



Paleo Footnotes

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October 2015

President's Note

Erich Rose
PSoA President

Things are kicking into high gear as we approach Fossil Fest. The Gem Capers, regional South Central Federation of Mineral Societies (SCFMS), and national American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) national shows and conferences are upon us, and there are a lot of outreach opportunities on deck. We will also have a presence at Fun Fun Fun Fest, which makes perfect sense since we know how much fun fossils can be.

Suzanne – our wonderful vice president and show chair – is looking to fill the various sign-up sheets for volunteers, so please do so at the meeting or contact her directly to find your volunteer slot. We need all hands on deck between Gem Capers and Fossil Fest.

Because Gem Capers is falling the weekend after our meeting, Ed Elliott is looking to hold the field trip to Texoma a week later in the month. He'll provide the details for this trip, which is always a good one.

As temperatures get cooler, the collecting can be a lot easier. For me, the trick is getting enough in with the shorter days. Hope you all get a chance to either go on the Texoma trip or at least get out on your own to a favorite site or two.

That's all for now. See you all on Tuesday.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 20 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane
Austin, Texas

Volunteer Today

We're in demand, but we need your help!

Suzanne Galligher
PSoA Vice President and Show Chair

Volunteerism is the gift of time and talent. I am extremely grateful to all of our volunteers – whether you volunteer on a committee, in an administrative support capacity, as part of the Board, or at public or educational outreach events. Volunteering is the gift that gives back. When you volunteer, everybody – the Club, the public, and you – benefit.

How do you benefit? For one thing, it allows you to meet other Club members who can give you deeper insights into the Club and build your knowledge of fossils and paleontology. Meeting fellow members may also enhance your professional connections and personal friendships. In many cases, serving others or doing good deeds increases your own sense of well-being. Ultimately, volunteering is an expression of your interest in and commitment to our Club's mission: advancing the state of the science, educating the public, and collecting and identifying fossil specimens.

We have many upcoming opportunities to volunteer, such as Fossil Fest, our booth at the AGMS Gem Capers show, and numerous public outreach events. Won't you support your Club and join us?

Thank you to everyone who helped with the annual stuffing of 1,500 zipper bags with Fossil Fest flyers and small fossil giveaways before last month's meeting! Be sure to give thanks to public outreach volunteers Ed Elliott, David Lindberg, Melvin Noble, Ron Root and Mike Smith. Our participation in [Identification Day](#) at the Texas Memorial Museum (Sept. 20), [Dino Day](#) at Champion Park in Williamson County (Sept. 26), and [Pioneer Day](#) at the Dr. Pound Historic Farmstead in Dripping Springs (Sept. 26) would not have been possible without them!

Upcoming Field Trip

Ed Elliott
PSoA Field Trip Chair

We'll be collecting along the shores of Lake Texoma. Meet at 8:00 a.m. on **Saturday, Oct. 31** at the entrance to Eisenhower State Park. The later-than-usual date is because of our participation in the AGMS show. Unless you want to leave at three in the morning, you will need to drive up the night before. Plan to stay overnight in the Sherman area, as we will also be collecting Sunday morning. We will visit a variety of sites. Some of these include large ammonites, so be prepared. You will definitely want to bring your hammers and chisels to remove specimens and backpacks to carry those specimens a fair distance along the lake shoreline. It goes without saying that you will need lots of water, sunscreen, a good hat, food, sturdy shoes, etc. If you need more info, contact Ed Elliott (fieldtripchair@austinpaleo.org or 512-657-7581).

