

PALEO FOOTNOTES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

VOLUME 18 | NUMBER 04

APRIL 2023



President's Note

Spring is back!

This month is one of the odd months with no meeting and no field trip, but it is time for the annual Auction and Potluck Picnic! We will be returning to Westcave Preserve for this event on Saturday April 22nd (Earth Day!).

In addition to our event which will be from 12noon –3pm, we are also going to set up a table and have something for the Westcave guests: our usual touch table and display of typical Hill Country fossils. Westcave has been very generous in letting us use the space for a minimal donation and we (continued on page 2)

This Month's Speaker

No speaker this month!

Please come join us at the Pot Luck and Auction at Westcave Preserve!

(See information in the President's Note this page and on page 2)

APRIL 2023

No Meeting This Month

PSoA Potluck and Auction
Saturday April 22nd
12:00pm - 3:00pm
Westcave Outdoor Discovery Center
24814 Hamilton Pool Rd
Round Mountain, TX 78663
(see details this page)

No Club Field Trip This Month

May Field Trip
Ada, OK - May 20th + 21st
Plan ahead for next month!
(see page 2 for more details)

Fossil Fest 2023 Update

Date: November 4th & 5th

Theme: Prehistoric Life Underwater

Flyers

We have been providing Fossil Fest flyers at outreach events to start spreading the word early. If you would like any for future events, please let me know via email showchair@austinpaleo.org and I will bring some to the next meeting.

T-Shirts

Please indicate the size and color of t-shirts you are interested in purchasing for Fossil Fest [here](#). I hope to have final quantities and pricing by the end of May so that they will be available to purchase by the June PSoA meeting.

Heather Aziz

Vice President + Show Chair

Join us in the Quarry in our report on the FIELD TRIP page 4!



March Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the regular March meeting of the Paleontological Society of Austin from March 21, 2023

- In the absence of Erich Rose, Jamie Shelton opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. There were about 25 persons in attendance.
- Jamie introduced Doug Shore Rex Kowalski as our speaker, whose presentation was on “New and Late Pleistocene Fauna from a Cave in Uvalde County, Texas”.
- The business meeting resumed about 8:00 after a brief break.
- There was no financial report.
- Heather Aziz noted the April 7th event at the Welch Hall at UT: ‘A Dino’s Roar’ presentation at 7 pm, and PSA will be setting up a table at 5:30 pm.
- We were reminded of the annual Auction to be held at West Cave Preserve on April 22nd. Table opens at 10 am and meeting will go from 12 to about 2 or 3 pm. As usual, the meat course and drinks will be provided and attendees should bring a side, salad, vegetable or dessert.
- There will be no field trip this month as the Auction takes its place.
- Heather gave a brief Fossil Fest update.

Meeting ended about 8:30 pm.

Gary Vliet
Secretary

President’s Note

(continued from page 1)

will pay them back in kind by offering something educational for their visitors. The plan is to be there by 10am and have a table set up through the afternoon until 3pm. I plan on being there at 10 and we will need a few volunteers to get us thru the afternoon. I hope some of you will also take part. We can take turns so no one misses the entire auction. If you think you would like to be a volunteer please let me know: president@austinpaleo.org.

We do still need you all to sign up for the Auction so that we know how much BBQ to bring (PSA provides the meat) and to get an idea what sort of side dish or desert you will bring. And along with a side dish we also need you to bring some items to be donated to the auction. Great fossils, books, maps, geo related jewelry, etc. are all welcome. Hopefully something others will be keen on bidding for. So please sign-up [here](#)... sooner than later...

For directions and to learn more about Westcave visit their website: <https://www.westcave.org> See you there!

Erich Rose

PSoA President

May 2023 Field Trip:

Ada, OK

DATE: Saturday + Sunday May 20th + 21st
Ada Oklahoma - Devonian, Silurian, Ordovician

The Club’s next field trip will be to Ada, OK for some Devonian, Silurian and Ordovician collecting. We’ll meet on the East Central University Campus on the corner of E. 12th. and N. Francis Ave. near the petrified Callixylon tree (1 block over by East Main St) at 8 a.m. Saturday, May 20. This is a two-day trip and we will visit numerous sites. Facilities will be scarce, so be prepared. Bring at least a gallon of water a day for each person, food, hats, long-sleeve shirts, sunblock, kneepads, etc. Bug spray is also recommended for chiggers and ticks. Also watch out for snakes. Some of the locations will require a short hike. Depending on the site, you may need a hammer and chisel. Bring lots of containers, zipper bags, soda flats, newspaper, etc. and something to label your finds. Ada is a college town with a number of motels and restaurants.

