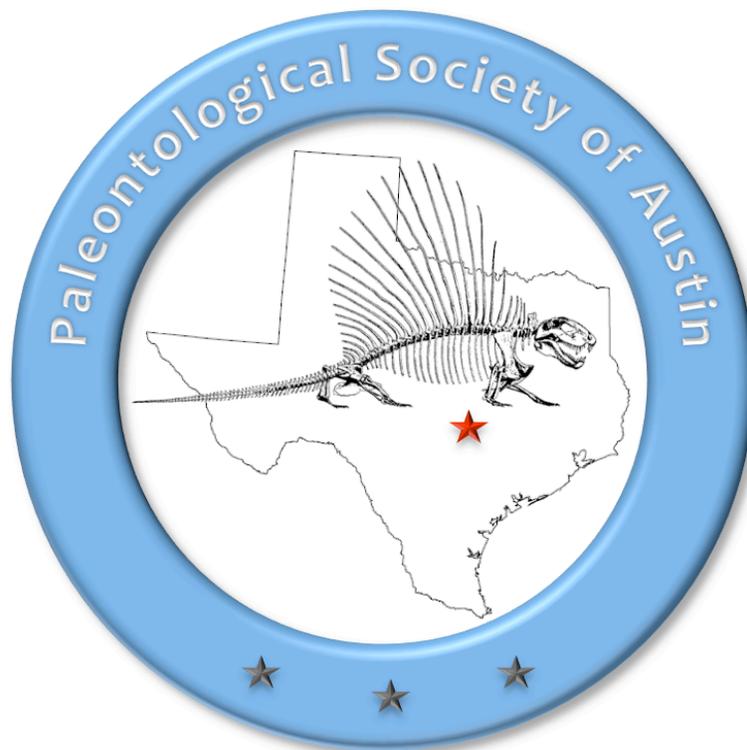


Paleo Footnotes

Newsletter of the
Paleontological Society of Austin

Austin and Central Texas



Volume 7, Number 7
July 2012

President's Note

Rain, serious rain! Exposed-lots-of-fresh-fossils kind of rain! It's Wednesday the 11th as I write this, and in the last two days my garden rain gauges have filled up, and over flowed twice. So that's a minimum of 5 inches here in Knollwood west of town. And it's not over yet, with more predicted through the end of the week. I'm just so ready to get out there and hunt, my skins a crawling. Remember a year ago? Rather not? Me too.

I almost wish we were going up to Harker Heights or 107/Gatesville this month. Those sites will be productive after this weather, but since it's still summer in Texas we are going to do some indoor, air-conditioned fossil gazing of a major kind. The Houston Museum of Natural Science has opened up 30,000 square feet of new paleontology exhibits. And Ed Elliot has arranged a discount group rate and you will not want to miss this opportunity. Get up early, stop for tacos or Kolaches in La Grange, and meet us at 9AM in Houston.

We will also be doing something a little different for our August meeting. If you have been collecting some special sites (no you don't have to reveal exact locations) or just want to show off your better stuff, this will be your chance. This will be a Show-and-Tell session, and I encourage everyone to attend and take part. Five to fifteen minutes and you can use the projector and screen or just pass stuff around. I also think it will be a great chance to learn a bit more about your fellow members, ask lots of questions and get excited about what we do as amateurs.

See you at the next meeting.

-- Erich

Next Meeting Tuesday July 17, 2012

**7:00 p.m. at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building
6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX**

The Study of Ancient Viruses

By David Lindberg

Virologists have found viruses in every form of life. Life forms and the viruses that infect them are engaged in a continuous struggle for survival, and this war has been fought for eons. Viruses and life have co-evolved, each shaping the other's evolution throughout time. Scientists knew almost nothing about ancient viruses until recent years, when scientists began finding viral remnants in the host DNA of ancient beings, by means of DNA sequencing. With this information, scientists have at last been able to start piecing together a part of the history and the story of ancient viruses.

This talk will start with an introduction to viruses; a discussion of what makes a virus, and how they infect host cells. Then there will be information on how viral DNA ends up in host DNA, with a focus on the viral DNA found in humans. A comparison of viral remnants in different species will reveal clues as to how long-ago viruses infected their hosts. With this information, a picture of how long viruses have existed will begin to emerge.

July Field Trip

The Houston Museum of Natural Science New Hall of Paleontology

Saturday July 21, 2012

We will meet at the main entrance at 9AM. Please be early.
The museum is located at 5555 Hermann Park Drive Houston, TX 77030

The museum has opened a new and expanded Paleo exhibit hall. We will be getting a discount admission rate (\$7 versus \$15) as a group so it is important that you are there on time and have your \$7 ready and at hand. 30,000 square feet of paleo exhibits will probably keep you busy all day but just in case you want more, take a look at the museum's web site <<http://www.hmns.org/index.php>> to see what else is offered. We have been offered a corporate discount rate. Members who get the newsletter via e-mail will get the code in a second e-mail blast.

June 2012 Meeting Minutes

Erich Rose called the meeting to order. He introduced guests and new members.

Marilyn Austin introduced our guest speaker, Dr. Clark Wernecke the Executive Director of the Gault School of Archeological Research. His presentation was titled "Central Texas and the Peopling of the Americas". This presentation discussed a shift in the way we think about the peopling of the Americas. There appears to be lots of evidence refuting the current generally accepted Clovis First Hypothesis.

We currently do not have a widely accepted replacement hypothesis.

While this presentation was archeological not paleontological in nature it was very interesting. Dr. Wernecke is very well informed and very entertaining.

