



PALEO FOOTNOTES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

VOLUME 19 | NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2024



President's Note

Fossil Fest preparations are speeding up!

This year's event is on November 2nd & 3rd and set up is on November 1st. Mark your calendars! Keep an eye out for a call for volunteers so that you can help with this year's event from VP and Show Chair Eric Jones! You do not need to be knowledgeable on fossils to volunteer. Fossil Fest is our big (and annual) outreach and education event that helps spread the joy of fossils with others.

Over the past year we have had several new members joining the club from all walks of life - it is important to

This Month's Speaker

Gracie the Mosasaur

Speaker: **Lee Schnelle**

The speaker for this month will be PSoA's own Lee Schnelle talking about his finding and preservation of "Gracie" the Mosasaur

Lee Schnelle is an Austin native who romped around the countryside near Barton Creek Mall. His childhood home was located on a hilltop with an abundance of Cretaceous fossils. He became fascinated with finding rare seashells and fossils in grade school. He attended UT Austin and received
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October 2024

PSoA Regular Meeting
Tuesday October 15th - 7pm
AGMS Clubhouse
6719 Burnet Lane

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88451710052?pwd=Uy9hV05BTy9rUmIzYlMzdVVnNTVjdz09>
Meeting ID: 884 5171 0052
Passcode: 603270

PSoA Club Field Trip
October 12th - ONE WEEK EARLY
Brady / Santa Anna
(see details page 2)

President's Note

(continued from page 1)

remember that we may have differing views on the world. However, we are all united by our common appreciation of paleontology and science. When meeting in the field or at the clubhouse, please be respectful and refrain from topics that may be alienating to others.

Gem Capers is quickly approaching. Please, if you are able, volunteer to work the table at AGMS' Gem Capers on 10/18-10/20. The best part about volunteering is you get FREE entry to the show (it's a big show)!

Please consider serving as an officer in 2025. Some of the current officers would like a break and we need to start training future officers so that when others step down from their volunteer positions the transition goes smoothly. Let me know if you are interested in learning more.

See you all at the monthly meeting!

Heather Aziz

PSoA President

This Month's Speaker

(continued from page 1)

a B.S. in Geology in 1983 specializing in hydrogeology and petroleum geology. He studied paleontology under Professor Sprinkle where he became fascinated by the vast array of vertebrate and invertebrate fossils in Central Texas. He attended numerous fossil hunting "dates" to Brownsville and other areas with this now wife, Susie. Since 1984, he has been employed as a professional geoscientist specializing in environmental assessments and fuel and chemical spill cleanups. In 2015, he renewed his passion for fossil hunting. He has since found thousands of isolated sharks teeth and invertebrate fossils in his spare time. Two years ago, he began actively passing on his fascination with fossils to his grandchildren and to young fossil enthusiasts that he has connected with online. He has made several vertebrate donations to science, most recently working to salvage an extremely rare complete basal mosasaur that he found on National Fossil Day in 2023. The fossil nicknamed "Gracie" was donated to SMU and Dr. Michael Polcyn who is actively preparing and studying it. Lee is working with Dr. Polcyn in his spare time to help put out a professional paper regarding the preliminary findings on the mosasaur.



October 2024 Field Trip:

Brady and Santa Anna Sites

Date: Saturday October 12th - **ONE WEEK EARLY**

The trip will be to a road cut north of Brady, TX. This location includes the Adams Branch limestone of the Canyon Group and beneath this are shale and mud stones mapped as the Strawn Group undivided, Pennsylvanian period fossils, including a variety of brachiopods, bivalves, bryozoans, coral, some gastropods, nautiloids and lots of crinoid material. Wood fragments have also been found. We will then go to another site, Lower Permian, afterwards. On occasion trilobites have been found at this location and a nice brachiopod called Wellerla. If we have time we might go to our Brownwood site also. Most material will be small to hand size but sometimes there are larger blocks with nice things in them you might want to remove. Bring containers of various sizes, hammer and chisels, eye protection and something to wrap fragile things in. Bring bags for the larger items. Bring lots of water, sturdy footwear, a hat, and food for lunch or snacks as we may not be near and stores or restaurants. Watch the weather in Brownwood for the appropriate clothing. It could be hot or cold this time of year. It is a long way back to town and there are no facilities, so be prepared.