Field Trip Report

Ed Elliott
PSoA Field Trip Chair

We had a good turnout for our Sept. 19 trip to Brownwood. Paul Hammerschmidt, Dave Florin, Earl Richards, Jon and Cindy Bonilla, Kevin Bills, David Lindberg, Bob McDonald, Eric and Jack Jones, Cathy and Gary Rylander, Ron Root, and Mike Smith all showed up. Our first stop was the Wilson Quarry. This is the Harpersville Formation, Cisco Group, Virgilian. Several of us spent time with new collectors, showing them what to look for. Little Jack was a lot of fun and had the kind of energy that made us all envious. By the time I started collecting, everyone had scattered. We were only there for 3.5 hours, and I really didn't get to see many finds. I'm sure most people found nice brachiopods, bryozoans, crinoid parts, straight nautiloids, and horn corals, as those are very common in the old quarry. David got quite a few corals for the Club's teacher kits. This short of a time is just not enough for Wilson.

We had all been looking forward to seeing what had happened to the spillway during the recent flood. It had certainly changed quite a bit. Though the Cedarton Shale is exposed in the lowest part of the spillway, most of what we looked at was the Winchell Formation, Canyon Group, Missourian. A good amount of time was spent just looking for safe access descending to the lower levels. Once found, it wasn't a hard climb. The topography has certainly changed. The overhang at the *Archaeocidaris* shale layer is gone and the layer has been undercut so you now have to excavate from below. Most of the club worked on an upper shale layer. Paul got a nice *Archaeocidaris* from there and I found a block from the lower level (already fallen) that I separated and from which recovered two specimens. Several people found plant material and carbonized wood fragments from this upper level. The only loose fossil I found was a nice oyster from the upper level. While there were abundant brachiopods in the silicified blocks, it was very difficult to successfully remove them. A few decent bryozoan slabs could be picked up, but most were in blocks of great size. More time could have produced more finds in the lower area but we were caught in a hard rain that afternoon that pretty much ended the hunt. All in all, it was another fun day in the Pennsylvanian of Central Texas.



Club members ready to collect!



Cathy and Gary enjoy some shade while collecting.

Upcoming Presentation

Ron Root
PSoA Program Chair

Adam Marsh, a graduate student at The University of Texas at Austin, will be speaking to us this month about his dissertation on contextualizing the End-Triassic mass extinction in North America using long-necked and meat-eating dinosaurs. He'll mostly be talking about Chindesaurus and Dilophosaurus, which are Late Triassic and Early Jurassic theropod dinosaurs from Arizona. Adam is from South Bend, Indiana. He earned his bachelor's degree at The University of Notre Dame in biology and geology. He completed his master's degree at UT-Austin in 2013 and is continuing his doctoral degree. In the summers, he is a seasonal paleontologist at Petrified Forest National Park and conducts other fieldwork along the Navajo Nation in Arizona.

Upcoming Shows

PSoA Booth at AGMS Gem Capers Show

Don't miss out! No prior experience or expertise required! Sign-up NOW to volunteer 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, Oct. 23–25 (with set-up on Thursday, Oct. 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's a blast and you get to enjoy the show while you're there. The PSoA booth will feature an educational Quest for Knowledge, fossil touch table, fossil displays, paleo tools, fossil cleaning and giveaways. It's great practice for Fossil Fest! For more information about Gem Capers, visit the AGMS Gem Capers website at www.austingemandmineral.org/gemcapers/index.html.

Fossil Fest Update

When: November 14 & 15, 2015 ~ 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Where: Old Settlers Association, 3300 Palm Valley Blvd., Round Rock, TX (on Hwy. 79, next to Dell Diamond)

Show Theme: Prehistoric Sea Monsters!

Good News: As reported last month, all large and small dealer/exhibitor booths are SOLD!

Bad News: There are many volunteer slots that remain open. We need at least one volunteer at each activity for it to open and many require two volunteers to operate smoothly. We will be left with no other option than to shut down activities if they remain unfilled.

Good News: We still have a few weeks to fill these slots! Sign-up online as a Fossil Fest Volunteer at www.mysignup.com/fossilfest (passcode is paleo).