Please note that the Sunday site will have limitations on the number of folks who are able to enter so please call or text Jamie (512) 214-2589 and let her know if you plan to attend. These are unfortunately not kid friendly environments...so we are going to request no kids under 12 attend. This is a very exciting trip but also a long drive - so we want to make sure you are aware of the opportunities before you make plans and leave Austin.

Jamie Shelton
Field Trip Co-Chair



March Field Trip Report: East Texas

Ed and I left out early Friday for the beautiful piney woods in east Texas to scout out new collecting spots, but ran into heavy rain that evening as we got into the San Augustine area. As luck would have it Mike called us and said that we had permission to go into his land. We went back to Nacogdoches to look at the glauconite outcrop behind the O'Reilly's where we were going to meet in the morning. There's still tons of sand dollars in the hard rock, but we decided to wait till morning when we met everyone. All these sites in east Texas are Weches formation, Mid-Claiborne group, Eocene marine.

At 8:00 Saturday morning Ed Elliott, Gary and Cathy Rylander, Eric Jones, Rose Farmer, Jean and Mike Higgins, William Jo, Diane Bedrosain, Brain Bedrosian and me, Melvin, met at the O'Reilly's in Nacogdoches. We showed the back wall that had tons of sand dollars to some club members but every one was ready to go collecting so we took off for Mike's private land outside of San Augustine. When we got there we started collecting - it was a beautiful sunny spring day, with blue skies and the musical bird song of white-eyed vireos, bluebirds and cardinals, with pileated woodpeckers keeping the beat.

Immediately we started finding *Protoscutella Mississippiensis* sand dollars (fig. 1). Every one found at least one good specimen, but all most every one found more than one. I showed everyone how to dig away from them when extracting them from the ground. The further away you get, the better and less likely to crack or break them up. In most

Fig. 1 *Protoscutella Mississippiensis* (Brian Bedrosian)



Fig. 2 *Membraniporidra* sp. (Jean Higgins)



Fig. 3 gastropod (Gary Rylander)



cases it's best to leave them in the matrix. Later on we went to the little hilltop to find *Fibularia texana* econoids, often nick named bbs because of their size and shape (fig. 7). The are just about 6 mm across but they are really cool if you can find one that has the five star shape ambulacra showing up. Several people also found *Callianassa* sp. shrimp claw pieces. On the other side of the lake Gary found some sharks teeth and some cool gastropods (fig. 3). Gene Higgins found a nice piece of *Membraniporida* sp. coral (fig. 2). Nice find. Eric Jones found a shark or fish vertebrae (fig. 5) and Gary found a few *Bellosaepia* squid beaks (fig. 6). Rose found a nice *Pinna* sp. bivalve (fig. 4).

After a while we left to go to a road cut and collect some more Mississippinensis sand dollars. There was a lot of dirt covering the exposure but there was enough left for people to find some more and we cleaned a little bit of it off. After an hour or so we left for the gauconite quarry. When we got there the old spoil pile that was once so good was almost gone but there where little mounds left and they had been cleared of a decades worth of growth, so we went up them to do a little

looking around. Diane found a ray tooth. Gary found a nice *Maretia Argutis* irregular echinoid (fig.10). These are a little rare and not often found, possibly maybe one or two each trip in a welcome addition to any collection. We left there to go down into the quarry proper. There were a few of the old mounds left in the bottom but everything has been moved around. Most people spent a lot of time going through the old stuff left and found some nice gastropods, bivalves oysters and scallops. Cathy Rylander found a crab claw. Gary, Rose, and Ed found some nice large *Flabellum* corals (fig. 8). Eric Jones spent some time driving around exploring and found a few fossils in the back of the Quarry. Unfortunately no one found the elusive *Schizater* sp. or *Eupatagus texanus* sea biscuit echinoids like Mike Smith did one year but there is always hope for tomorrow. Every thing in east Texas is starting to get overgrown and played out, but I think we had a successful trip because everybody came away with something nice.

Melvin Noble
Field Trip Co-chair



Fig. 4 *Pinna* - mollusk (Rose F.)



Fig. 5 vertebra (Eric J.)



Fig. 6 squid + shark (Gary R.)



Fig. 7 *Fibularia texana* (Brian B.)



Fig. 8 *Flabellum cuneiforme* (Rose F.)



Fig. 9 Shark Tooth (Brian B.)



Fig. 10 *Maretia Argutis* - irregular echinoid (Gary R.)



Fig. 1 my little bumpy crab carapace

March Field Trip - Side Trip

Day 2 of the east Texas trip my mom and I woke up and headed out for breakfast. After a very very early morning the previous day, we leisurely made our way back to O'Reilly's to meet up with Ed and Melvin to hit one of the "lost" spots. Before we left a white-eyed vireo turned up near the parking lot and the binoculars came out. It flitted about in the trees overhead until flying out of site - a sign for us to get on with the hunt!

