

PALEO FOOTNOTES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

VOLUME 18 | NUMBER 03

MARCH 2023



President's Note

Spring has sprung and the bluebonnets are blooming!

Still awaiting some spring rain but otherwise the weather has been grand. Even our February field trip up north received a reprieve on the rain that was forecast. It was cool and gray and a little mucky, but otherwise a fine day of collecting in the Finis Shale at Jacksboro. And I know a few of you stuck around and did some collecting near Mineral Wells on Sunday. I look forward to the field trip reports.

This month is also a big one for outreach events. We will host a touch (continued on page 2)

This Month's Speaker

A New Late Pleistocene Cave Fauna from southern Texas
by Doug Shore

Texas is no stranger to caves. The limestone bedrock stretching across the Central and southern parts of the state is ideal for their formation. Hundreds of caves are known throughout this region and many have produced fossils. I will give a preliminary look at a new late pleistocene fauna discovered in a cave in Uvalde County. Fossils discovered thus far provide an important look into this time period and how it may have changed through time.

(continued on page 2)

MARCH 2023

Regular March Meeting
Tuesday March 21st - 7pm
AGMS Clubhouse
6719 Burnet Lane

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85014168353?pwd=SE5vcn5LTUYvUzZBcmE0azhqbURqQT09>
Meeting ID: 850 1416 8353
Passcode: 201484

Dino Days
Zilker Botanical Garden
Saturday, March 18th
9am-2:30pm (see page 3)

March Field Trip
Saturday, March 25th
Whiskey Bridge + East Texas
(see page 2)

President's Note

(continued from page 1)

table at Wild Basin Preserve this week as well as continue our presence at Dino Days held at Zilker Botanical Gardens. I also look forward to learning what is in store for this month's field trip.

Hope to see yall next Tuesday!

Erich Rose

PSoA President



Join the collectors at Jacksboro in our report on the FIELD TRIP page 4!

This Month's Speaker

(continued from page 1)

This month's Speaker: **Doug Shore**

Born and raised in California, I flunked out of a community college due to a learning disability. But through volunteering I was still able to work my way into paleontology. I have volunteered with the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, the San Bernardino County Museum, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. I have participated in field work in California (including the Channel Islands), Utah, Texas, New Mexico, and Wyoming. I worked as a preparator at PaleoTex/Texas Through Time in Hillsboro but right now am just volunteering.



A happy hunter at a fresh site - check out this SIDE TRIP on page 6!

March 2023 Field Trip:

East Texas + Whiskey Bridge

DATE: Saturday March 25th

Nacogdoches Area Sites - Eocene

Whiskey Bridge - Eocene

This month we may try to do dual trips, similar to what we did last year. I will be leading one group to some old collecting sites in East Texas in search of a wide variety of Eocene fossils. *Please note, this may be one of the last trips out there for a spell as many of our sites are either no longer accessible or have starated to weather away or become overgrown.* As an alternative to those that don't want to make the long trek out east, we are also considering a trip to Whiskey Bridge.

The East Texas trip will meet at 8 am on Saturday, March 25th in Nacogdoches, Texas. We will meet at the O'Reilly Auto Parts located at 614 N. University Dr. in Nacogdoches. If you get there early enough, there is collecting behind the store along the cliff wall, but it is hard rock The caravan will leave from this spot to our first location. Bring lunch, water and the usual collecting materials. Most – but not all – of our finds will be small, so sectional boxes will be useful. A rock hammer will come in handy. Watch the weather and dress accordingly. It should be in seventy's with lows at night in forty's but the occasional cold front has been known to come thru. Note: much of our sites may be overgrown. We have found sand dollars, echinoids, crab material, gastropods, bivalves in several areas. We will be driving around to several sites. If we do not have enough for Sunday we will stop at Whiskey Bridge on way back.

The alternate trip will be to Whiskey Bridge which is just outside Bryan, TX trip and will meet at 9 a.m. on Saturday, March 25th. To get there look for an old train bridge crossing the Brazos River at Texas State Highway 21. From Austin, take either US-290 or TX-71 east and turn left onto TX-21 heading north toward Caldwell. Eleven miles past Caldwell, just after FM-50 on the right and County Rd-221 on the left, you will see the rusty railroad bridge. **SLOW DOWN** and prepare to turn left across the highway and onto a small pull-off along the left side of the road just before the bridge. If you miss the turn, cross the bridge, make a U-turn, and come back to the pull off. **DO NOT PARK** near the railroad equipment, but instead park along the small road/grass above the river. We will be collecting along the west bank of the river just below the parking area, so if you get there late just walk down to the river and you will find us. This is a middle Eocene marine site, Gastropods, bivalves, shark teeth, fish ear bones can be found. Most of the finds will be small and only a knife or small screwdriver is required. Sectional boxes can be useful It can be muddy and slippery if it has rained so be prepared.