Directions: Take Hwy 71 west out of Austin and drive to Brady. From Brady, take Hwy 377 north and turn right (east) onto FM 765. After a short distance, you will cross CR 450 and see the collecting site. Hint: If you are driving on 377 and cross the Colorado River – you went too far. **OR** Take Hwy 183 north to Lometa. On the south side of Lometa take Hwy 190 to Richland Springs. From Richland Springs go north on Hwy 45 and turn left (west) onto FM 765. You will get to the collecting site just before you cross CR 450.

Call Melvin Noble for more info 512 468-8914. Please leave voice mail message and I will contact you. For more info on any of these field trips, contact me at: fieldtripchair@austinpaleo.org

Melvin Noble

Field Trip Co-Chair

Call for Entries - Side Trips

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 and I will do my best to include your stories in future issues.

Brian Bedrosian

Newsletter Editor

The Micro Matrix

Howdy! Here is the monthly installment of The Micro Matrix! This month is tiny stuff from Lake Texoma! I grabbed a bucket full of matrix right next to the Boat Ramp and this is some of the nice little things i found!

1. **Ammonite** unknown
2. **Coral** unknown
3. **Crab**
4. **Gastropod**
5. **Platycyanthus** coral
6. **Carcharias amonensis** shark tooth

Jamie Shelton

PSoA Member, Programs Chair, Field Trip Co-Chair



Outreach report:

Texas Avid Outdoor Fall Expo

On 10/3-10/6 Mike Smith and I performed outreach at the Texas Avid Outdoor Fall Expo at Oxford Ranch and Campground in Llano, TX. We provided a touch table and fossil ID sheets of common Texas fossils (designed by our resident fossil photographer, Jamie Shelton), Mike gave a talk on Saturday, and our “Pick a Duck” game was a hit with the kids. We had merchandise available for purchase including: PSoA x Fall Outdoor Expo specialty stickers!

Heather Aziz

PSoA President



Fossil Fest 2024 + Gem Capers: Call for Volunteers!

Fellow PSoA Club members - this is the time of the year for our local geological and paleontological conventions. This is an ideal time for us to give our time towards one of our primary missions - to share a fascination and curiosity for fossils and paleontology with our community. After a year of enjoying presentations from professionals in our field and months spent in the field hunting for fossils ourselves - now is the time for you to give back! If you have never participated in either of these events, you would be surprised at how rewarding it can be to see the spark of fascination in the face of someone - old or young - who realizes that much of the history of this planet can be found in our backyards.

Up first is Gem Capers - hosted by the Austin Gem and Mineral Society - who so graciously allow us to use their clubhouse for our meetings. October 18th - 20th at the Palmer Auditorium in Austin. **Sign up to volunteer at Gem Capers [here](#).**

Our feature event of the year, Fossil Fest, follows a few weeks later - November 1st-3rd at Old Settler’s Heritage Association in Round Rock. **Sign up to volunteer at Fossil Fest [here](#).**

Please sign up to support your club and share your love of fossils with others - look forward to seeing you there!



Fig. 1 cidarid spine (Jamie Shelton)

September Field Trip Report: Lake Texoma

It was a cool late summer's morning when Gary and Cathy Rylander, John Herron, Kathy and Carson Schubert, Bob McDonald, Kevin Bills, Ricky Paxton, Brian, Emerson, Anders and Diane Bedrosian, William Joe, Bill Thompson, Grady Parks, Kala Berkman, Edward Elliott and me, Melvin Noble, met at Eisenhower State Park entrance to go fossil collecting on Lake Texoma and Lisa Izzi meet up with us on Sunday. After car pooling to the first collecting site, one group went to the left of the lake shore and the other group went to the right side. Among the people that went to the left and in the gravels, Ricky Paxton found a nice shark tooth (fig. 2), Kayla Berkman found one of the nicer cidarid echinoid spines seen (fig. 4), Carson Schubert found some nice cidarid plates (fig. 3) and Jamie found some echinoid spines (fig. 1).