Volunteer Needs: It takes every single club member to put on a show of this magnitude. There are many different jobs to choose from – whether you prefer manning the admissions desk, magnifying fossils under the microscope, helping out in the kitchen, talking to kids about the touch table fossils, spinning the Wheel of Fossils, watching kids at the Dig Pit or helping with the Make & Take craft – there's something for everyone! You can even donate bottled water for volunteers and vendors at the show. If you can't donate your time at Fossil Fest as a volunteer, please consider these other valuable options: donate funds to the kitchen to offset food costs, purchase bottled water for volunteers/vendors, spread the word about Fossil Fest via e-mail or social media (friends, family, co-workers, teachers, Scout/Youth leaders), post our flyer to local nature clubs or other related online forums, print the Fossil Fest Show Flyer (on our website at austinpaleo.org/fest) and tack to community bulletin boards (at your local coffee shop, restaurant, library, office break room, book store, etc.).

Got Fossils? It's time to bring all your fossil donations to this meeting! We need lots and lots of CLEAN fossils for the Dig Pit (small) and Spinning Wheel (bring what you would want to take home). Keep this in mind when you're out collecting: if you come across an outcrop with a lot of a particular fossil, please pick up extras for the fest!

Please give thanks to David Lindberg and Dax Gonzalez! David has been diligently assembling the teacher kits this year, and Dax Gonzalez is sorting all the fossil donations and ensuring that there is always a good mix of fossils on the Wheel of Fossils board at all times. **If you have any spare Porocystis (algal fruiting bodies) or horn coral from Brownwood or Jacksboro, please bring them to the upcoming meeting.**

Exhibit Cases: **We are in desperate need of marine reptile fossils to exhibit in cases flanking our informational show theme displays!** Please email showchair@austinpaleo.org if you have any we can borrow. We encourage you to create an exhibit case for the show this year. There are a lot of display cases to fill in the Hall! Additionally, it would help us teach some key Texas curricular 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
- 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
- Fossil and display showing what we were able to learn about it (for instance "x" tells us the type of climate/environment the organism would have been in while living. If a sea dwelling organism, is there anything that tells us whether it came from deep or shallow ocean, cold/warm temperature, turbid/calm environment, etc.?)

Advertising: I am very pleased to announce that we will be publicizing Fossil Fest in an Austin events and entertainment guide with a reach of 100,000+ monthly visits, 170,000+ page views, 46,000+ Facebook fans, 18,000+ email subscribers, 2,700+ Twitter followers and 2,000+ Instagram followers. We will be monitoring our Grand Door Prize tickets to see how many attendees heard about us through this forum.

Digital Marketing: We are in the process of sending a series of Fossil Fest emails out to club members, former attendees, SCFMS officers, Austin area teachers and Scout/Youth groups via our email service provider, Vertical Response. The Show Committee began this digital campaign three years ago and it has proven to be very effective and provides a significant cost savings to the club (as opposed to sending via snail mail). Please join me in thanking our webmaster, Gordon Galligher, for converting all the word documents and images into compatible formats for sending via email and monitoring the open and click through rates.

Grand Door Prizes: Mike Smith is printing and cutting the gazillion Grand Door Prize tickets for this year's show. Thanks Mike! Watch our website (www.austinpaleo.org), Facebook ([austinpaleo](https://www.facebook.com/austinpaleo)) and Twitter ([@Austin_Paleo](https://twitter.com/Austin_Paleo)) for updates and photos of our Grand Door Prizes.

Dealers/Exhibitors: Please join me in welcoming our 2015 Fossil Fest Dealers & Exhibitors: Austin Gem & Mineral Society (AGMS), Dinosaur George (George Blasing), Natural Selection Enterprise (Joe Bone), John Fox, Jack Grant, Miriam Hall, Microfossils Et Cetera (Chase Jennings), Red River Paleontology (Wayne Mandrell), George & Marian McNabb, The Dig (Jason Petersen), Nature's Treasures (Karen Richards), The Paleo Pelagica Museum of Natural Science (Anna Stanley) and Teredo's (Doug Vanderford).