We will discuss this further at the meeting on Tuesday. Email trip leaders for more information.

Melvin Noble

Field Trip Co-Chair

2023 Upcoming Paleo Events

Dino Days - Zilker Botanical Garden

Running through March 18th, the Zilker Botanical Gardens will be hosting **Dino Days**. There will be events and hands-on activities every Saturday in the Hartman Prehistoric Garden. PSoA will be present on March 18th, 9am-2:30 pm, to talk to folks and share our touch table - please [volunteer](#) to help out!



Fossil Clues to the Past - Riverside Nature Center

The Riverside Nature Center's new fossil exhibit **Fossil Clues to the Past** is replete with fossils donated by Jackson School - the exhibit will run through the end of the summer and will have exhibits from across the fossil record.



February Meeting Minutes

March 21st - the Meeting was opened by Erich Rose at 7:00 PM, both in person and via Zoom. There were about 25 persons in attendance and a couple via Zoom.

Erich Rose introduced Rex Kowalski as our speaker, whose presentation was on 'The Tyrant Lineage'.

The business meeting resumed about 8:00 after a brief break:

- Mike Smith reported that PSA ended the year in good shape financially.
- Melvin and Mike planned to have booth at Zilker Park on March 18th.
- The Auction was confirmed to be held in April 23 (Earth Day) at West Cave Preserve.
- It was announced that the Tee Shirt Design for this fall's Fossil Fest would have an Echinoid theme. One can join the discussion on the specific design and submit your ideas via Facebook
- The field trip this Saturday (Feb 25th) will be to Lake Jacksboro. Those planning to attend should meet at the Jack County Court House at 8:30 am in Jacksboro. Note that, if one arrives later it will be 'very' hard to find actual site.

Meeting ended about 8:30 pm.

Gary Vliet

Secretary

Fossil Fest 2023 Update

Date: November 4th & 5th

Theme: Prehistoric Life Underwater

Call for Vendors

We still have open booth spaces for vendors. If you have friends or know of any vendors that may be interested please ask them to email me at showchair@austinpaleo.org for further information. Thus far we have 9 vendors interested/committed to the event.

T-Shirts

Please use the following [link](#) to indicate your interest in purchasing a Fossil Fest T-shirt. The design and color options are included on the google spreadsheet. Shirts are estimated to cost \$12 to members. Ultimately the final price will be dependent upon the quantity we have printed. Feel free to indicate whether you'd like the design placed onto the front or the back of the shirt (majority wins).

General

The event is now posted on Facebook.

Tear pads are available for advertising at outreach events. If you would like one, see me at the monthly meetings. I will have some with me.

Heather Aziz

Vice President + Show Chair



Fig. 1 Collection of Conularids (Brian Bedrosian)

February Field Trip Report: Jacksboro

The day started out somewhat cool but comfortable enough for collecting. Gary and Cathy Rylander, Brian Bedrosian, with his sons Emerson and Anders, Paul Hammerschmidt, Mike Smith, Kevin Bills, John Hinti, Erich Rose, Eric Jones, Tyler Stoviak, Grady, Jean Higgins, Ron DiPronio, Leah Pfaff, Gary Kendricks and me, Melvin Noble all met at the courthouse in Jacksboro.

After a few minutes of socialization and showing off a few ID books on the finis shale, we carpooled to the collecting site. The walk across the dam seemed longer than I remember but Gary Kendrick had the right idea with his electric bicycle. When we got to the other end some people went to the hill, while I and some others went to the right to collect at the exposure where the lake was low. There didn't seem to be too much in the lake spot at first but when we got to looking we started to find fossils. Eric Rose found a shark's tooth but almost immediately lost it and despite a valient effort to search for it, could not find it. I feel for him, I've been there, we've all been there. A lot of us found some nice brachiopods in that area with nice preservation. I found a rather large Worthenia gastropod. Jean was interested in the flat area over the fence so we went over there and looked for a little while and then proceeded to walk up to the main exposure where the rest of the club was already deep into the hunt. Gary Kendrick found a nice chunk of a Metacoceras nautiloid. Whole ones are a very rare find at this site, but one was found last year. Tyler found a nice full nautiloid plus some other cool stuff. Gary Rylander found a nice Goniatite ammonoid (fig. 4).