We headed to the roadcut that was once a stop for the club and now little more than a dirt outcrop surrounded by ever advancing local flora. This site was known for squid beaks (fig.3), a plethora of scallops (fig. 2) - at least three distinct species - and a selection of similar gastropods found in other Eocene deposits. Within a few minutes Ed found the seam chock full of scallops - as many as you could grab, all 1/2"-3/4" in size and thin as anything. I found a trio of squid beaks - one very nice and two pretty worn - still very cool finds.

After an hour or so, we headed off to a site we were given permission to access by a friend's parents. It was a small site but offered a chance to find some different eocene species than at the club sites. After an hour so so of crawling along the ground came my find of the day - a small bumpy crab carapace (fig. 1) - my first ever and so very cool! A great treat after a wonderful trip to the piney woods!

Brian Bedrosian
Editor



Fig. 2 Scallop



Fig. 3 *Belosaepia* sp.



Tailings...

In The News

Amateur Fossil Hunter Discovers New Species of Giant Petrel in New Zealand

The now-extinct birds, which lived roughly three million years ago, likely used their hooked bills to feast on seal carcasses

Sarah Kuta, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), February 27th 2023

A Fossil Fruit From California Shows Ancestors Of Coffee And Potatoes Survived Cataclysm That Killed The Dinosaurs

The discovery of an 80-million-year-old fossil plant pushes back the known origins of lamiiids to the Cretaceous, extending the record of nearly 40,000 species of flowering plants including modern-day staple crops like coffee, tomatoes, potatoes and mint.

Brendan Lynch, [University of Kansas News](#), February 7th 2023

Anyone can discover a fossil on this beach—if you wait out the tides

In New Brunswick, the world's highest tides reveal fantastic fossils, from giant dragonflies to dinosaur footprints.

Robin Catalano, [National Geographic](#), February 27th 2023

Scientists Discover Oldest Known Fossils of Pollen-Carrying Insects

It's unclear whether the creatures were pollinating prehistoric plants or just getting a snack

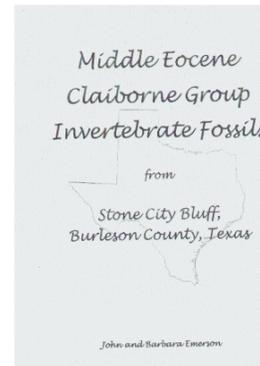
Will Sullivan, [Smithsonian Magazine](#), March 6th 2023

2023 Field Trip Schedule

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.

Whiskey Bridge / Eocene Resources



Middle Eocene Claiborne Group Invertebrate Fossils from Stone City Bluff, Burleson County Texas

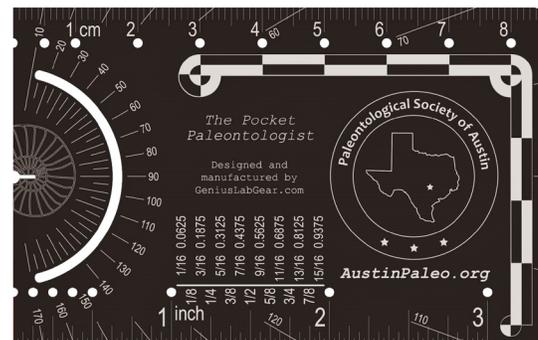
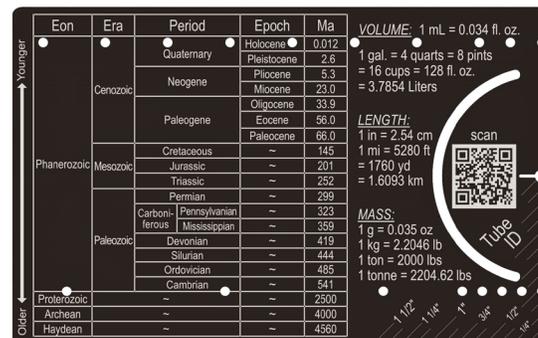
by John and Barbara Emerson. This self published volume catalogs over 200 species known to come from this exposure. All specimens are described in detail and shown in black and white photographs. It is available from the [Houston Gem and Mineral Society](#) website for \$20 (paperback copy) or \$10 (digital download).

Stone City Member, Middle Eocene, Clairborne Group, Stone City Bluff, Burleson Co., Texas Main Glauconite Bed (MGB) Study Guide

by James E. Flis and Christopher J. Flis (2015 Rights Reserved v. 1.1) This study guide available on the [Houston Geological Society](#) website is great primer on the exposure and provides a faunal menu with full color photographs.

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**

2021 Officers

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