



PALEO FOOTNOTES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

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FEBRUARY 2022



President's Note

Looking back on cold days...

I'm sitting in my study working on some long overdue cataloging. Last month's field trip to Harker Heights was a pretty good one for me. I found a couple of decent echinoids and upon returning home it reminded me that I still hadn't identified many specimens from many earlier trips. And outside the study frozen trees are banging into my house reminding me of many a cold winter day back East when all I did this time of year is catalog.

Our meeting this month comes up rather quick on the 15th. Not sure yet (continued on page 2)

This Month's Speaker

Visiting (and Hunting) the Jurassic Coast of England

Presented by: Jamie Shelton

Visiting (and Hunting) the Jurassic Coast of England - from Lyme Regis to Weymouth. Two of our PSOA members have taken trips to the area famously known as the home of Mary Anning and early paleontological finds. This presentation will highlight the geology of the Southern Coast, fossil hunting finds, plus a side jaunt to the British Natural History Museum in London. The presentation will include Jamie's recent travels as well as Mike Smith's from a few years back. (continued on page 2)

FEBRUARY 2022

PSOA Regular February Meeting
Tuesday February 15th - 7pm

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81105073377?pwd=bjNaTjRGdSswWFpVM0R0a3REM1ArQT09>

Meeting ID: 811 0507 3377
Passcode: 292903

PSOA February Field Trip
Saturday February 19th
9:00am in Jacksboro
(see page 2)

President's Note

(continued from page 1)

what sort of speaker we have lined up but we always find someone. The field trip is planned for Jacksboro. Hard to imagine being there today but we have had many a great day there where it started brutally cold and by mid-day we were all down to t-shirts. As long as the day is sunny it will be good.

We do have some club business to take of this coming meeting. We need to elect officers. **So this will be my last chance to ask anyone if they are interested in being a club officer to step up.** If so you can email me your name and what position you may be interested in. All current officers, with the exception of secretary, have agreed to stay on another year. But that doesn't mean you still can't run. We can always use new blood. Let me know.

Hope to see you on the 15th!

Erich Rose
PSoA President

This Month's Talk

(continued from page 1)

This Month's Speaker - our own Jamie Shelton!

Jamie is an artist, traveler, foodie, dancer and avid amateur fossil hunter. She attended her first PSoA meeting at the age of 8 as the guest of a friend who was a member and 40 years later, she finally joined. She is trying to make up for lost time by finding all the fossils she possibly can. She travels frequently in pursuit of new places and new finds and has published several SIDE TRIPS articles in our newsletter documenting these adventures. Visit her website on Central Texas Fossils and beyond: www.fossil-quest.com

Minutes from January's Meeting

The January meeting had good attendance with a great speaker. We look forward to seeing you next month!

Emelia Rose
PSoA Secretary

Fossil Fest 2022 Update

We are hopeful that the COVID climate will improve before November and allow us to hold Fossil Fest on 11/5 & 11/6 of this year. The success of Fossil Fest largely depends on members volunteering to help with the event. We will start holding planning meetings in March. All members are invited to join in on the planning and partake in making Fossil Fest a success!

Heather Radford
Show Chair



February 2022 Field Trip: Lake Jacksboro

DATE: Saturday February 19th - 9:00am
Lake Jacksboro - Upper Pennsylvanian

This site is Upper Pennsylvanian and is replete with fossils from the Finis Shale, Graham Formation of the Cisco Group. Most fossils will be marine in origin, including Brachiopods, Trilobites, Corals, Bryozoans, Mollusks, Crinoids, and the occasional shark tooth. Fossils will generally be small and loose, so bring plenty of small containers or sectional boxes. The drive back into downtown Jacksboro is not far, but coupled with the walk back across the spillway, it will waste valuable collecting time – bring food and plenty of water to maximize your time. If you stick around for more collecting on Sunday, we will visit various road cuts and possibly the Mineral Wells Fossil Park. We will meet at 9:00 am in front of the Jack County Extension Office located at 100 N Main St. in Jacksboro (the town square). To get there, take 183 North from Austin and, in Lampasas, turn onto 281 North, which will take you straight to Jacksboro. Or, take I35 North to the EI35/ WI35 split just North of Hillsboro. Take WI35 to Ft Worth and take I20 West. On the West side of Ft Worth take the loop 820N and just North of Lake Worth exit for West 199 (the Jacksboro Highway). This will take you straight into Jacksboro. Saturday morning look for a group of fossil hunters parked by and standing by the courthouse. Remember that Jacksboro is about four hours from Austin, so either drive up the night before or be prepared to leave early Saturday. Jacksboro motels are somewhat bare-bones, so if you want top quality accommodations.... some people stay in Mineral Wells as we will be in that area for Sunday. We will caravan as a group to the first site, so please be on time. There will be a \$3 admission fee per person (children are free) to cover our parking in and crossing the spillway in the state park. Please have CASH handy to put into envelopes at the pay station. Check the local weather before leaving so that you can dress appropriately. February in North Texas can be cold. Hopefully it will warm up in the evening. We ask to please wear mask when standing next to others and when we disperse you can take them off. Any questions please e-mail trip chair or call Melvin or Jamie.