Upcoming Public Outreach

Suzanne Galligher
PSOA Vice President and Show Chair

We have some sensational opportunities to spread the word about Fossil Fest at these upcoming public outreach events. You don't need to be an expert to volunteer! You just need a friendly smile and willingness to talk

fossils with others. Volunteering is really gratifying! As an added plus, you get to hang out with your fellow club members at some pretty festive localities. Won't you join us? E-mail vicepresident@austinpaleo.org to reserve your preferred volunteer spot.

Do512 Family Tent at [FunFunFun Fest](#) at Auditorium Shores on Friday, Nov. 6 from 6 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.
Need 3-4 volunteers. PSoA President, Erich Rose, will be giving an engaging talk and demo on "Amateur Paleontology and Opportunities for the Citizen Scientist." PSoA will bring flyers.

[Rockin' Kids Club](#) at the [Round Rock Library](#) on Monday, Nov. 9 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Need 3-4 volunteers. We will be giving a short talk on the fossils in your own backyard – dinosaurs! We'll bring some touch table fossils and the South San Gabriel River theropod track and also assist the kids with their own make-and-take dinosaur track craft.

Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2015

Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building

Paul Hammerschmidt
PSoA Secretary Pro Tempore

President Rose opened the PSoA meeting at 7:08 p.m. He called for the Treasurer's report. Mike Smith gave the Treasurer's report. He stated that the Club has received \$1,500 from dealer deposits for this year's Fossil Fest. Mike also provided information regarding the Club's scholarship program. He reported one candidate for the non-vertebrate award had been selected. Two candidates for the vertebrate award were undergoing the selection process. President Rose called for approval of last month's minutes. Mike amended the previous minutes statement "...we were required to award some of these (scholarship) funds this year," which was incorrect. The association is not required to distribute the scholarship funds, but we should be encouraged to award them when funds are available. Minutes were approved by vote as amended.

Under old business, a general discussion was held regarding receipt of newsletters. It was reported that one member had not received a newsletter in two or three months because his computer was not working. It was approved that that member will receive future copies of the newsletter via USPS. Regarding non-receipt of the electronic versions as a result of a member in arrears with dues, Gordon Galligher will send a reminder notice to each member during the month on which their dues are due.

President Rose and Suzanne Galligher (Vice President & Show Chair) reviewed a substantial list of upcoming public outreach opportunities in which club members can participate. See September's newsletter for the list of or email of outreach opportunities and e-mail Suzanne Galligher to reserve a volunteer spot. Suzanne introduced a final program called Dinovember which will be held at the Round Rock Library the entire month of November. President Rose discussed the AGMS Gem Capers show which will occur October 23-25 at the Palmer Events Center. PSoA will have a table at the show and can encourage participants to attend the club's upcoming Fossil Fest. AGMS is hosting the National Show for the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) during their Gem Capers. PSoA will assist AGMS by leading a field trip to Whisky Bridge for attendees of the conference. [Editor's Note: This trip has since been canceled due to AGMS scheduling conflicts.] He also encouraged our club members to help out with AGMS Gem Capers show. President Rose called for Other Business.

Suzanne Galligher relayed that Alan Peters has retired, and he may be talked in to put on a class for our club. Melvin thanked the club members who had provided snacks and drinks for the club meetings and encouraged others to sign up for future meetings. Ed Elliot talked about the upcoming field trip. He noted that the Brazos River was still running high. The club agreed that a trip to Brownwood would be favorable. Ed had been in communication with Bob MacDonald about the possibilities for the Brownwood area. Previous rains had increased the possibility of a successful collecting trip. President Rose adjourned the business meeting at 7:45 p.m. Door prizes were handed out and the members recessed for snacks.

The meeting reopened at 8:00 p.m., and Ron Root introduced our presenter William Gelnow, who has a Master's degree in paleontology from East Tennessee State University and is currently pursuing his Ph.D. at The University of Texas at Austin. Will's talk was a fascinating overview of the evolution of the pineal organ and the pineal foramen: its appearance, disappearance and sometimes reappearance in the fossil record. See last month's newsletter for more details on this fascinating topic.

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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