



Paleo Footnotes

Volume 15, Number 5

May 2020

President's Note

Erich Rose

PSoA President

Here we are in month three of Covid-19 and it looks like we have yet a long ways to go. On the good side I have been enjoying time at home with my wife and daughter but on the bad side the bug to get out has been biting me harder and harder. And as things have calmed down a bit, and I've gotten into this routine of keeping my distance from others wearing a mask, I am realizing it isn't so bad a trade-off in order for all of us to stay healthy and ALIVE.

I did manage a small trip to a Hill Country road cut and was rewarded with a few new fossils. But mostly I would love to spend an afternoon with friends collecting and sharing the experience of finding new "old" things. And so we are trying to figure it all out.

Along those lines we finally held a board meeting and made some decisions. The minutes of the meeting are in this newsletter. In a nutshell we have decided that meetings at the AGMS club house are indefinitely postponed until the threat is past. In lieu of that we will begin virtual meetings on Zoom in June. Meetings will be on the usual third Tuesday each month at 7pm. These will include a presentation with Q&A and then a short business meeting for announcements and, best of all, field trip information.

Next Meeting (ONLINE)

6/16 – 7 p.m.

Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane Austin, Texas

Next Field Trip

tbd

Texas

See directions in Upcoming Field Trip Report section.

President's Note (cont'd)

Zoom is one of the many virtual meeting formats available and you may already be familiar with it. It is fairly easy to use on most computers or tablets and can work with a smart phone as well. You don't need a camera or microphone to participate, although it can enhance the experience. We will write up some how-to notes to help the newbies before the first meeting on June 16th.

Yes, field trips will start up again. They are one group activity that can easily meet the suggested guidelines for safe social behavior. Our plan is to keep them close to home so no need to stay in motels. We will probably also start them a little later, maybe 9 or 10am, instead of 8am. We should have no problem finding spots where we can all keep a proper distance and we will ask members to wear masks. Our field trip leaders are looking at where we will go, and when, and we will keep you all apprised thru the newsletter and email.

The biggest decision we had to make was in regards to Fossil Fest. And we are so sorry to announce that it was decided we would cancel this year's show. We discussed all the possibilities and came to the unanimous agreement that, with the prediction of another wave of virus this fall, we just don't see things being different enough to hold a proper show. We will be reaching out to our dealers and refunding their deposits and we will make arrangements with Old Settlers to lock in our spot for 2021. Luckily the club can afford to operate in the red this year.

One of our last decisions was to start up, and promote, a Paleontological Society of Austin "group" Facebook page. This will be a members-only page where we can all converse, post our finds and share questions and answers about whatever paleo-related subject we find interesting. Even if you are not a fan of Facebook it will allow you to stay better informed on what the club is doing or planning. This will be in addition to the newsletter so you will still have access to all necessary news and

President's Note (cont'd)

notifications. We will also continue to maintain our public PSA Facebook page.

I hope this information is enough to satisfy everyone's questions and concerns regarding PSA and the Covid-19 situation. The board's decisions did not come quickly or easily but were made with the best interests of all our members. If you still have questions or want to raise concerns or make suggestions regarding how we are moving forward please don't hesitate to email or even call me directly.

Sincerely,

Erich Rose, president
Paleontological Society of Austin
president@austinpaleo.org 512-626-9930

Board Meeting Minutes

Emelia Rose

PSOA Secretary

Board Meeting Minutes

Field Trips: We are looking closely at starting field trips again along with how to make sure they are safe for all members. The following will be highly recommended as well as making sure members are aware of any local regulations. Please note we will recommend you wear face masks, social distancing will be practiced so carpooling with other members who aren't family will be discouraged, along with sharing meals at restaurants with other Club members who aren't family. *Lastly, the field trip schedule will likely change since we do not want members driving a long way or having to spend the night in hotels.*

Meetings: Meetings will begin to resume on the third Tuesday of each month via ZOOM beginning in June, instructions will follow on how to use ZOOM, but downloading the app is the best for clear audio and visual. These meetings will be structured the same as regular meetings with our speaker beginning at 7:00pm, followed by a Q&A in the chat section where the moderator will bring up your question to the speaker. *No microphone or video camera will be needed to participate in these ZOOM Meetings.*

April Auction: The auction which was supposed to happen in April will **not** be rescheduled this year, instead we will tentatively hold the next auction in April of 2021.