Melvin Noble
Field Trip Co-Chair

January 2022 Field Trip: Harker Heights

A chill was in the air...but not for long!

I have to admit, this was the first PSoA Field Trip that I was actually not looking forward to. I had been watching the temperature predictions and it was shaping up to be a cold cold morning. And it WAS. But, as always with Texas weather, if you don't like it...wait a minute because it will probably change. And it DID! The sun came out, it warmed up nicely and we ended up with a GORGEOUS day for Fossil Hunting!

We had a small group consisting of Nick Hartman, Gary Kendrick, his son Adam and his grandson Garrison, Alan Keith, Gary and Cathy Rylander, Erich Rose, Sean Caradine Rick Goldgar, Ed Eliot, Melvin Noble and myself, Jamie Shelton.

Our first locale in Harker Heights always produces some great fossils – the variety of fauna found there always amazes me. Everything from some REALLY nice gastropods found by Ed Eliot to some nicely preserved Phymosomas found by Alan. Ed came in handy helping educate a couple of new members, Nick and Sean, on what to look for and identifying their finds. I was excited to find my first bits of Crab stuff (fig.1) there and a nice new to me Bivalve called Trapezium.

We stayed there most of the morning but then decided to go try out another spot which I had scouted out in the Fall. I call it “Ammonite Flats” because there are SO MANY Oxytropidoceras ammonites there. Sadly, they are almost all in chunks and the only ones that are whole are so embedded that you'd break them trying to get them out. Erich was the only one who ended up with a nice “almost” whole one... because it was small...it held together! Ed found the first regular echinoid – a Phymosoma. A few others were found but they were pretty scrappy. What I love about this spot is the *Leptosalenia mexicanas*. They have an interesting red color to them, seemingly just on their “caps”. (fig. 3) I've not seen that preservation anywhere else. Also, there is an abundance of the little corals *Parasimilia* (and other genus, which Erich told me



about but I don't remember the name). Nick and I sat in a spot and picked up half a dozen easy.

Sean was taken in by the flint nodules that were strewn about. Nice colors and good sized pieces. He said he is going to work on some flint knapping, so we are looking forward to seeing what he produces!

So despite my concerns about the weather, we ended up with a beautiful Texas “winter” day for fossil hunting! Who knows what the weather will do for our February trip.....cross your fingers for another nice day!

Jamie Shelton
Field Trip Co-Chair



Fig. 1 Crab Claw
Found by Jamie Shelton



Fig. 2 *Engonoceras ammonite*
Found by Melvin Noble



Fig. 3 *Leptosalenia mexicana*
Found by Jamie Shelton



Tailings...

In The News

Armored dinosaur's last meal preserved in stunning detail

Fossilized gut contents reveal details of the prehistoric creature's daily life—and even the season when it died.

Michael Greshco, [National Geographic](#), June 2nd 2020

This Tiny, Googly-Eyed Prehistoric Crab Was a Fast-Swimming Predator With Sharp Vision

The 95-million-year-old crab had crystal clear eyesight and oar-like legs that helped it snatch up prey

Elizabeth Gamillo, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), January 27th 2022

99 million-year-old flowers found perfectly preserved in amber bloomed at the feet of dinosaurs

Flowers discovered perfectly preserved in globs of amber bloomed at the feet of dinosaurs, suggesting that some flowering plants in South Africa today have remained unchanged for 99 million years, a new study reveals.

Katie Hunt, [CNN](#), February 1st 2022

East Africa's Oldest Modern Human Fossil Is Way Older Than Previously Thought

Analysis of ash from a massive volcanic eruption places the famed Omo I fossil 36,000 years back in time

Brian Handwerk, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), January 12th 2022

2022 Field Trip Schedule

February:	Jacksboro
March:	East Texas / Whisky Bridge
April:	Oklahoma Trip (Spring Branch as backup)
May:	Johnson City
June:	Brazos Float Trip (Bandera as backup)
July:	Austin Loop 360 (or Brazos backup)
August:	Houston Museum of Natural Sciences
September:	Brady / Santa Ana Sites
October:	Texoma (Moody/Evant as backup)
November:	Brownwood
December:	Christmas Party!

Important Note: Please refrain from visiting sites the club is scheduled to access as part of a scheduled field trip. Doing so can clear a site of quality fossils and negatively impact the experience folks will have, especially new members, if the site suddenly feels "picked over". We do our best to carefully space out trips to allow them to recover, so please be respectful of the club and stay off these sites within 3 months of a planned trip.

