



Paleo Footnotes

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President's Note

Erich Rose
PSoA President

The days are getting short, and I am getting deep into some reorganization of my collection. These dark evenings do not make for good collecting, but they do encourage indoor activity. I'm trying to improve the way I sort and store my specimens. Not easy when I have hundreds and hundreds of fossils from single locations. In the next few months I hope to do another round of Fossil Collecting 101 pre-meeting lectures. I'll improve last year's presentations and invite others to contribute ideas and examples. Let me know what aspects of fossil collecting you are most interested in or have questions about. Anything from how to find them to identification and cataloging.

We will be finishing up the year with our annual holiday party and White Mammoth Gift exchange. Good food and lots of fun. The society will provide brisket and turkey as well as beverages. You bring a side dish or desert. You are also welcome to bring your own adult beverage to consume or share. We also provide the plates and other utensils. Now, if you want to take part in the White Mammoth exchange all you need to do is bring a wrapped paleo-oriented gift (fossil, book, jewelry, toy, etc.). We usually say in the \$10-\$20 range but it could also be something you found or created yourself or maybe it's that proverbial "white mammoth" you received years ago and want to help "find a new home." We are looking at a big turnout so be prepared for a fun second half after dinner.

We also have some business to take care of. Most importantly election of officers and appointment of various chairs. Most of our current officers are happy to stay on in their current roles, but we are always looking for new blood. If you want to get more involved do not hesitate to contact me about what positions are available. We will conduct the election after everyone is seated during dinner and before the gift exchange.

Annual Holiday Party

Please join us for the Paleontological Society of Austin **WHITE MAMMOTH HOLIDAY POTLUCK** at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 19 at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building.

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). [View the RSVP.](#)

If you would like to participate in the "White Mammoth" gift exchange, please bring a gift-wrapped, fossil-related item. We suggest around \$10-20 value or just something you think would be fun to have. Obviously, fossils, books, toys, games, etc. will all work nicely. Rules for the exchange will be explained after the dinner.

PSoA Website Wins Award

The South Central Federation of Mineral Societies has awarded the Paleontological Society of Austin Website the top ranking in its annual contest. Congratulations to Club Webmaster Gordon Galligher and Club Treasurer Mike Smith for their work over the years on the website.



Next Meeting

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

November Field Trip Report

Ed Elliott
PSoA Field Trip Chair

The day started off with an “oops” on my part. I had said to “meet at Frans”. I hadn't been by there lately and there is no more Frans'. It all worked out despite me. Present were Melvin Noble, Ron DiPronio, Vaughn Nelson, Andrew Pansi, Tim Cawthan, Kayla and Lori McGuinness, Rose and Mike Farmer, Kathleen Howard, Mike Zimmer, and Andrew Dunham.

We went to a spot on Little Walnut Creek by 290E to collect the Dessau and Burditt members of the Austin Chalk Group. The preponderance of fossils here are bivalves. There are four *Exogyra* species, as well as *Lopha*, *Ostrea* and *Inoceramus*. As most of the people present had never been, I thought it was a good place to start. With entire oyster beds to choose from and soft limestone to chop, I think most collected good specimens. After a few hours we went to another site upstream on Little Walnut. This site is Dessau as well. We found a lot of rough straight ammonites called Baculites. Some still retained some of the sutures. Scallops, bivalves of many kinds are common. One found here is called *Spondylus guadalupae*; while abundant, they are difficult to get a good one out of the rock. The thin rind of the shell with spines always stays behind. Andrew D. managed to find three echinoids and chopped all of them out. I was sitting on top of one of the *Phymosoma bybeeii* just prior to him finding it. He had the eye that day. We were in process of leaving mid-afternoon when I spotted a coiled ammonite and chopped it out. I believe it is a *Texanites*.

From there, some of us went over to Shoal Creek around 49thSt. This has been a great place for me over the years. This day there was not much to see. Both the Del Rio and the Buda Formations of the Washita Group are present. We found some really nice valves of the large scallop *Neithea roemeri* embedded in large boulders from the Buda. We didn't feel like chopping for hours, so they are still there. Other than some *Texigryphaea* we saw little. Everything in the creek seemed to be covered in a layer of dirt, which didn't help. The last site was a dud. To those who followed me into the creek – I can only swear that it has been a productive site for many years. Add a little rain and it will be again. By now it was getting dark and we left. I hated to end the day on that note, but the rest of the day was fun. It is nice when you quit for the day and half an hour later, you are home. We should hunt in our backyards more often. See you at the next one.

