



# PALEO FOOTNOTES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

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NOVEMBER 2021



## President's Note

### Cooler Weather but Shorter Days.

The need to go collecting is always moderated by one factor or the other. I'm glad we are getting back to early starts for the field trips. I don't have as many opportunities to spend a whole day out collecting so when I do I want to maximize the daylight. Last month's field trip into the Fredericksburg Group got me all jazzed up and excited to try and finally identify some of my finds this last trip and ones that have been awaiting attention for several years. I'm finding great pleasure in sorting through and reorganizing many of my

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## This Month's Talk

### Amber in the World; A case study: Texas Amber

Presented by: Virginia Friedman

This presentation will be divided into two parts: First, it will have an overview of amber from around the world. We will touch on different topics such as: What is and is not amber, the function of resins, the formation of amber, the varying colors of amber, the geological settings where amber is generally found, and the geographic distribution of amber throughout the world. We will also discuss, amber nomenclature, amber paleobotanical

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NOVEMBER 2021

**PSoA Regular August Meeting**  
Tuesday November 16th - 7pm

**Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86132637112?pwd=TGZoTUlxejJlJTjM3Z0oxeWxvRnJLUT09>

**Meeting ID: 861 3263 7112**  
**Passcode: 422927**

**PSoA November Field Trip**  
Saturday November 20th  
9:00am in Brownwood  
(see page 2)

## President's Note

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earlier finds. In some cases I now have better references than I had when I first visited those sites years ago.

I believe our trip this month will be into the Pennsylvanian Period once again. Not sure yet what site the team has in mind, but they are all great.

One of our members, Virginia Friedman, will be giving us a presentation on amber this month. Her talk will include a discussion on amber from Texas.

Hope you all can attend the meeting. See ya then...

### Erich Rose

PSoA President

## This Month's Talk

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affinity, a brief history of amber, its chemistry, analytical approaches to the study of ambers, current classifications, its inclusions (inorganic, zooinclusions, phytoinclusions), and fake amber (a case I worked on). The second part of the presentation will be on the study of the newly discovered Texas amber.

This month's speaker: **Virginia Friedman**

Virginia was born in Mexico City and attended the British School where she learned english. As a teenager she attended the Goethe Institut n Maurnau Germany where she learned german. She holds a BS in Biochemistry + Microbiology from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, a BS in Medical Technology from Tarleton State University, and MA in Spanish Literature from the University of Texas at Arlington, an MS in Geology / Paleontology from UT Dallas, and is in the process of receiving her PhD in Paleobiology from UC Davis.

Virginia's paleontology studies focused on Irvingtonian (Early Pleistocene) Proboscidean fauna, fossil pearls, vertebrate coprolites, and amber.

She published, along with her colleagues, the first scientific study on the newly discovered Texas amber. Another publication on the description of first insect in Texas amber is in progress. In 2021, through the National Autonomous University of Mexico, as well as the Mexican Society of Paleontology, Virginia established "Friedman Scholarship for the Scientific Research of Mexican Amber"

## Minutes from October's Meeting

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We had an excellent speaker at our meeting this month. We look forward to seeing you at the next meeting!

### Emelia Rose

PSoA Secretary

## November 2021 Field Trip:

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### Wilson's Clay Pit - Brownwood Tx

**DATE: Saturday November 20th - 9:00am**

Brownwood - Wilson's Quarry - Pennsylvanian

Wilson's clay pit is an old favorite Pennsylvanian site. This site has an abundance of different specimens, lots of crinoid stems with an occasional cup, brachiopods, corals, bryozoans, sometime trilobites and the prize *Petalodus* teeth, an extinct shark of the Pennsylvanian period. These are just a few of the fossil that can be found

Most material will be small to hand size but there are larger blocks with nice things in them. And some in large boulders with things 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, hat, food for lunch or snacks, and watch the weather for Brownwood for appropriate clothing. It can be colder there than here. It is a long way back to town and there are no facilities, so be prepared.

Please wear a mask when in close proximity to to each other until we disperse out.

It's always a good trip to Wilson Quarry, hope to see you there!

**Directions:** We will meet on Market Place Blvd (parking lot of strip mall just past the Abundant Life Church) off of 279 at 9am, Saturday November 20th. Look for my Blue Toyota Tocomia pickup or Jamies Dark Blue Scion XB with Turquoise wheels. Note this is a new place as we usually meet at the Early Mall, we will caravan from here.