After his presentation Dr Wernecke passed out handouts describing the Gault School of Archeological Research and GSAR, "a 501©3 nonprofit with a mission to promote research and education into the earliest peopling of the Americas". Persons wishing to join GSAR or wishing to volunteer can do so at WWW.GaultSchool.org.

A break was taken.

Business:

Prior minutes were approved.

Treasurers Report was not presented.

Fossil Fest Committee:

A committee meeting was held. The first draft of a press release was written. Two new vendors have been accepted for the festival. The theme for 2012 Fossil Fest will be Volcanoes and Dinosaurs.

Grant Committee:

Two applicants have applied for grants. The request from Natasha Vitek for help studying "The Variations in Box Turtles" was accepted.

Long Range Financial Committee:

No activity

Other:

Sue Postlethwait from AGMS announced to the club that one of the AGMS trailers had been stolen. The locks have been changed. Insurance and police have been notified. Item in the trailer when it was stolen included:

- 600 lbs of tumbled rock
- Vests and aprons
- All signs and banners
- Tablecloths
- Additional 4 pages of items

The field trip was discussed. It will be to Bob Carroll's quarry near Ada Oklahoma. Bob may lose his lease next year, so think hard about going this year.

Door prizes were awarded.

Meeting was adjourned.

PINE COUNTRY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY SCFMS* Regional Show & Convention

**August 25th & 26th, 2012
Jasper, Texas**

*South Central Federation of Mineralogical Societies

The annual show and meeting is being held in Jasper, Texas this August. This is the regional umbrella group we belong to and for those who are as much an all-around rock hound as you are a fossil collector the show and convention might be a great way to spend a summer weekend.

If you would like more info contact Erich Rose <president@austinpaleo.org> and I will send you the package of information.

June Field Trip Report Oklahoma

Eleven members met at the Callixylon tree in Ada, as usual. We might just start meeting at another spot. The East Central University campus has built up so that we have to park a good distance away from the tree. Not as easy to find the meeting place as it was. Those that made the trip were: Dr. Jim Sprinkle, Jeff and Jonathan Doerzbacher, Joe and Susan Watkins, Gary and Cathy Rylander, Melvin Noble, Mike Smith and John Hinte.

Our first stop was Jennings' Quarry. This is Haragan Formation, Hunton Group, Devonian. The primary reason we go there has been to dig the crinoid bulbs, *Scyphocrinites ulrichi*. A good segment of the group now just look for other invertebrate fossils. Something was said about digging through rock, in the sun when you already have a box of bulbs at home wasn't as much fun. While I still like them, whether we go back might be a decision that is being made for us. The quarry seems to be extending their spoils piles over the bulb beds. If they extend at the same rate they did this year, next year the beds will be buried. There were still 53 bulbs taken home this trip. Melvin and the Doerzbachers did very well.

Our second stop was Yellow Bluff, which is Bois d'Arc Formation, Hunton Group, Devonian. This a beautiful place to hunt, the higher you climb the more scenic it is. Lots of brachiopods and a couple of trilobites were found. There were quite a few small crinoid cups, *Pisocrinus*, found and I picked up a nice piece of a large straight cephalopod. The collecting was just OK, nothing exciting was found.....and then Joe came walking up with a slab that came from Morocco by way of a rock shop we said. He said he'd found it down in the creek. It was covered with crinoids, stems and complete crowns - at least two, maybe three. We paused to hate him for a few minutes and then all spent the next hour looking in the creek, trying to find where it had come from. No luck with that. I hope he brings it to the next meeting, it is a beautiful piece.

A bunch of us continued hunting at Amsdens' P-7 site, a road cut that is the Henryhouse Formation, Hunton Group, Silurian. Part of the outcrop is overgrown and a big part is fenced off from us. Lots of brachiopods and corals, some more of the *Pisocrinus* cups and I believe that I remember Gary saying that he'd found a few trilobites. At the end of the day, most of us met for a good dinner and a lot of

conversation and laughs.

On Sunday we met and caravanned to Bob Carrolls' quarry. This site contains both the Bois d'Arc and the Haragan Formations and is Devonian. I kept my nose in the rocks and many people came by to say they were heading home, already in their vehicles. I really don't know what was found. It's hard to believe that a lot of trilobites weren't found. Jonathan showed me a really great spiny one (*Dicranurus* ?) on the edge of a rock. I had mentioned to Jim that I was really hoping to find bivalves, something that seems to not show up much in Oklahoma rocks of this period. He spotted one in a slab and gave it to me, so I now have two very nice scallops in my collection. And another very large rock that needs to be cut down. Saturday we were hot, but were in the open and able to catch a little breeze. At Bobs, we were just plain hot. After talking to him for a while, we have permission to come back in April, before he loses his lease and maybe in better conditions. If we want to make it a week end trip, I will do my best to find a new site for us to explore as well.

I hope to see all of you in Houston at the new Houston Museum of Natural Science looking at four football fields worth of paleontology exhibits.



Up on Yellow Bluff, Gary & Melvin.



Crinoid bulbs at Jennings' Quarry



The *infamous* crinoid plate.

Photos by Ed Elliot

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 the third Tuesday* of each month, 7:00 p.m. at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building, 6719 Burnet lane, Austin, TX. The public is cordially invited to attend. See web site for April & December dates.

Annual Dues: \$18/individual, \$24/family and \$12/associate (non-voting, receiving newsletter) Send to: Treasurer, Paleontological Society of Austin, PO Box 90791, Austin, TX 78749-0791

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The Paleontological Society of Austin is a member of and affiliated with:

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PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

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DATED MATERIAL – MEETING NOTICE

FIRST CLASS MAIL