

# PALEO FOOTNOTES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

VOLUME 18 | NUMBER 01

JANUARY 2023



## President's Note

### Welcome to 2023!

I hope you all had a great New Years and are looking forward to a great new year. I know I am. With the new year the club has a bit of business to attend to. By the time we meet we will have had the first board meeting at which we will set and propose a budget, put together a field trip and event calendar and discussed any new projects we might take on.

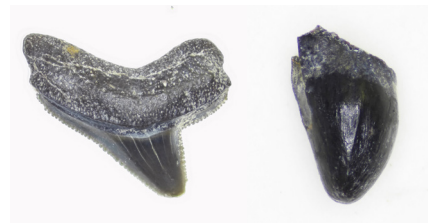
And one of the first orders of business will be to hold an election for officers. The club is in dire need of new officers for some positions. I have been the (continued on page 2)

## This Month's Speaker

### Micro Fossiling

Presented by: Jamie Shelton

Discover the "hidden world" of Micro Matrix Fossil Hunting! Everywhere we go fossil hunting there is a whole other level of discovery possible if you have the right tools to see it! Jamie will present her obsession with all things tiny in this months talk.



## JANUARY 2023

### Regular January Meeting

Tuesday January 17th - 7pm

AGMS Clubhouse 6719 Burnet Lane

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89647476127?pwd=UULJNzhhTHhCNnNnamw1WGN6SHRZZz09>

Meeting ID: 896 4747 6127

Passcode: 552592

### January Field Trip

Saturday, January 21st - 9am

Harker Heights Sites

(see page 2)

## President's Note

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president for way to long and would gladly hand this off to another member. Mike feels the same way about being treasurer. Paul is also ready to hand off the program chair position. Gary does a great job as secretary but he isn't around in the summer. These are pretty straight forward positions and we are a simple non-profit group so there is no big pressure. Please, if you are interested in any of the positions let us(me) know. If you have questions about each officers role, ask me.

I have not yet heard what the field trip schedule is looking like, but I have no doubt Jamie and Melvin will be proposing a good mix of classic favorites and hopefully some new spots. We will be planning another auction/picnic in April and set the dates for this year's Fossil Fest.

So there will be a great deal of "business" for us all to attend to at the meeting. If you can make it please plan to come. If not, we hope you can tune in via Zoom.

Take care, and see you there....

**Erich Rose**  
PSOA President

## January 2023 Field Trip: Harker Heights Sites

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**DATE: Saturday January 21st - 9:00am**  
Harker Heights - Walnut Formation

We will meet in the HEB Parking lot on Indian Trail Drive off of 190 as you come into Harker Heights. The site is easily accessible, facilities and shopping are within driving distance but a sack lunch is a good idea. Lots of good finds here – gastropods, echinoids, the occasional ammonite. Some finds can be tiny, so small containers are a good idea. No digging required, but a screwdriver or some other implement is always useful. Also, please wear masks when gathering initially, once we get to the site it is at your discretion, but we do ask that if you are interacting with another club member (to show off something you found or see what someone else has found) do please put that mask on! We want to make sure all our members are safe! So much floating around these days!

Please pay attention to the weather - the temperature can be unpredictable this time of year - and dress appropriately. This is an easily accessible site with easy picking - a great spot to bring the kids! Look forward to seeing everyone there!

**Melvin Noble**  
Field Trip Co-Chair

## 2023 Meeting of the Board

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We held our first Board Meeting of 2023 on the evening of the 10th of January on Zoom. Here are the highlights:

**Board Members:** With no recent volunteers stepping up, our current Board remains largely intact from the past several years. As Erich mentioned in his note, we are looking for recent or new members who are interested in taking a more active roll in the club to throw their names in the hat for some of the Officer and Board positions that others have been holding for a long time. If you are interested, please do let us know so we can find a good position for you.

At the upcoming January meeting we will be voting to approve the new budget and formally adopt the current slate of Board Members. Please do come to show your support for these folks who take time out of their own lives to keep our club growing and prospering!

President	<b>Erich Rose</b>
Vice President	<b>Heather Radford</b>
Treasurer	<b>Mike Smith</b>
Secretary	<b>Gary Vliet</b>
Field Trip Co-Chair	<b>Melvin Noble</b>
Field Trip Co-Chair	<b>Jamie Shelton</b>
Show Chair	<b>Heather Radford</b>
Programs Co-Chair	<b>Paul Hammerschmidt</b>
Programs Co-Chair	<b>Jamie Shelton</b>
Webmaster	<b>Mike Smith</b>
Editor	<b>Brian Bedrosian</b>

**Budget:** We took some time to review the budget for last year and a new budget was put forth for this year by our Treasurer which includes some new outreach and donation funds.

