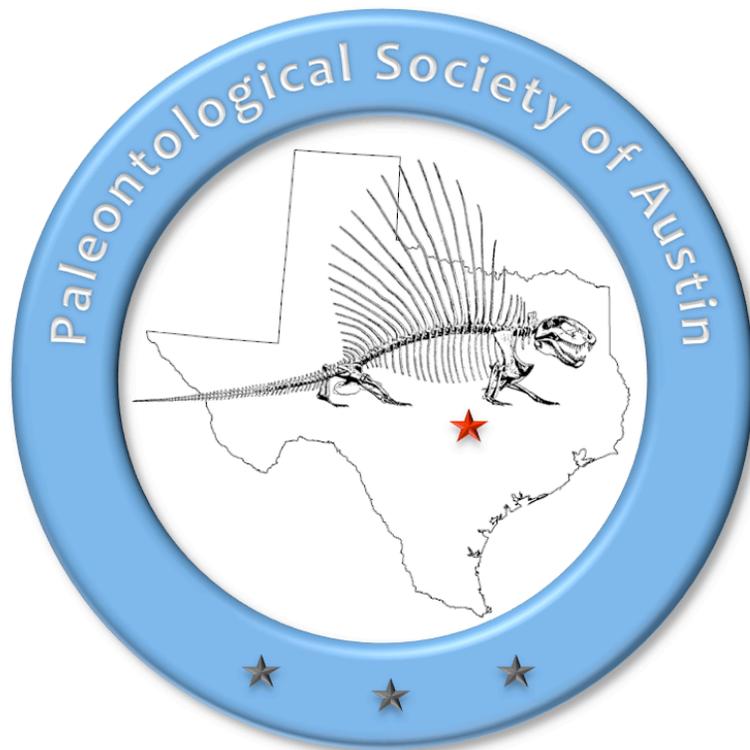


# Paleo Footnotes

Newsletter of the  
Paleontological Society of Austin

Austin and Central Texas



Volume 8, Number 4  
April 2013

## **President's Note**

April brings us back to our annual auction and picnic. It also brings us a bonus field trip weekend. We have been invited back to Bob Carroll's Black Cat Mountain Quarry for one last visit. Because it is such a long journey it will include an extra day and numerous other collecting sites. As of my last conversation with Ed he was still putting the agenda together but be assured there will be a good selection of Paleozoic locations to visit and interesting fossils to collect. Ed should have more info by the auction on Saturday. If you miss the meeting send him an email or give him a call (evenings) for details.

The auction and picnic are always a fine event. Westcave Preserve is one of the prettiest settings in the Hill Country and if you have never been there it is worth the drive and make sure you come early or stay late to take the tour to the grotto.

We have two outreach events in May that would be better for a few extra hands. If you would like to spend a few hours spreading the gospel of fossil collecting take a look at my notes at the end of the newsletter and contact either Dax or me. Remember you do not need to be a fossil expert, just an enthusiastic member of the society. We will provide everything else.

I will see you all at the auction.

-- Erich

**Next Meeting**  
***Saturday April 20th***  
**12:00 Noon - 3:00 PM at Westcave Preserve**

## **Paleontological Society of Austin Annual Auction and Potluck Picnic**

The main dish and soft drinks will be provided. Bring your favorite side dish or dessert.

Please bring fossils or fossil-related items to contribute to the auction. Along with great fossils, books, maps and art have been popular in the past. Something you feel folks might actually competitively bid on is the idea. Remember this is one of our only two money-raising events for the year and often makes up a substantial portion of the next year's budget.

Don't forget your checkbook or cash!

Stay after the auction and take a guided tour at 4pm. Tour rates are \$5 per adult, \$2 per child under 12, or \$15 per family. Free tour admission is offered to Westcave Preserve members.

Westcave Preserve is located on Hamilton Pool Road just beyond the Pedernales River in western Travis County. Head out TX 71 and pick up Hamilton Pool Road (FM 3238) just north of Bee Cave. This is about a 45-minute drive from downtown Austin.

