponder among friends.

Speaking of that meeting, I hope you all enjoy yourselves. I'll be somewhere else. Hopefully with my feet dangling in some cool water.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, August 18 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane
Austin, Texas

Upcoming Field Trip

Pleistocene Fossils along the Brazos River

Ed Elliott

PSoA Field Trip Chair

The Club will be collecting on the gravel bars of the Brazos River for Pleistocene-age fossils this month. You may also find arrowheads and other stone artifacts. This is a great trip when the weather is hot.

Meet at Stephen F. Austin State Park in San Felipe at the statue parking lot at 8:00 a.m. Traveling east on I-10, just east of Sealy, take exit 723 to FM1458 north (left) to the park. We will be launching from under the bridge just outside of the park. Bring whatever you would need for a day on the water: food, lots of water, a canoe or kayak, hat, collecting materials and packing material since some finds are fragile. Wear clothing that you won't mind getting in the red water. You will get wet and probably muddy. This trip is always a lot of fun.

As of the writing of the newsletter, the water level on the Brazos is a little high but on a downward trend. If it is too high, the gravel bars are underwater. If the water is too low, you spend more time dragging the boat than paddling. For this reason, the trip may need to be called off or changed. Please keep an eye out for e-mail updates. Contact me (512-657-7581) if you have questions.

Upcoming Presentation

Ron Root

PSoA Program Chair

This month's meeting will provide members an opportunity to show off all of those cool fossils they've found when no one was around with whom to celebrate. Bring in your neat finds from any recent trips or share some stories from fossil-related trips you have recently taken. There will be a laptop and projector for anyone with photos to display.

Upcoming Shows

PSoA Booth at AGMS Gem Capers Show

Sign-up as a volunteer at the August meeting or online (after the meeting) at www.mysignup.com/agms (the passcode is paleo) for the Paleontology Table at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society (AGMS) Gem Capers show held Friday through Sunday, October 23–25 (with set-up on Thursday, October 22) at the Palmer Events Center. This is our largest educational outreach of the year and presents an enormous opportunity to spread the word about Fossil Fest. It is great fun, so don't miss out! In the meantime, please start gathering up small, clean fossils for donation. We'll need those donations at a pre-meeting fossil-stuffing party on Tuesday, September 15 at 6 p.m. We'll be bagging 1500 fossils along with our Fossil Fest show flyer to give away at public outreach events and the Gem Capers show.

Please note: AGMS is also hosting the Federation Show for the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) during Gem Capers at the Palmer Events Center. PSoA will be leading a field trip for AFMS. We'll include more details in the newsletter when we know them. If you'd like to know more about the AFMS schedule, please visit www.amfed.org/show2015.htm.

Fossil Fest Update

Save the date! The 25th Annual Fossil Fest will be Saturday to Sunday, November 14–15, 2015 (with set-up on Friday, November 13). This year's show theme is: Monster Marine Reptiles! We'll be exploring all the marine reptiles that roamed the Texas seaways. At this month's meeting, we'll talk about volunteering for Fossil Fest and helping to promote it by distributing Fossil Fest tear pads/flyers around Austin, such as public libraries, the Texas Memorial Museum, UT Geology Department, Walter Geology Library, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Inner Space Cavern, Austin Nature & Science Center, Beverly Sheffield Education Center - Splash Exhibit, and the Thinkery. A basket with a labeled packet for each location (containing tear pads, flyers and instructions) will be left on the sign-in table. Please consider picking up a packet for that location and dropping it off by September 1 if you live, work or travel near one of these locations. Please send an e-mail to showchair@austinpaleo.org if you have ideas for other locations where we should advertise our annual show. The support and assistance of all members is essential in making Fossil Fest a success. There are many ways that members can help, so please stay tuned for upcoming opportunities!

We also encourage you to create an exhibit case for the show this year. We are looking to fill cases in the front room with marine reptile fossils to go along with our show theme. Additionally, we have a lot of display cases to fill in the Hall! We want to see those fossils you worked so hard to collect in searing heat, ankle-deep mud, slippery slopes, capsizing canoes or finger-numbing cold! So start sorting through your fossils now! Additionally, it would help us teach some key curriculum concepts to students. If you're in need of exhibit case ideas, please consider:

- Collection of fossils from a specific locality around Texas and surrounding area
- Collection of a specific type of fossil from localities all around Texas and surrounding area
- A display of how a plant or animal becomes a fossil
- Examples and a brief description of changes to an organism over time
- Collection of a particular organism and their structures
- One organism - the characteristics used to identify it with samples and diagrams
- A fossil and display showing what we were able to learn about it (for instance "x" tells us in what type of climate/environment the organism would have lived. If it is a sea dwelling organism, is there anything that tells us whether it came from a deep or shallow ocean, cold/warm temperature, turbid/calm environment, etc.)