Some of the real prizes were Eric Jones (figs. 5+6) and Paul Hammerschmidts (fig. 2) Rostroconchs. Rostroconchs are not found out here very often but are always very exciting. Actually they're one of the few things that I really want to

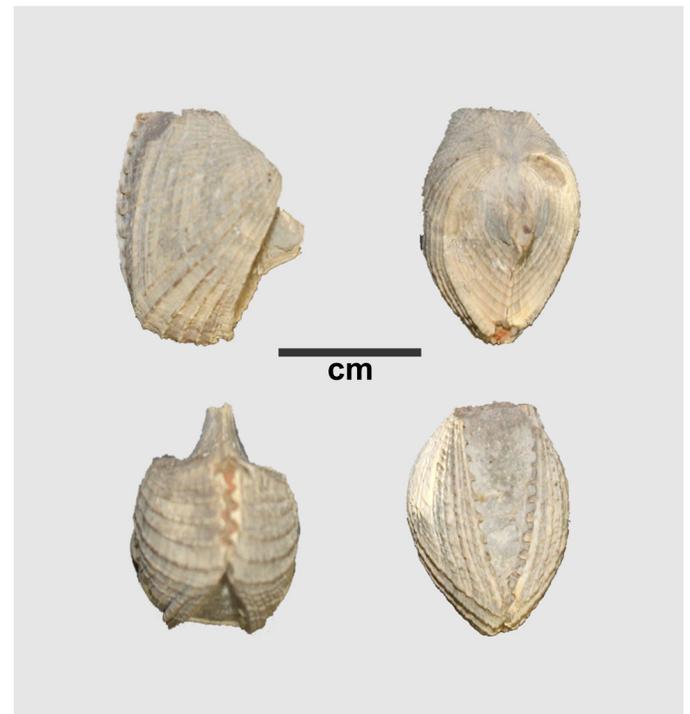


Fig. 2 Rostroconch - four views (Paul Hammerschmidt)



collect, one of my favorite, but I did not find one. Several people found Conularids. Brian found a pile of them (fig.1), along with an Glikmanius occidentals tooth cusp. Tyler found a really clean detailed brachiopod (fig. 3), after the trip he spoke with Bob Williams from the Dallas Paleontology Society (who is a better expert on the Jacksboro Finish shale fossils, at least more than some of us) who identified it as a *Rhynchopora magnicosta* brachiopod. Bob said that this was the first of the species from this site, to his knowledge, and extends the temporal range to the Virgil series, Cisco group. They are typically found in places like Mineral Wells or Palo Pinto which are a bit older. Cool find!

Later on in the day Leah and I went back to the lake side flats. She looked in the water which is a good place because sometimes you find things that others miss. I Found a Mammoth tooth in the Brazos River one time like that. After finding a few more brachiopods I looked up to see Ed, Tyler and Jean heading back. It was getting towards dusk. When we got back to the vehicles, Ed and Tyler talked fossils till it got dark. Jean, Leah and Tyler drove back to their homes while Ed and I went to Dairyland for supper. I had the fried catfish which made it the end of a great day collecting. It does not get much better than this, unless I found ten Rostroconchs. Hey, I can always dream. Everyone had a good time it was good to be collecting in the Finis shale at Jacksboro again.



Fig. 3 *Rhynchopora magnicosta* - four views (Tyler Stoviak)

Melvin Noble
Field Trim Co-chair



Fig. 4 *Goniatite ammonoid* (Gary Rylander)



Fig. 5 *Rostrochynch* - flared rostrum (Eric Jones)



Fig. 6 *Rostrochynch* - gape on ventral side (Eric Jones)

February Field Trip - Side Trip

Day 2 of the Jacksboro trip the boys and I woke up early and headed out to the Doughnut Palace for a breakfast we could take on the road. Driving through thick soupy fog we headed in the direction of Mineral Wells. Planning to hit a variety of the usual roadcuts, we decided to follow a recommendation from a fellow club member and hit a site just a bit further out of town than we typically tread. As we neared the site the burnt umber color of the rocks and deeply furrowed slopes emerged through the haze.

Out of the truck we hit it hard. Within minutes Emerson had his first crinoid cup. A few minutes later I found one, than Anders. Within the first hour we had found about 5 more and our plans of going anywhere else quickly evaporated as the fog burned off in the sunshine.

The site continued to deliver a host of other interesting finds. The diversity of fauna was very similar to Jacksboro and a bulk of the species were similar or the same as those found there - though in different frequencies. Horn corals were very prominent as their white fossilization stood out against the grey/rust background. A specific little gastropod (fig.1) with very defined surface patterns was found in abundance and was a cool treat. I managed to walk away with 3 rostrochonchs - all a bit beat up but still very cool to find as I got skunked at Jacksboro the day before, only finding bits and pieces.

