



Paleo Footnotes

Volume 13, Number 12

December 2018

President's Note

Erich Rose

PSoA President

Here we are at the end of another year. Days have been getting shorter. No after-work collecting. In a few weeks we will reach the winter solstice and the Earth's tilt will shift us back into the light. The Earth has been spinning its way around the sun for billions of years and will most likely continue for at least a few billion more. So we can feel assured each year will have its share of good collecting days.

We will finish this year with our annual pot luck dinner and the White Mammoth gift exchange. This is our chance to just hang out, eat good food and have a little fun. Bring a side dish or dessert and we will provide the meat and beverages. You are also welcome to bring beer, wine or whatever you like. The gift exchange is optional but if you wish to take part bring along a wrapped paleo-oriented gift that you think someone would love to have or get a laugh from. Everyone is welcome, bring the family.

We will have only one item on the business agenda and that will be election of officers. TBD at the meeting.

See you then!

Next Meeting

Tuesday, December 18 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane Austin, Texas

Next Field Trip

Saturday, January tbd – meet at 8:00am
Location: tbd
Meet: tbd

November Meeting Minutes

Gary Vliet

PSoA Secretary

Meeting minutes courtesy of Emelia Rose

- The meeting started at 7:00 with the business portion and a recap of Fossil Fest.
- All the officer positions are open, the election will be at the December meeting. If you are interested in any of the positions please feel free to email president@austinpaleo.org.
- The field trip was confirmed for 8:00 on Saturday, at the cliffs at the intersection of Bee Cave and 360.
- December's meeting (Tuesday the 18th) will be our annual potluck dinner and white mammoth gift exchange. Always a fun evening and a great time to celebrate the past year with your paleo friends.
- After a quick break, Paul Hammerschmidt did a presentation on Paleontology in the News.
- The meeting concluded at 8:30

Upcoming Field Trip

No Field Trip Is Planned For December

Ed Elliott

PSoA Field Trip Chair

Coming soon: Check our online calendar for the 2019 field trip dates. <https://austinpaleo.org/calendar.html>

Upcoming Meeting Program

Paul Hammerschmidt

Programs Chair

Annual pot luck and White Mammoth gift exchange.

Field Trip Report

Fossil hunting in Walnut Formation along Loop 360 Austin, Texas, November 2018 (Erich Rose)

Our expedition was closer to home than usual. Being the Saturday after Thanksgiving we decided to keep things simple. At 8 am we met at the large road cut where Bee Cave Road and Loop 360 meet on the west side of town. It was really nice to see old and new members and families show up. I didn't take names like Ed does, but I counted a dozen or more members.

The road cut is a favorite of geology classes from UT and other universities and I was able to provide a small handout that Ann Molineux had created a few years back. The handout helped explain the various formations and members we were looking at and collecting from. The base of the cut below where we collected is Glen Rose Formation and the Bull Creek Member of the Walnut Formation. The very top of the cut is Edwards Limestone. We concentrated our collecting on top of the first bench where the Bee Cave and Cedar Park members of the Walnut Formation.

The Walnut is loaded with fossils: oysters and other bivalves, a large variety of gastropods, ammonites, small corals, worm tubes, and echinoids were found. Personally I collected two nice *Phymosoma texanum* regular urchins and two large gastropods including one that appears to be an extremely large *Tylostoma* species that would be out of place in the Walnut based on the literature. Ed Elliot picked up at least one really well preserved *Coenholectypus planatus* and I believe other nice fossils were found.

I left the cut about noon. Others stuck around longer and I hope to hear of more great fossils found that afternoon. I would also like to know if others explored some of the other cuts along 360 I suggested. Send me a note or see me at one of the next meetings.

Update from Ed: He found three cidarids and a two pound trilobite. Very Nice!

Odds and Ends

Dinosaurs May Have Given Birds Their Colorful, Speckled Eggs

In spite of their diversity, bird eggs derive their color from just two pigments: protoporphyrin, which produces a reddish-brown color, and biliverdin, which creates blue and green. Last year, a team led by Yale palaeontologist Jasmina Wiemann discovered these two pigments in the fossilized eggs of an oviraptor, a small, bird-like dinosaur.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/dinosaurs-may-have-given-birds-their-colorful-speckled-eggs-180970687/>

This Dino-Era Bird Was as Advanced as Modern Species. So Why Did It Disappear?



During the age of the dinosaurs, there were lots of species of birds that came from many different lineages. But about 65 million years ago, when the fifth great extinction took place, all of those birds—except for a few flightless species—went extinct along with the dinosaurs and half the living creatures on Earth.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/dino-era-bird-flew-well-modern-species-so-why-did-it-disappear-180970817/> & also <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2018/11/new-dinosaur-era-bird-largest-north-america-fossils-paleontology/>

Weasel-Like Fossils Reveal Evolutionary Clues of the First Mammals

A protomammal known as *Kayentatherium* was discovered with 38 babies in 185-million-year-old rock. University of Texas at Austin graduate student Eva Hoffman detailed the discovery at the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology meeting in Albuquerque recently, and the findings have also been published in *Nature*.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/weasel-like-fossils-reveal-clues-about-evolution-first-mammals-180970836/>

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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