Lastly, I'd like to incorporate technology into the show this year. How do you use technology with respect to fossils, paleontology or your hobby? Is anyone digitizing their collection? How about 3D scanning or printing? Please contact showchair@austinpaleo.org if you are utilizing any of this technology for your hobby.

Upcoming Public Outreach

Suzanne Galligher

PSoA Vice President and Show Chair

Living in central Texas, we've learned that when it rains, it pours. So it is with outreach events! We have three upcoming events on two consecutive days during the month of September. Volunteering at outreach events is a rewarding and valuable club experience. Don't be afraid to step up because you're "not an expert." We've all been in those shoes and the majority of us are hobbyists or amateurs. Your interest in fossils and paleontology means that you already know more than the general public! Join us in the thrill of introducing adults and children to the fabulous world of fossils in our backyard. If you are interested in volunteering, please e-mail vicepresident@austinpaleo.org.

[Homeschool Day](#): Austin Zoo on Friday, September 25 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

[Dino Day](#): Champion Park in Williamson County on Saturday, September 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

[Pioneer Day](#): Dr. Pound Historic Farmstead in Dripping Springs on Saturday, September 26 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2015

Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building

Dale Vargo

PSoA Secretary

Erich gavelled the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. He then passed out hard copies of the newsletter for those who had not seen it, and remarked that we have a nice turnout tonight even though the newsletter was delayed in being e-mailed. The meeting minutes were brought up for approval and the motion to approve passed. Erich asked those present if anyone would report on the latest field trip. Mike gave the latest Treasurer's statement. Erich said the we have received a request for volunteers to be officeholders of The South Central Federation of Mineralogical Societies (SCFMS), of which we are a member. SCFMS's convention will be in Austin this year and we have been asked by AGMS to host a local field trip in connection with their convention here, and concurrent with AGMS' Gem Capers annual show. Ed suggested Whiskey Bridge as a field trip that would be fun for the attendees, since it is fairly close and would yield good finds for all. Erich announced that we will be having an increased, substantial presence at Gem Capers this year. Cathy then presented a get well card for Frank and offered it to anyone wishing to sign a message for him. Mike said that the hats we have for sale are almost gone. Melvin then called for volunteers to bring refreshments for the upcoming meeting in August and beyond. Suzanne then announced that The FOSSIL Project, an organization dedicated to building connections, collaboration and education across the wide spectrum of fossil-interested communities, will be having a workshop conference in Dallas this fall and called for those interested in attending to sign up. She also noted that many of the attendees' expenses will be paid for by the conference. Please let her or Erich know if you may be interested in attending. Erich then asked Ed how the recent field trip went and Ed reported the details, including the fact that a group of fossil enthusiasts from the Williamson County group was there at the road cut at the same time as our own group. Earl reported that even though the group had cancelled the first portion of the field trip, he actually was able to collect some fossils from the pit in Waco as well as making it to the road cut later. Ed then announced the details for the upcoming field trip to the UT Vertebrate Lab at JJ Pickle Research Center in Austin. The parking requirements for the Research Center were outlined also. Erich noted some of the visitors, including Tomas and Judy from the D.C. area, who have been finding some local fossils. The door prizes were then won by Joe, Ryan, Earl, Erich, James, Tomas, Cathy, and Dave. We then took our refreshment break. Upon returning from our break, Ron announced tonight's speaker, Joshua Lively from UT, giving his talk on "Mosasaurs in Texas and Beyond". Lively, who has previously given talks to us on fossil turtles of the Western US, showed slides of Mosasaurs from Texas, related them to snakes and monitor lizards and presented new info regarding them based on newly-discovered, high-quality specimens. Lively outlined the numerous groups of these large Cretaceous-era swimming predators and noted the collecting of many specimens that was done by the Works Progress Administration during the 1930's. Then he told of his focus on contributing to modern scientific communities' overview for considering effects of climate change today by linking the known physical information about these fossil Mosasaurs with gathered data on these ancient reptiles' own climate change history from the same Cretaceous period in order to arrive at some useful conclusions to be drawn about potential climate change influence on living populations today. Lively then took questions from Earl and Paul regarding Mosasaur behavior. The meeting adjourned at 8:55, with Lively and his colleagues continuing to discuss Mosasaur identification as we cleaned up, visited with each other and departed for home.

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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