October Field Trip Report

Ed Elliott
PSoA Field Trip Chair

We arrived at what we've been calling the “Brady site” on a very crisp beautiful morning. For a while I had thought that the four of us there were going to have it all to ourselves. Little by little members kept showing up. Present were Joe Watkins, Melvin Noble, Rose Farmer, John Hinte, Dax Gonzalez, Mike Smith, Cathy and Gary Rylander, Mike Zimmer, Scott, Angie and Mary Steelman, Ann Shonronsk and Vlad Medrano, Robert Saxelby, Erich Rose, Dave Hoppes, Kevin Bills. Quite a crowd.

This outcrop is Adams Branch Limestone of the Canyon Group above and the Brownwood Shale of the Strawn Group below. Both are of the Missouri Series. It quickly turned from a cold day to a simply wonderful day as we crawled all over the exposures. A decent variety of brachiopods were found, as were a couple of species of horn coral, some bivalves, some gastropods, bryozoa and crinoid material. I remember Mike S. found three cups and I found one, all appear to be *Delocrinus*. While most of the better finds came from above, the Brownwood had its' share. Most of my bivalves and several very pretty gastropods came from it. Maybe the crinoid cups as well. Out of a huge pile of *Myalina* sp. I found a couple of nice ones. Two valved *Myalina* are not common. It has been nearly twenty years since the club came here, and we'll be back.

We followed up a good site with a better one when we went to our Santa Anna site for the first time in six (?) years. With the addition of a fence and gate, four old timers had a hard time spotting the property. The entrance was grassed over as well. Once found we settled right in. We quickly struck trilobites...Melvin had three, I had four, and I remember Mike S., Erich and Gary found some. All of mine were *Ameura missouriensis*. The brachiopods were plentiful as were the horn corals. There were nearly as many *Zaphrentis gibsoni* as there were *Lophophyllidium* corals. And I remember that both Gary and Erich found a large crinoid cup. There were also quite a few large bryozoan fronds lying in piles, I

would have liked to see the structure whole. This site I believe to be the Santa Anna Shale of the Moran Formation, lower Permian. It was a great day hunting the Paleozoic, good friends and great fossils. See you at the next one.

November Meeting Minutes

Dale Vargo

November 21, 2017 – Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building

Erich called the meeting to order at 7:05 and touched on the upcoming topics for tonight, including 4 officer positions and field trip chair. Paul then introduced tonight's speaker, Grace Musser, U of Texas PhD candidate. Ms. Musser presented an example of how to effectively study evolution in extinct birds and apply the information gathered to more accurately determine the exact lineages of modern birds. She has extensively worked on the main task of data-gathering, compared skeletal differences and similarities, morphology, genetic code, the phylogenetic tree, how life spreads through tectonic changes, and through much analysis, arrives at likely indicators that enable evaluation of modern bird ancestry to be valid and helpful toward preserving their future. She finished her presentation and took questions from the audience, including one about extinct penguins. Then we took our refreshment break.

After the break, the door prize winners were drawn: Angie, Mary, Melvin, Max, and Scott. Tonight's visitor is Maria, who brought her son, Max, one of our members. Mike then gave the Treasurer report. Then we moved into the discussion of our 2017 Fossil Fest. We made over \$1,200. profit this year. Various aspects of Fossil fest were touched on, like the Dig Pit comments from Rose and Kathleen, dealer absences, and the popularity of this year's t-shirts. Mike noted that the use of the Square card reader went well. New themes for the upcoming 2018 fossil fest were suggested, such as cephalopods, petrified wood, Austin's oceanic past, and other themes were put forward. Then we discussed new club officers and board members for 2018 and Erich suggested new people to step up and serve. Ed then talked about the field trip possibilities. Erich outlined our upcoming December 19 Paleo Society Holiday Dinner Party and the White Mammoth Gift Exchange afterward, detailing the catered entries and potluck trimmings that will be there. Erich noted that our paleo society has recently been listed in Texas Geosciences Magazine as one of their donor/supporters, along with other players like EXXON. Emelia noted that this year's t-shirts were actually sold out. Thanks were given to Scott and Angie for their sales of the lapel pins. We then adjourned November's meeting.

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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