### Melvin Noble

Field Trip Co-Chair



In situ fossils at Wilson's Clay Pit in Brownwood

# October 2021 Field Trip Report: Moody and Evant

## Moody skies, fossil shows, and surprise finds!

We had a nice gathering of PSoA members for the September Field trip and once again had lovely weather - a bit warm but with some nice breezes to keep us cool! On the field trip was Rick Goldgar, Alan Keith, Adam and Kyle Kendrick, Brian and Emerson Bedrosian, Yoli and Will Lins, the Heiselber Family (Katie, Johnny and Isabel), Michael Treves, Kevin Keys, Grady Parks, Gary and Cathy Rylander, Melvin Noble, myself (Jamie Shelton) and even had our President of PSoA, Erich Rose, joining us for the first time in a while! There was another family with two boys that somehow I didn't get their names - sorry about that, y'all!

The first roadcut outside of Moody presents a pretty steep scramble, but that does not deter any avid fossil hunters - Gary Rylander was the first to the top! This site has Edwards Formation above with Walnut below so it makes for some great hunting - two formations with very different fauna. I was lucky to find a couple of gastropods in the Edwards which were new to me and Alan collected one of the nicest Rudists Eoradiolites I've ever seen (fig. 1 - he let me borrow it to photograph...thanks Alan! I'll get it back to you... eventually!) The finds of the day though, were of course, made by the kids (lucky ducks). A lovely full Ammonite Engonoceras was found by Isabel (fig. 2) and a whole Tetragramma was found by one of the boys! Michael also found a really nice Tetragramma taffi, even if it was just a half ...a half is still better than none!

Cathy made one of the most interesting finds - we all were excited thinking she had found a starfish on a Cyprimeria clam, but Erich recognized it as a type of sponge boring pattern (fig. 3). It was still an amazingly cool fossil find.

We finally got our fill of this site and decided to move on. Some of the group went on to Hillsboro as they were having their First Annual Fossil and Mineral Expo, so Melvin and others had the good idea to have a "showing of PSoA support". The rest of us went on to the Evant roadcut - about 20 miles from the Moody site. We all got hung up in some traffic resulting from the transport of those huge blades of



Looking over the Walnut road cut near Moody, TX

windmills...those things are just gigantic. But we made it to Evant finally!

This is a Comanche Peak exposure, so it has similar but slightly different fauna than the Walnut Formation. Lots of good stuff was collected - Brian won the prize for finding the most regular echinoids (Phymosomas) of the day! I found another little gastropod I'd not found before - a Turbo weatherfordensis (fig. 4 - I was definitely having a gastropod day....) and Gary found a complete Ammonite that I am not even sure what it was. It certainly didn't look like any I'd seen come out of Comanche Peak formation! Leave it to Gary to find the most unusual thing!

So all in all, another great field trip of fossil hunting!

**Jamie Shelton**  
Field Trip Co-Chair



Fig. 1 Rudists Eoradiolites  
Found by Alan Keith



Fig. 2 Ammonite Engonoceras  
Found by Isabel Heiselber



Fig. 3 Cyprimeria Clam with boring  
sponge Found by Cathy Rylander



Fig. 4 Turbo weatherfordensis  
Found by Jamie Shelton



## Tailings...

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### In The News

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#### **100-million-year old crab fossil in amber is history-altering discovery**

Fossils of the earliest “modern-looking” crabs were discovered in tree amber, estimated to date back 100 million years, rewriting crustacean history.

Staff Video, [USA Today](#), October 21st 2021

#### **Paleontologists Unearth the Oldest Evidence of Herd Behavior in Dinosaurs**

Fossils found in an ancient nesting ground reveals that herd mentality is almost 200 million years old

Rasha Aridi, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), October 26th 2021

#### **Fossil of prehistoric sea scorpion found in South China Sea — and it’s as big as a dog**

A team of researchers found a fossil of a sea scorpion that was about 3 feet. That’s about the size of a dog – and not a chihuahua either.