Fig. 2 shark tooth (Ricky Paxton)



Fig. 4 cidarid spine (Kayla Berkman)



Fig. 3 cidarid plates (Carson Schubert)



Fig. 5 *Mortoniceris* sp. ammonite (Brian Bedrosian)

On the right side of the shore, Brian's son Emerson, found a wonderful seven section cidarid plate (fig.7). That is a rare find. Later on in the day he found a four sided plate (fig. 8), if he keeps this up he can build his own cidarid echinoid! Emerson also found a nice *Mortoniceris* sp. ammonite (fig. 6). His father Brian found a total of two really beautiful *Mortoniceris* sp. ammonites (fig. 5). One was just perfect. I wish I was so lucky! Ed found some nice *Macraster* echinoids and I think Brian and his son Anders (fig 12) found some of his first ones. He also got several *Holasters*, both the low form and high form. One had quite a bit of bryozoan on it (figs 9+10). John Henti would love it. Brian found a beautiful *Trigonia* in fairly good shape (fig. 11). Brian, his sons Emerson and Anders were all just killing it. I found my first small denture clam in the gravel, but I'm still looking for one little bit bigger. Several plates of so called razor clams, *Rastellum* (they are really Oysters) were collected and I took one home myself. It is not like I needed another one but it just said "Take me, take me!"



Fig. 6 *Mortoniceris* sp. ammonite (Emerson Bedrosian)



Fig. 8 cidarid plate assemblage (Emerson Bedrosian)



Fig. 7 cidarid plate assemblage (Emerson Bedrosian)



Fig. 9 **Holaster** echinoid (Brian Bedrosian)



Fig. 10 **Holaster** echinoid (Brian Bedrosian)

Later in the day it got a little hot, most of us were running out of water, so most everybody shuffled back to their vehicles. Some people went back to the hotel room or home, but Ed and I decided to follow Brian to and his family to Post Oak Creek in Sherman. I have known about Post Oak Creek for a long time, but have never went there. Brian and family had sifters to collect shark teeth and let me use one. I collect for a little while then started collecting *Lopha Bellaplicata* *Bellaplicata* Oysters with Ed. I love *Lopha* and these were beautiful. We both found some gorgeous ones that day.

That evening several of us went out to eat at Huck's Catfish Restaurant. The food was great as well as the camaraderie of fellow fossil collectors. I wanted to put a note on here that in the old days we used to go across the dam to Wendy's catfish. It was just an old club tradition. When Wendy's closed we found Huck's. Thanks to all for keeping an old tradition alive. Its also a great time for beginners to ask questions about what they found and learn more about fossils.

The next day we went to a different area but could not get to our collecting site as the water was too high. I'm a little concerned that maybe they dredged out the cove but we went over to the right side of that area where I knew you could usually find ammonites.



Fig. 11 **Trigonium** (Brian Bedrosian)



Fig. 12 **Macraster** echinoid (Anders Bedrosian)



Fig. 13 **ammonite in matrix** (Carson Schubert)



Fig. 14 Future paleontologists hard at work excavating an ammonite

The site had been pretty picked over but it did not matter because the kids had a great time. They found an ammonite in the ground and spend a lot of time digging it out. They had fun getting experience in being a future Paleontologist and working hard together. (Figs 14+15) One of them was over heard saying this was one of the best collecting spots ever. I found a pretty nice echinoid that I have not had time to identify yet. After spending the morning at this site, we decided to go over to the dam area which is a well known spot the club used to visit. Unfortunately, we found out that it is no more. It was buried below a thick layer of dirt with big boulders and the site is completely gone. I don't know if it's going to be a hotel, a restaurant or some one building a nice home for themselves - but it's really sad for the collecting community. It's really getting harder and harder to get to some of our places on Lake Texoma - having lost two just this year. None the less, it was a great trip and the Bedrosian family took the prize for the best fossils. Seven sided cidarid plate, beautiful Mortonicerias sp. ammonites and a great Trigonina were some of the best fines ever. We had a good trip. Hope to do another one next year!

Melvin Noble
Field Trip Co-Chair



Fig. 15 Success!