## Next Field Trip

**Saturday & Sunday, April 27th & 28th**

### **Paleozoic of the Arbuckle Mountain Region, South-Central Oklahoma**

We'll meet in Ada at the Callixylon tree on the East Central University campus at 8:00AM Saturday morning. This incredible petrified tree is located at the corner of Main Street (now pedestrians only at this spot) and Francis Avenues on the campus. There will be parking spots along Francis Ave. & E 12th St. Collecting sites will be in the Devonian, Silurian and Ordovician. Sites will include Bob Carrol's Quarry which should not be missed since this will be the last year we get in there. If you go up early on Friday contact Ed about some of the possible bonus locations and stops to visit south of Ada on Friday.

More detailed info will be provided at the next meeting but if you can't make it to the meeting call (evenings only) Ed Elliott at 512-657-7581 for further information.

This is a two-day trip and we will visit numerous sites. It will be HOT! Rest stops and facilities will be few and far between so be well prepared. Bring LOTS OF WATER. At least a gallon a day for each person, no kidding. Hats, long sleeves, sun block, etc. are all a must! And bug spray because there will be weeds and where there are weeds there are chiggers and ticks. Food is also suggested since we will be in a very rural area with virtually nowhere to get a quick bite.

Some of the locations will require a short but strenuous hike, which in the hot weather can be a challenge for some. If you have any concerns please speak with the field trip leader Ed Elliot.

There is usually a group meal back in Ada Saturday night. Ada is a college town and there are a number of motels to pick from. Suggestions will be made at the meeting.

Depending on the site you may need hammer & chisel or just a good set of knee-pads. Bring lots of containers, zip-lock bags, soda flats, newspaper, etc. and something to label it with.

#### **Meeting Minutes for Austin Paleo Society March 2013**

Erich rose called the meeting to order and introduced the guest speaker Brett Nachman, PhD student from UT. His topic for tonight: **Across The Great Divide: 15 Seasons of Fieldwork in the Paleocene/Eocene of the Great Divide Basin, Wyoming** In his presentation, Brett outlined the history of this high desert basin, its previously limited and difficult fossil survey activity. He then related the

story of a fortunate discovery in 2009 of vast numbers of very well-preserved rodent and primate fossils, which has enabled these scientists to intensely study the jaw, tooth and dental processes for these extinct fauna. These discoveries and analysis tied together much of the fragmented faunal information for animals from this period of about 50 million years ago, yet some interesting questions persist concerning how some of these basin areas are abundant with fossils, yet adjacent areas have none.

In addition, these scientists are using their collected data from this basin area to develop computer modeling programs that show likely fossil deposit trends and Brett and his colleagues have now developed strategies for predicting fossil locations by remote analysis, an exciting improved method, and heralds a new era in efficient fossil site exploration through virtual location predictive modeling.

Brett answered questions and then we took a break.

We resumed the meeting and accepted the minutes of the Feb. meeting.

Then the Treasurer's report was given and it was noted that donations are needed for the scholarship program.

The Fossil Fest Committee will meet in April. Outreach was discussed regarding:

- (a) Dripping Springs fest in May and Heritage Farmstead-see Erich
- (b) Violet Crown event, a dig-pit or fossil-touch table and info for younger children- see Dax.

(c) Goddard School, a June speaking and presentation opportunity- see Melinda

The AGMS Rock Swap was announced for Sat, 4/13, 9-3pm. Bring fossils, rocks to swap, etc. Erich alluded to the South Central Mineral Society scholarship program using online donations.

Then there was a brief report of the good finds and weather from the Wilson clay pit field trip.

Ed Elliott then detailed the upcoming field trip to East Tx, Nacogdoches to sand dollar locales.

Erich noted that we have the annual auction and a field trip in April- possibly the last opportunity to access Bob's quarry near Ada, OK.

Linda McCall was lauded for her award-winning publication on Pilot Knob micro fauna. She also showed the group some shark teeth found as paving fill in NC.

6 door prizes were won.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47pm.

## Field Trip Report - March 2013 East Texas

When we headed east on Friday, I had a feeling that it was going to be a good weekend. As we got closer to Crockett we ran into more and more dogwoods and redbuds. In Crockett we started seeing a lot of azaleas of many hues as well as other flowering trees and shrubs. Spring-time in East Texas is always a very special time. And it was nice and warm. Saturday morning was a different story with shades of winter sneaking back in. The temperature was dropping as we signed in. Bob McDonald, Cathy and Gary Rylander, Linda McCall (and later Bruce), Melvin Noble, Mike Smith, Dax Gonzalez, and Mark Montgomery were all excited to go collecting but wishing for the warmth of the day before.