Naomi Ludlow, [USA Today](#), October 29th 2021

#### **Giant Sea Lizards Ruled the Waves While T. Rex Roamed on Land**

A new fossil discovery shows marine reptiles called mosasaurs lived up until the asteroid impact that killed non-avian dinosaurs

Riley Black, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), November 1st 2021

#### **Penis Worms May Have Been the First Real Hermits**

Hermit crabs may have evolved hermiting behavior 180 million years ago, but penis worms beat them by more than 300 million years

Rasha Aridi, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), November 10th 2021

#### **What’s Next for the 1.2 Million Prehistoric Fossils Now at Smithsonian**

Digitization will soon allow researchers around the globe to access the latest specimens in the National Fossil Collection

Abigail Eisenstadt, [Smithsonian Voices](#), October 19th 2021

## 2021 Field Trip Schedule

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December: **Local Fossil Hunt + Picnic?** We will discuss more at this month’s meeting - stay tuned!

Can’t wait to see what is in store for 2022!

## Side Trips:

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### FossilMania in Glen Rose TX

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#### **Fossil hunting and a wonderful show!**

I took a little trip to Glen Rose TX over Halloween weekend because The Dallas Paleontological Society puts on a show called FossilMania. I had heard of it for years but never attended, but always wanted to. Well, I was actually invited to be a vendor so decided to gather up my art and my mask and headed to Glen Rose for a long weekend.

A cold front had blown in that night and the winds were gusting around 30 MPH but that did not deter me from doing a little fossil hunting on the way up! I stopped at a couple of roadcuts between Clifton and Glen Rose...nothing super great, but fun to get out and poke around. Except for that wind.... But I did hit up a nice spot I’d been to before, an Edwards Formation overlaying a Walnut shelf and found some nice rudists, a couple of echinoids and a cool *Oxytropidoceras texanus* ammonite – whole, but broken up as Erich Rose says “in kit form” (fig. 1).

I found a cute little “tiny home” for daily rental at an RV park, so it was nice and isolated and had a lovely view of the hill country. I got settled in and then headed to the Somervell County Expo center to set up for the show. There were about 15 vendors each with minimum of 2 tables – some had as many as 12! DPS (Dallas Paleontological Society) also had a (continued on page 5)



fig. 1 *Oxytropidoceras texanus* ammonite Found by Jamie Shelton

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big table full of displays and door prizes that looked amazing! The Show started Friday morning at 8am with the local kids coming in from the schools. Nice small groups of 15 or so at a time, so it was not too overwhelming. Being Halloween weekend, they were all in costume which was fun. They all got little gift bags of fossils and their main question to vendors was “Do you have anything for free?”. I learned to next time bring more give away fossils!

Saturday brought the main crowds of both townspeople and real fossil enthusiasts. There were a couple of lectures on various topics – one of which was some of the history of Glen Rose called “Moonlight, Murder and Dinosaurs”, it sounded quite interesting but I wasn’t able to attend . . .had to keep those sales happening! They also had a field trip to a couple of fossil collecting spots and a special guide to the State Park. And the Door Prizes! So many door prizes!

The vendors were quite diverse, everything from locally collected fossils (many ammonites and echinoids) and some amazing worldwide fossils available, including a gorgeous Ammolite Ammonite from Canada, which did sell . . .for \$11,000!! I can’t decide which I’d prefer more . . .to sell something like that or to BUY something like that! Sunday had a Silent Auction going on, which wrapped up at Noon. There were some amazing pieces up for auction! Everything from books to fossils and everything in between. It was a really fun show and I met some really great people, including the guy who found the Arlington Archeosaur site (he was a character . . .took me hunting to a spot on the Paluxy River) to Mr. and Mrs. Farish (he signed his book Fossil Sharks and Rays for me and had a really fun floating remote controlled shark to amuse us all!). All in all, a great show, lots of fun, good people AND I made a few sales and found a few fossils!



View of Jamie’s spread at FossilMania, shark lurking in the hall...



Amazing Ammolite Ammonite from Canada that sold for \$11,000!

## Jamie Shelton Side Trip Report #2

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](http://austinpaleo.org) for more information.

*Please note, due to COVID 19, in person meetings have been temporarily paused, and monthly meetings are instead being held on Zoom. Please see instructions above to attend the meetings virtually. 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 Societie’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](http://www.austinpaleo.org)

Webmaster: **Gordon Galligher, [webmaster@austinpaleo.org](mailto:webmaster@austinpaleo.org)**

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

Twitter: **@Austin\_Paleo**

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