



Paleo Footnotes

Volume 12, Number 1

January 2017

President's Note

Erich Rose
PSoA President

Well here we are starting up a brand new year. The officers and board had our first meeting last week, and we have managed to put together a budget, a calendar with field trips and other events, and some new ideas for outreach.

Our first field trip will be just up the pike to Harker Heights. This is a great place to find some nice echinoids (sea urchins), fairly decent ammonites, a variety of other Cretaceous invertebrates, and even some shark teeth. We will begin a series of pre-meeting presentations this month that I am calling, "Fossil Collecting 101." Oriented toward the beginners (of all ages), each in the series will guide you through the process of becoming a fossil collector. Topics will include:

- What are fossils, and what is paleontology?
- How and where to find fossils.
- How to identify fossils.
- How to label and catalog a fossil collection.

The series will continue through the next three meetings, and you will be well on your way to finding and building your own collection by the time we are finished.

I hope to see you on the 17th for the next meeting.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, January 17 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane
Austin, Texas

Next Field Trip

Saturday, January 21 – 8 a.m.
Harker Heights and Surrounding Vicinity
Meet: McDonald's at 630 Indian Trail
Harker Heights, Texas 76548

Fossil Collecting 101

Join Club members for a three-part series of informal sessions on how to begin (or improve) your fossil collection.

Erich Rose
PSoA President

PSoA members are hosting a three-part series of presentations on paleontology, collecting fossils and making a collection for beginners and seasoned collectors. Members will explain exactly what fossils are and discuss their study. Learn where to find fossils and proper collecting techniques, as well as how to organize those finds into a proper collection.

The Club will hold the sessions at 6 p.m. – prior to its regularly scheduled meetings – which occur every third Tuesday of the month.

January 16 – What is Paleontology?

Why collect fossils? Contributions of amateurs and the study of the Earth's history.

What are fossils? Vertebrates and invertebrates, Ichno fossils, types of preservation.

February 21 – How do I Find Fossils?

Geology and Stratigraphy, maps and guidebooks, public and private property, collecting equipment, labels and notes, safety.

March 21 – How do I start a collection?

Cleaning and preparation, storing and displaying, identification, labeling, numbering and cataloging.

Handouts will be provided, but you may want to bring a notebook and lots of questions. Note that these presentations will take place prior to the regular meetings, and we will be covering a great deal in each 45-minute session. Please be there on time or early so we can start at 6 p.m. sharp.

Upcoming Field Trip

Hunting for Cretaceous fossils in Harker Heights.

Ed Elliott
PSoA Field Trip Chair

The Club is headed out to Harker Heights and other locations along US-190 this month. We will be collecting from the Fredericksburg Group, Walnut and Comanche Peak Formations. Although many of you have collected these same formations in and around Austin, the variety of fossils will be somewhat different with a few more types of echinoids being common and other species of invertebrates we don't commonly see here. Shark and other fish teeth have also been found.

Most of the fossils will be loose and easily collected. Some may require a little digging or down-sizing, so a rock hammer and chisel could be handy. Mostly you will just need a variety of containers (boxes, zipper bags, divided boxes, etc.) for everything from tiny crab claws to ammonites.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the McDonald's on the north side of 190 at Indian Trail. Take I-35 north to Belton and head west on US 190 to Harker Heights. Exit at Indian Trail and look for the McDonald's on the right.

Travel time from central Austin is about 1 hour and 15 minutes. So plan to be there on time because we will caravan to our first stop fairly quickly. Contact Ed Elliot at 512-657-7581 with any questions.



Shark vertebra, fish teeth & more from the Harker Heights area.

Meeting Minutes

Dale Vargo
PSoA Secretary

December 20, 2016 – Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building

We gathered at our regular meeting time and held our annual Christmas Party potluck and White Mammoth gift exchange. Around 50 were there celebrating with good food, fellowship, and a festive atmosphere. We placed our gifts up front, helped ourselves to the feast, ate and visited, and gave kudos for the food, mood, and decorations!

Once the dinner had concluded, Erich Rose emceed, wishing all a Happy Holidays. The meeting minutes were approved. Erich noting that Dale Vargo is recording his final meeting minutes as official Secretary. Mike Smith reported that we made over \$2,100 in profit from Fossil Fest 2016. And, Erich announced that Emelia Rose will be Vice-President and Show Chair for Fossil Fest this coming year. Our Fossil Fest show theme for 2017 will be "Dinosaurs." He then asked that we join him in honoring Suzanne Galligher for serving five years as Show Chair. He offered a "Thank You," as we all applauded Suzanne for her completed work. Erich noted that we intend to furnish a nice gift for Suzanne and asked Mike to allocate funds for it.

Then it was time for our White Mammoth gift exchange and Mike and Erich carefully checked the number of actual gifts and compared it to those ready to exchange – and there were over 40. So, we reviewed our rules for choosing and raiding gifts. Mike passed the bowl around, and we drew our numbers so that the exchange could begin. We watched, laughed, and wondered what would happen next, as nice gifts were chosen, lost, considered, coveted, and raided. We had fun and light-hearted drama as usual.

Then we spent the closing time together, talking and cleaning up the party array. We said our good-byes and Happy New Year wishes and departed.

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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