My personal find of the day was a crinoid crown (fig.3) with all of the arms but no cup. The find of the day, though, goes to Emerson for the conical crinoid cup (fig. 2) he found at the base of the exposure. It bears resemblance to the *Paragassizocrinus* free floating crinoids we find at another local site, but with a basal circlet and distinct basal impression in the bottom where the stem attached. We hunted until mid afternoon and then reluctantly left this wonderful site to head home. Another great day of hunting!

Brian Bedrosian

Editor



Fig. 1 **Gastropod** in situ



Fig. 2 **Crinoid cup** - Emerson's find of the day!



Fig. 3 **Crinoid crown**



Tailings...

In The News

Fossils of a 340-Pound Giant Penguin Found in New Zealand

Paleontologists unearthed the bones of two new penguin species that lived 50 million years ago

Margaret Osborne, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), February 9th 2023

52 Million Year Old Fossils from the High Arctic Show Near-Primates were Cool with Colder Climates

Two sister species of near-primate, called “primatomorphans,” dating back about 52 million years have been identified by researchers at the University of Kansas as the oldest to have dwelled north of the Arctic Circle.

Brendan M. Lynch, [University of Kansas](#), January 25th 2023

Squatting Dinosaur Left Behind a Huge Footprint in England

An archaeologist accidentally came across the fossil that was preserved for 166 million years

Sarah Kuta, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), February 16th 2023

The First Fossil Finders in North America Were Enslaved and Indigenous People

Decades before paleontology’s formal establishment, Black and Native Americans discovered—and correctly identified—millennia-old fossils

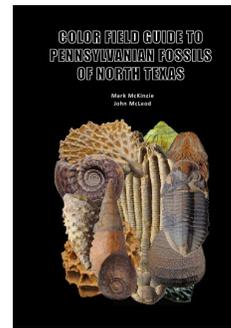
Christian Elliot, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), February 22nd 2023

2023 Field Trip Schedule

March	East Texas + Whiskey Bridge
April	Club Auction + Picnic
May	Oklahoma
June	Austin Loop 360 (Lower Brazos)
July	Johnson City
August	Witte Museum - San Antonio
September	Texoma (Moody / Evant)
October	Brady + Santa Anna
November	Brownwood
December	White Mammoth and Pot Luck

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. Please note that dates and locations are subject to change - check the monthly newsletter or come to our monthly meetings for updates.

New Publication!

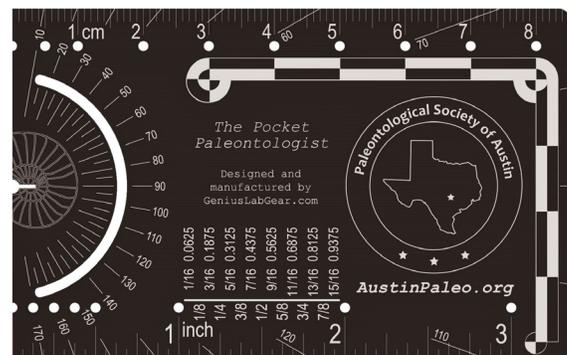
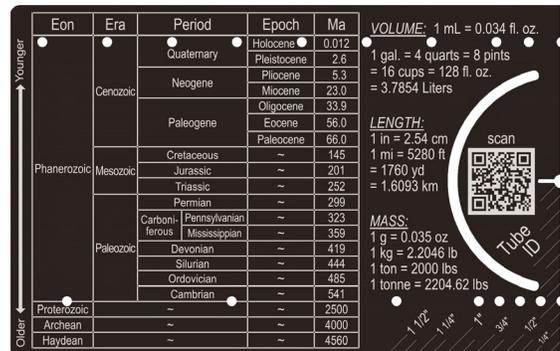


Color Field Guide to Pennsylvanian Fossils of North Texas by Mark McKinzie and John McLeod 2021

This is a spiral bound field ready version of their seminal volume available for \$22 from Lulu.com. The book includes descriptions of the exposures at Lake Bridgeport, Wilson Claypit, Jacksboro and other Texas Pennsylvanian sites frequented by PSA members with color images of specimens.

New Austin Paleo Gear!

Below are images of the new Pocket Paleontologist we are having produced and will be offered for sale. I put the order in for 100 of them to start with and they will likely be available for purchase at the May club meeting! - Eric Jones



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 flop down next to them.

10. Be safe. If someone is working an area on a slope do your 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.



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, our monthly meetings are currently held in a hybrid format, with in person gatherings at the AGMS Clubhouse which can also be attended virtually via Zoom. Please see information provided on page one of this newsletter each month. While we are not currently requiring masks at any in person gatherings, we ask that you maintain a safe distance from others when socializing. 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 Society'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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