After a caravan to the east side of San Augustine our first quarry stop was great. Though I didn't see any of the wonderful crab carapaces that were found last year, there was a great many more fossils weathered out of the matrix. There were at least five species of coral, a large variety of gastropods, at least three kinds of bryozoa, many different bivalves – a lot of which had both valves, I picked up three kinds of crab claw and a large number of the “ghost shrimp” claws, there were quite a few *Belosaepia* found, and nautiloid pieces as well. A pleasant surprise were the echinoids. While we weren't surprised to find small sand dollars (*Protoscutella mississippiensis*) it was surprising to pick up two heart urchins (*Maretia arguta*), one beautiful – one not. And later, Linda picked up a good partial *Schizater* sp. Later she also picked up one of

the *Maretia*. A few B-B's (*Fibularia texana*) were found as well. Also picked up were a few Pinna pieces, which I need to learn the Eocene name for. Mike found a rather nice larger sand dollar that will look great on his shelf. Spoils piles can be a lot of fun. Another brief caravan and we were at our old sand dollar quarry. I had been warned that there might be nothing left – a gas well had been drilled since our last foray. What a shock, most of our hunting area was now taken up by a gas well, a HUGH platform, storage tanks and holding ponds. All of our good hunting sites were gone. Door gets closed – window gets opened. A hill had had a long cut made through it and, though rather steep, lots of the sandy limestone is exposed. Quite a few dollars, from small to large, were found. And Mike did extremely well by picking up a rather nice *Eupatagus texanus*. The first “sea biscuit” I'd ever seen in E. Texas. And Linda found a ledge we'd never looked at that had a lot of “B-B's” on it. Out of a pile of green glauconite that had been recently dug I picked up several nice Pinna pieces. Not bad for a quarry that had been “destroyed”. We'll be back. We ended the day gathered together eating Mexican food in Nacogdoches. A great day!

On Sunday we started out at the big hill on University Dr. in Nacogdoches. Not a total waste, but an outcrop that has been taken over by vegetation - not much left to collect. After a short visit, we headed out to Lake Nacogdoches. BRRRRR. Sitting on the side of the lake with the wind howling across it, the wind chill was annoying, to say the least. Every time I leaned over close to the digging area, I received a face full of fine dust/sand. While several very beautiful fossils were found, no one seemed to be raking in any quantity. Several people had gone the day before, several more had to get back early and the rest of us were looking for a reason to stay. Even the die-hards, Linda, Melvin and I, were gone by 2:00. It is a good location, but it can be frustrating at times. I've been asked what to use to ID the fossils from Lake Nac. While all of our sites are Weches Formation, Middle Claiborne, Eocene, Lake Nac is very close stratigraphically to the Queen City Formation. While the Emerson book on the Stone City Formation can be used for a lot of the fauna, our friend Chris Garvie wrote a book that helps. *Bulletins of American Paleontology*, Vol. 111, Number 352 (1996) “The Molluscan Macrofauna of the Reklaw Formation”. A good number of the fossils just aren't in the Stone City and Chris' book helps to fill some of the gaps.

While Saturday was certainly the best, it was a great weekend in East Texas. Next year I hope to put wood back on the menu. Regardless, what a great place to be in the spring! Hope to see you at the auction and in Oklahoma. --Ed

## **Field Trip Report - February 2013 Brownwood Area, Wilson Clay Pit**

A beautiful but chill day greeted us at the Mall in Early and we couldn't wait to start picking up the wonderful fossils of the Pennsylvanian. With me were Erich and Emelia Rose, Rene Wojcik, Earl Richards, Cindy and Dennis Fryar, Bob McDonald, Mark Montgomery, Julia Mahand, Ryan and Gordon Galligher, Joe Watkins, Melvin Noble, Kevin Bills with Tyler and Ian, and Cathy and Gary Rylander.

After the caravan to Wilson Quarry, we discussed going to another site later, but mostly agreed

that Wilson was worth the whole day. Wilson is Harpersville Formation, Cisco Group, upper Virgillian Stage and, with the exception of Santa Anna, is the youngest Pennsylvanian formation that we hunt. That would put it somewhere in the vicinity of 290MYA. This quarry is huge and very fossiliferous and we all instantly scattered with our noses to the ground. It turned out to be a very toothy day. Dennis and Cindy were hunting near me and spoke of teeth – I remarked that I was interested in finding *Peripristis semicircularis* and he promptly picked up two decent specimens. Several members picked up good partials of *Petalodus ohioensis*, but I heard that Gary had a very nice one and I saw Bobs' nice one. Mark(?) found a large *Symmorium reniforme* that, while missing all of the cusps, was still impressive. Erich found a very nice *Polyacrodus sp.*, which was great, because I had never seen one before. Being with others while they find things is always a learning experience.