**Fossil Fest 2023:** Points of success and areas for growth were discussed for this years Fossil Fest which will be held on November 4th and 5th. The theme this year will be Prehistoric Life Under Water.

**Field Trip Schedule:** We also discussed this years proposed schedule of events, including our monthly field trips. Please note that the following list is tentative and locations and dates may be subject to change due to access, weather, safety concerns and/or other opportunities that arise.

January	<b>Harker Heights Sites</b>
February	<b>Jacksboro (Bergheim)</b>
March	<b>Whiskey Bridge (East Texas)</b>
April	<b>Club Auction + Picnic</b>
May	<b>Oklahoma</b>
June	<b>Austin Loop 360 (Lower Brazos)</b>
July	<b>Johnson City</b>
August	<b>Witte Museum - San Antonio</b>
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December	<b>White Mammoth and Pot Luck</b>



## 2023 Upcoming Paleo Events

The year starts off with a host of exciting paleo events around the state.

Kicking things off this weekend in Kerrville, the Riverside Nature Center will have the opening weekend of their new fossil exhibit **Fossil Clues to the Past**. Complete with fossils donated by Jackson School, the exhibit will run through the end of the summer and will have exhibits from across the fossil record.

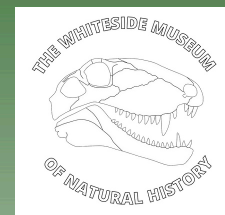


Next up in February, the Whiteside Museum will be hosting **Permian Fest**, a weeklong convention with fossil digs, workshops, lectures, and vendors. This overlaps our field trip to Jacksboro but is sure to be a very special experience for those making the trek.

Also starting in February, the Zilker Botanical Gardens will be hosting **Dino Days**. Running through March 18th, there will be hands-on activities every Saturday in the Hartman Prehistoric Garden. PSoA will be present on February 18th and March 18th, 9am-2:30 pm, to talk to folks and share our touch table - please [volunteer](#) to help out! Also, on February 18th, our own Jamie Shelton will be giving a talk at the gardens - hope to see you all there!



# PERMIAN FEST 2023



FEB 19TH - FEB 26TH, 2023

DIG WORKSHOPS

LECTURES

VENDOR BOOTHS





## White Mammoth + Holiday Potluck

On the 20th of December the club met at the AGMS clubhouse and celebrated the end of the year by breaking bread and stealing gifts from each other...I mean having a White Mammoth exchange. Many exciting gifts were shared and everyone went home with a gift.



After several years of staying away to keep each other safe it was wonderful to end the year together with friends. I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year. **Here's to all the great times and great finds in 2024!**







## Side Trip: Canyon Lake Area

Last weekend my mom, the boys and I stole an afternoon to strike out towards San Antonio and do some hunting in the Canyon Lake area. The boys love hunting out there because they know that as soon as they grow tired of hunting for scavenged bones around the lake they know we will get into the kayaks and get out on the water.

We started the day off at a site we found by accident in a rainstorm a few years back. It is loaded with echinoids, though the preservation is pretty poor. The second site is pretty sparse but a couple hours crawling around on your hands and knees with a pair of reading glasses often proves worth the effort. This time was no exception, treating us to a host of micro echinoids, star shaped crinoid stems, and crab material. My mom's find of the day was an awesome crab claw (*Paleopagurus banderaensis*) with both pincers still intact! Emerson's favorite find was a armadillo shell with a nearly full skeleton within which Anders help him collect along with a pile of other bones from various rodents (much hand sanitizer was used). With the sun getting low and the water level way down, we finished the day in the kayaks exploring a ghost forest in the lake - a knot of exposed tree trunks that were submerged when the lake was formed.

**Brian Bedrosian**  
Editor



*Hyposlenia Phillipsae*



*Orthopsis Comalensis*



*Pentacrinus texanus*



*Pygopyrina hancockensis*





Fig. 1 *Phymosoma texanum*

## Side Trip: West Texas Fossil Hunt

I have to go to Midland at Christmas time to visit family. Notice I said Have To, not Get to.....it's an obligation that, while I am happy to see family, I am not typically thrilled to go to Midland. It's not a bad city, just....not Central Texas! But this year was an exception because a fossil friend told me of an abandoned quarry where I MIGHT find something I've been looking for- an Echinoid *Tetragramma taffi*. So after everything settled down after Christmas, I headed down the road to this site, not having a clue what to expect. It was an

overgrown dirt road just off the highway next to a working quarry. But I looked carefully for No Trespassing signs (I was fully prepared to turn around if I saw them....I don't mess with Texas Land Owners) but happily....NONE! So up the road I went and came upon a HUGE expanse of old quarry. Fortunately, my husband decided to come with me this day because it was a very isolated place. Not that I was worried about people, but rather just the idea of being alone in the "desert" in an old quarry. It's good to have back up.