Fig. 1 Partial crab claw in situ (Brian Bedrosian)

Side Trip Report: Canyon Lake Area

A fossil hunting trip in the heart of summer can be a tough sell for my family. One of my favorite spots for this time of the year is Canyon Lake. The lake is a great spot to go swimming and kayaking and there are several spots around the lake to dig into some cretaceous Glen Rose formation. This trip we invited one of Emerson's friends and his family for the day. We took the boys to a spot that I had found a few years back that I knew would be productive. I was concerned when we arrived to find that significant roadwork had completely changed the site, but after a few minutes close inspection, the exposure was still exposed and everyone was quickly finding handfuls of brachiopods, gastropods, several different types of echinoids and the ever present *Porosystis globularis*. After an hour of climbing around the site, we headed for the lake and respite from the heat. While the family swam and played in the water, I hunted nose to the ground for smaller treasure in an almost completely eroded site that was once very productive. After nearly an hour of finding very little the site started to produce and I was able to find a half dozen small *Leptosalenias* (fig. 2), some tiny *Heterasters*, and one very crushed irregular echinoid I could not identify. Adding to my modest haul were several column segments of the star shaped crinoid (fig. 3) and a few nearly complete crab claws (fig. 1).

Everyone now exhausted and blissful after a day in the sun, we wrapped up the day watching the sun set from the dam and having burgers down at the Canyon City Grill - a wonderful little shack on the back side of the dam. All in all a great summer adventure!

Brian Bedrosian
Editor



Fig. 2 *Leptosalenia* echinoid (Brian Bedrosian)



Fig. 3 crinoid stem (Brian Bedrosian)



Tailings...

In The News

Rare Jaw Fossils Discovered in Texas Shed Light on a 20-Foot-Long Mosasaur

Unearthed last year, the remains could reveal new information on the extinct sea reptile, which crushed mollusks and shelled creatures with its large, round teeth

Sarah Kuta, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), September 24th 2024

Dinosaurs Evolved Feathers for Far More Than Flight

Fluff and fuzz helped the creatures keep warm, blend in and communicate

Riley Black, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), September 20th 2024

Construction Project Uncovers Millions of Fossils Beneath a Los Angeles High School

The discoveries include sharks, shorebirds, mammals and saber-toothed salmon, with the oldest remains dating to almost nine million years ago

Margherita Bassi, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), September 18th 2024

Four Places to Find Fossilized Shark Teeth in the United States

Sharks have been losing teeth for 400 million years. Here's a guide to uncovering some of these plentiful fossils across the country

Carlyn Kranking, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), September 17th 2024

Divers in Mexico's Underwater Caves Get a Glimpse of Rarely Seen Artifacts, Fossils and Human Remains

Cenotes in the Yucatán Peninsula are time capsules preserving remnants of Maya culture and fossils of extinct megafauna

Martin Broen, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), October 1st 2024

2024 Field Trip Schedule

October	Brady / Santa Anna
November	Brownwood
December	White Mammoth and Pot Luck

Locations in italics are alternates depending on weather and availability.

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 Book Resources



Paleo Books from HGMS

This is a book series published by the Houston Gem and Mineral Society and contains several volumes on Cretaceous and Pennsylvanian fossils from Texas localities. These can be purchased as a bundle or individually, in print or as a digital download, from the [HGMS Website](#).

- Texas Cretaceous Echinoids (Print & Digital Options)
- Texas Pennsylvanian Brachiopods (Print & Digital Options)
- Texas Cretaceous Ammonites and Nautiloids (Digital Only)
- Texas Cretaceous Gastropods (Print & Digital Options)
- Texas Cretaceous Bivalves (Print & Digital Options)
- Middle Eocene Claiborne Invertebrate Fossils (Print & Digital Options)
- Cretaceous Oysters in Texas (Digital Only)

WhatsApp for PSoA Members

This would be handy for folks to have on their phones for Field Trips - or just an easy way for the board to communicate with you when email is not practical.



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.

11. Over the past year we have had several new members joining the club from all walks of life - it is important to remember that we may have differing views on the world. However, we are all united by our common appreciation of paleontology and science. When meeting in the field or at the clubhouse, please be respectful and refrain from topics that may be alienating to others - such as religion and politics - as we want all people to feel welcome and a part of the club.



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 for more information.

Please note, our monthly meetings are currently held in a hybrid format, with in person gatherings at the AGMS Clubhouse which can also be attended virtually via Zoom. Please see information provided on page one of this newsletter each month. While we are not currently requiring masks at any in person gatherings, we ask that you maintain a safe distance from others when socializing. 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 Society'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

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/austinpaleo>

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

Current Club Officers

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