Good Field Trip Etiquette

1. Arrive on time or early. At the prescribed meeting time (often 8AM) you should be out of your car standing with the field trip leader, signed in and ready to hear the day's schedule, directions and helpful pointers.
2. Do your homework. Use one of the online mapping programs to determine travel time and directions from your home the day before. Take the map with you and leave at least 15-30 minutes early. This is critical when we are going to quarries, private property or if the first stop is a meeting-point, not the collecting site. The field trip leader will not wait more than 15 minutes beyond the scheduled time.
3. Make sure you have the field trip leader's phone number. Their number will appear in the field trip notice. Bring a copy of the notice from the newsletter or e-mail blast so you have the information. That is the best way to find the group if you do get delayed or lost. But do not count on it. Some of our remote sites have poor cell reception. We have no way to guarantee you will get there if you miss the meeting spot.
4. The first stop is not breakfast. Please do not expect the rest of the group to wait while you order food or take care of business. If you need to do that, arrive 30 minutes early and then be ready to go at 8:00AM sharp!
5. The field trip leader sets the schedule. Gather near the leader at the beginning of every trip and listen carefully. The leader will describe where and when things will happen. That will include directions, plans for breaks and everything else you need to know about how the day will unfold. If you are not sure about directions or the schedule speak directly with the field trip leader. Do not count on hearsay.
6. Do not ask the entire group to stop for unscheduled breaks. If you need to take a break during the day, do it after you know where the collecting site is located. The field trip leader will usually schedule a break around lunch but not between every stop. Follow the group to the site and then circle back for food or facilities. This is why we suggest bringing your own food and beverages. Also being prepared with TP, or whatever else, for "emergencies".
7. Sign in and don't forget to report to the leader when you leave. This is not critical, but he or she will greatly appreciate those two things. Having everyone's name let's him know how well attended the trip was and we like to list everyone in the follow up reports. Secondly, getting a chance to hear and see what you found that day and being able to keep track of who is on site at the very end is just a good thing.
8. Be prepared. Make sure you have the materials you need to collect safely. In particular, water, hat, sunscreen and food.
9. Don't crowd the next guy. Please be courteous of your fellow collectors space. If someone says "Hey I found a good one!" don't come rushing over and crowd into their collecting zone. Let them offer to share the space. You can ask them where they found it and then move off to one side or the other, but don't just plop down next to them.
10. Be safe. If someone is working an area on a slope do you best not to pass above them. If you need to do so, please let them know you are passing and do your best not to send any debris down on top of them. If someone is working above you and you must pass below, please alert them for the same reasons. Generally speaking, if someone is working a spot respect that they "own" that area and your passage through or around that location should only be done with their permission and/or invitation.



Side Trips:

Texas Coast Fossil Hunting

Now, I grew up in Texas and I've been to the Texas Coast hundreds of times, but in all my beachcombing, I'd only ever found the usual suspects- shells and sand dollars and other "beachy" stuff. Of course, I wasn't LOOKING for fossils and as we know, unless you are looking, you don't see! Now that I am totally obsessed with fossils, I have been to Galveston a couple of times to find shark teeth and crabs and have had no luck. I learned that shark teeth could also be found at Port Aransas so I thought I'd give it a try when my husband and I went to Port A for New Years. As I was searching (in vain) for a shark tooth...I found something I was even more excited about...a little piece of fossil turtle shell! We were only there for a couple of days so I didn't get to do much more than a couple of beach walks.

My January Beach adventure was not over, however, because my parents rented a house a house in Port A and I got to go spend the whole week going to the beach every day! Some days were sunny and warm, others were cool and cloudy, but hey, it's the beach...it's ALL good!

The first day I found another nice turtle shell fragment, with an interesting "spine". I also found a very small bit of vertebra which, needless to say, really had me excited about finding more! So over the next few days, I looked and looked and didn't find much, but I did find one REALLY nice larger vertebra but no shark teeth. My dad found me a lovely little vertebra and my mom found a fish spine (I love going fossil hunting with them because they are happy to let me have



the fossils...hahahah). I was quite happy with my finds and was content to just beachcomb for shells and such, but as we ALSO know....sometimes when you stop searching for the thing....that's when you find it. So the next to last day, I was out just looking for more shells and I came across something special – pretty sure it's the top of a turtle or reptile skull! It's tiny, but has amazing detail! So my fossil hunting was a TOTAL success as far as I was concerned, but then, happily, on another final walk on the beach...I found my shark tooth! And these were all my first Pleistocene finds, as well. I'm hooked. I can't wait to go look for more!

Jamie Shelton
Field Trip Co-Chair

Editor's Note:

I would like to extend an invitation to all members to submit stories of their own travels for publish in future episodes of SIDE TRIPS. All I need is a short write up (and I can assist with this) as well as some photos of your trip (iPhone or Android photos are perfect - just make sure to send me the full resolution version). Fossil hunting trips are always welcome, but so are trips to museums, fossil/mineral shows, and other adventures that explore the world around us. You can reach me at editor@austinpaleo.org and I will do my best to include your stories in future issues.

Brian Bedrosian - Newsletter Editor

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 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

Webmaster: **Gordon Galligher, webmaster@austinpaleo.org**

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

Twitter: **@Austin_Paleo**

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