Fig. 2 *Coenholectypus* sp.

It was chilly and sunny, which was nice, but the WIND. The wind in West Texas can be overwhelming and here, up on top of the quarry cliffs, it was so strong I could not hear my husband at the bottom calling up to me. FORTUNETLY, the wind was blowing me away from the cliff edge rather than toward! It was still kind of crazy fighting that wind. But I kept my nose to the ground and it kept me out of most of it.

But the FOSSILS.....I have never seen so many *Coenholectypus* echinoids (fig. 2) in one place ever. They were EVERYWHERE. Not in very good condition, mostly eroded or broken, but there were hundreds of them. I managed to pick up a dozen that were decent. I went a little *Coenholectypus* crazy, I admit. I love the little things. My husband said they looked like Garlic Cloves.

Also prevalent were the *Phymosoma texanum*s (fig. 1). Lots of them, most covered in matrix, except the ONE. Which I will give credit to Dave for finding! Which of course, he gave to me. Sadly, I did not find the *Tetragramma* I was looking for. There was a lot more area to search but I was starting to feel the effects of cold and wind. So I took one last walk around the rim of the quarry and found something odd looking...I was practically yelling What Is This?? What IS THIS??

I thought for sure it had to be modern, but it was too heavy. I found a beautiful piece of Cretaceous turtle shell (fig. 3). It truly looks like it could be modern, but it is indeed fossilized. So while I didn't find my *Tetragramma*, I came away with something equally awesome. Just goes to show, all you have to do is expect the unexpected.

**Jamie Shelton**  
Field Trip Co-chair



Fig. 3 Cretaceous turtle shell fragment - 3 views





## Tailings...

### In The News

**See the Largest Known Flower Preserved in Amber**  
 Aided by modern technology, researchers discovered the prehistoric blossom was a case of mistaken identity  
 Sarah Kuta, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), January 13th 2023

**How Animals May Have Conquered Snowball Earth**  
 We know there were animals during our planet's chilliest era. But what did they look like?  
 Chris Baraniuk, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), December 28th 2022

**This 120-Million-Year-Old Dinosaur Fossil Had a Mammal Hiding in Its Stomach**  
 The finding represents only the second recorded instance of a dinosaur consuming a mammal  
 Jacquelyne Germain, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), December 22nd 2022

**Paleontologists May Have Solved the Mystery Behind a Prehistoric Reptile Graveyard**  
 Ichthyosaur mothers likely migrated to the site to give birth  
 Riley Black, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), December 19th 2022

### 2023 Field Trip Schedule

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**Important Note:** Please refrain from visiting sites the club is scheduled to access as part of a scheduled field trip. Doing so can clear a site of quality fossils and negatively impact the experience folks will have, especially new members, if the site suddenly feels "picked over". We do our best to carefully space out trips to allow them to recover, so please be respectful of the club and stay off these sites within 3 months of a planned trip. Please note that dates and locations are subject to change - check the monthly newsletter or come to our monthly meetings for updates.

### Paleo Posters

The paleo posters we had on display at fossil fest, along with many others, are available as pdfs on the [LINKS](#) page on our website. These might be useful resources for teachers. Or maybe you just need dinosaurs posters for your wall!

#### Geological Formations

Geological Mapping Tools to identify formations in Texas.

#### Prehistoric Sharks

- Overview
- Megalodon
- Shark Teeth

#### Prehistoric Monster Reptiles

- Overview
- Ichthyosaurs
- Plesiosaurs
- Mosasaurus

#### Dinosaurs

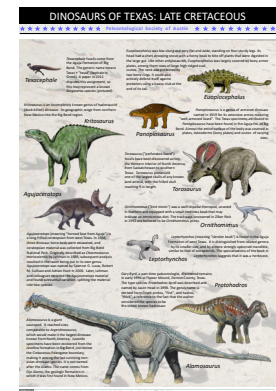
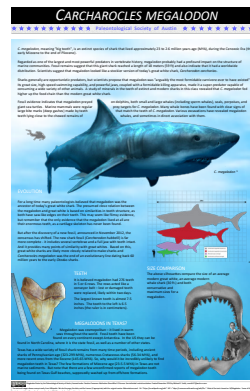
- Dinosaurs Found in Texas - Lower Cretaceous
- Dinosaurs Found in Texas - Upper Cretaceous
- How our images of dinosaurs have changed over time. Retro vs. Modern

They are free to use and are available under Creative Commons licenses. Some are only available for non-profit uses, others are under CC BY-SA, the share-alike license. Both just require attribution.

I used Office Depot to print them poster-sized. I also had them mounted on foam core which brought the total to around \$50 each.