Facebook Group: We will be creating a Facebook group to keep members up to date and act as an open forum for Q&A for the Club. Please stay tuned for details, *this Facebook group will be for members only.* See the Special Notices section for details!

Fossil Fest Update

The Board and Show Committee have made the very difficult decision to **cancel Fossil Fest 2020** which was scheduled for the first weekend in November. We find this the most proactive decision to keep our vendors, members, and the general public safe. The next Fossil Fest will be during the first weekend of November 2021.

We will be notifying dealers of our FF decision. We will be sending checks to return their deposits.

Please direct any questions or concerns to Board@AustinPaleo.org and thank you for your continued support of the Club. Stay safe and healthy!

Thank you,
PSOA Board

Upcoming Meeting Program

Paul Hammerschmidt

Programs Chair

PSOA meeting was cancelled for May.

Upcoming Field Trip

Ed Elliott

PSoA Field Trip Chair

No Field Trip is planned for May. Stay tuned for a possible June field trip!

Virtual Field Trip Report

Jamie Shelton

Field Trip Guide

We're all missing our great Club Field Trips so PSoA member Jamie Shelton has kindly provided us with a report of her own Virtual Field Trip.

Hunting From Home: Fossil Matrix in your Mailbox!

Hello Fossil friends! Fortunately, fossil hunting tends to lend itself to social distancing, but some of us are being extra cautious (and rightly so!) and are curtailing even our solo fossiling trips. But I found a way around all that....hunting from home! Some friends from a little home grown company of PaleoTex LLC posted that they sell bags of Matrix from a variety of locations – Texas, Oklahoma and elsewhere. I decided to buy a few pounds to see what I could find. And I have to say... I found LOTS!

I got two Permian fossil matrices – Texas Red Beds and Oklahoma from Richard Spur, plus a little bit of West Texas Cretaceous Aguja formation. Now, some of these are TINY fossils, so if you are patient and have a good magnifying lens (or handheld microscope camera – I got one recently and LOVE IT), you will find all kinds of little tiny treasures! I found quite a bit of great stuff with just my reading glasses and good lighting (yep, I'm creeping up on 50 and need those glasses!) but I went through it again with my microscope camera and found even MORE great stuff!

So if you are interested in getting some matrix for yourself, PaleoTex LLC is on Facebook, you can message them and they will happily send you some in the mail! (They sell it by the pound for \$13 but also have some specials on larger amounts). Happy Hunting!

I am including a few pics of some of my favorite finds



Special Notices

If you are a member of the PSoA and would like to engage more via Facebook, join the Private Facebook Group : ***Paleontological Society of Austin*** . It is only open to dues paying members of the PSoA, but hopefully can serve as another way to connect our Society! You can share fossil related articles, post your recent field trip and personal trip finds and see what other members are up to! https://www.facebook.com/groups/153405801141/?epa=SEARCH_BOX

Odds and Ends

New paper argues the *Spinosaurus* was aquatic, and powered by predatory tail

“*Tail-Propelled Aquatic Propulsion in a Theropod Dinosaur*,” in the April 29 issue of *Nature*, uses new fossil evidence and robotically controlled models.

Read more at <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/04/new-paper-suggests-spinosaurus-may-have-been-aquatic/>

Like Dolphins and Whales, Ancient Crocodiles Evolved to Spend Their Time at Sea

Researchers tracked changes in the crocodylian creatures' inner ears to learn how they moved into the sea

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/dolphins-and-whales-ancient-crocodiles-evolved-spend-their-time-sea-180974714/>

Four New Species of Prehistoric Flying Reptiles Unearthed in Morocco

In recent weeks, paleontologists have reported four new species of prehistoric flying reptiles dating back to the mid-Cretaceous, or about 100 million years ago all found in Morocco.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/four-new-species-pterosaur-unearthed-morocco-180974587/>

Digital Reconstructions Reveal 200-Million-Year-Old Dinosaur Embryo's Unusual Teeth

New scans suggest unhatched dinosaurs reabsorbed a set of teeth during development.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/digital-reconstructions-reveal-200-million-year-old-dinosaur-embryos-unusual-teeth-180974661/>

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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