Unusual seemed to happen many times this day. Earl picked up a very nice large *Derbyia sp. (plattsmouthensis?)* and a large, ugly specimen that I say is a *Conularia*. Never saw one at Wilson before. And Cindy picked up a lovely cup that I don't believe was the usual *Delocrinus*, possibly a *Parulocrinus*. I picked up a very tiny vase-like cup that I have no name for and a lovely bivalve that looks to have *Myalina* affinities. Both Joe and I picked up nice specimens of a large “oyster” that I also have (yet) no name for. My weirdest find of the day was a very large coiled nautiloid. I've never heard of a coiled nautiloid being found at Wilson. This one would be (if whole) in the range of 30cm+. In some respects, it resembles *Titanoceras sp.*, but not in others. Both Erich and I picked up brachiopods that we had never found before at Wilson – I assume that others did as well. And Emelia picked up several trilobites that, while not complete, were far nicer than we usually find here. All-in-all, an exceptional day of collecting the wonderful fossils of the Pennsylvanian. Can't wait to go back.

See you all at the next one. --Ed



Unusual large nautiloid collected by Ed Elliot.

## Outreach Volunteer Opportunities

We have two outreach events in May that would be better served with a few extra hands:

**Violet Crown Spring Festival** will be held at Brentwood Park, 6710 Arroyo Seco, from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Saturday, May 4, 2013. The festival garners thousands of visitors every year. In order to sponsor a free activity, there is no monetary obligation. We appreciate any time and man power you can donate.

The event is a project of Violet Crown Community Works, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization helping build and sustain community in the Brentwood and Crestview neighborhoods. The festival will include activities for children and families, as well as neighborhood history and information about community resources. Local artisans will offer their wares and food and beverage vendors will be on hand offering tasty treats for everyone.

Contact Dax Gonzalez (Dax.Gonzalez@tasb.org) if you would like to help him man a table or two showing kids fossils and talking about how much fun this hobby is.

**“Diggin’ Drippin’ History”** Sunday May 19th, 2-5PM, The event will take place at The Dr. Pound Historical Farmstead Museum which is is located at 570 Founder’s Park Road, in Dripping Springs. The event is organized by the Heritage Circle: <http://heritagecircle.org/>

Contact Erich Rose: president@austinpaleo.org if you are interested in lending a hand.

FYI: If you are a teenage member looking for public service hours we can fill out your forms and give you credit for educational outreach.

### Places to go, Fossils to see:

(Courtesy the Rock & Gem magazine website & others.)

**April 26-28--Houston, TX:** Fine Mineral Show; Westward Look Mineral Show; Embassy Suites Hotel near the Galleria, 2911 Sage Road, Houston, TX; free parking and admission; [www.finemineralshow.com](http://www.finemineralshow.com)

**May 4—ARLINGTON, TEXAS:** Annual rock and gem swap meet; Arlington Gem & Mineral; Arlington Clubhouse; 1408 Gibbons Rd.; Sat. 8-1; free admission; faceting rough and equipment, rock swap, rocks, equipment, rough, cabs, gems, related items; contact Jack Spinks, 209 Overlook Dr., Midlothian, TX 76065, (214) 335-9452; e-mail: [jlspinks@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jlspinks@sbcglobal.net); Web site: [agemclub.com](http://agemclub.com)

**May 25-26—FORT WORTH, TEXAS:** 62nd Annual Show; Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club; Amon Carter Exhibits Bldg., Will Rogers Memorial Center; 3401 W. Lancaster; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$5, seniors, students and military \$4, children (under 16) free; "Timeless Treasures", more than 25 dealers, exhibits, kids' games, hourly door prizes, grand prize, silent auction; contact Steve Hilliard, PO Box 418, Decatur, TX 76234, (817) 925-5760; e-mail: [fwgmc@embarqmail.com](mailto:fwgmc@embarqmail.com); Web site: [fortworthgemandmineralclub.org](http://fortworthgemandmineralclub.org)

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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