### Mike Smith

Treasurer





## Good Field Trip Etiquette

1. Arrive on time or early. At the prescribed meeting time (often 8AM) you should be out of your car standing with the field trip leader, signed in and ready to hear the day's schedule, directions and helpful pointers.
2. Do your homework. Use one of the online mapping programs to determine travel time and directions from your home the day before. Take the map with you and leave at least 15-30 minutes early. This is critical when we are going to quarries, private property or if the first stop is a meeting-point, not the collecting site. The field trip leader will not wait more than 15 minutes beyond the scheduled time.
3. Make sure you have the field trip leader's phone number. Their number will appear in the field trip notice. Bring a copy of the notice from the newsletter or e-mail blast so you have the information. That is the best way to find the group if you do get delayed or lost. But do not count on it. Some of our remote sites have poor cell reception. We have no way to guarantee you will get there if you miss the meeting spot.
4. The first stop is not breakfast. Please do not expect the rest of the group to wait while you order food or take care of business. If you need to do that, arrive 30 minutes early and then be ready to go at 8:00AM sharp!
5. The field trip leader sets the schedule. Gather near the leader at the beginning of every trip and listen carefully. The leader will describe where and when things will happen. That will include directions, plans for breaks and everything else you need to know about how the day will unfold. If you are not sure about directions or the schedule speak directly with the field trip leader. Do not count on hearsay.
6. Do not ask the entire group to stop for unscheduled breaks. If you need to take a break during the day, do it after you know where the collecting site is located. The field trip leader will usually schedule a break around lunch but not between every stop. Follow the group to the site and then circle back for food or facilities. This is why we suggest bringing your own food and beverages. Also being prepared with TP, or whatever else, for "emergencies".
7. Sign in and don't forget to report to the leader when you leave. This is not critical, but he or she will greatly appreciate those two things. Having everyone's name let's him know how well attended the trip was and we like to list everyone in the follow up reports. Secondly, getting a chance to hear and see what you found that day and being able to keep track of who is on site at the very end is just a good thing.
8. Be prepared. Make sure you have the materials you need to collect safely. In particular, water, hat, sunscreen and food.

9. Don't crowd the next guy. Please be courteous of your fellow collectors space. If someone says "Hey I found a good one!" don't come rushing over and crowd into their collecting zone. Let them offer to share the space. You can ask them where they found it and then move off to one side or the other, but don't just flop down next to them.

10. Be safe. If someone is working an area on a slope do your best not to pass above them. If you need to do so, please let them know you are passing and do your best not to send any debris down on top of them. If someone is working above you and you must pass below, please alert them for the same reasons. Generally speaking, if someone is working a spot respect that they "own" that area and your passage through or around that location should only be done with their permission and/or invitation.



### Editor's Note:

I would like to extend an invitation to all members to submit stories of their own travels for publish in future episodes of SIDE TRIPS. All I need is a short write up (and I can assist with this) as well as some photos of your trip (iPhone or Android photos are perfect - just make sure to send me the full resolution version). Fossil hunting trips are always welcome, but so are trips to museums, fossil/mineral shows, and other adventures that explore the world around us. You can reach me at [editor@austinpaleo.org](mailto:editor@austinpaleo.org) and I will do my best to include your stories in future issues.

**Brian Bedrosian**  
Newsletter Editor

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 normally 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](http://austinpaleo.org) for more information.

*Please note, due to COVID 19, in person meetings have been temporarily paused, and monthly meetings are instead being held on Zoom. Please see instructions above to attend the meetings virtually. Please note all virtual meetings are recorded and the Society may elect to publish the video of these meetings, in part or in total, to the Societie's website or another publically accessible venue as benefits the goals of the club listed above.*

#### Membership Information

Annual Dues: **\$18/individual**  
**\$24/family**  
**\$12/associate** (non-voting, receiving newsletter)

Pay on-line at: <https://www.austinpaleo.org/newMembership.html>

Send payment to: **Treasurer, Paleontological Society of Austin,**  
**P.O. Box 90791, Austin, TX 78749-0791**

PSOA Web Site: [www.austinpaleo.org](http://www.austinpaleo.org)

Webmaster: **Gordon Galligher, [webmaster@austinpaleo.org](mailto:webmaster@austinpaleo.org)**

Facebook: [@austinpaleo](https://www.facebook.com/austinpaleo)

Twitter: [@Austin\\_Paleo](https://twitter.com/Austin_Paleo)

#### 2021 Officers

President: **Erich Rose**

Vice President: **Heather Radford**

Treasurer: **Mike Smith**

Secretary: **Gary Vliet**

Field Trips Programs: **Melvin Noble & Jamie Shelton**

Editor: **Paul Hammerschmidt**

Webmaster: **Brian Bedrosian**

Show Chair: **Mike Smith**  
**Heather Radford**

#### Science Advisors:

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**James T. Sprinkle, PhD.**

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