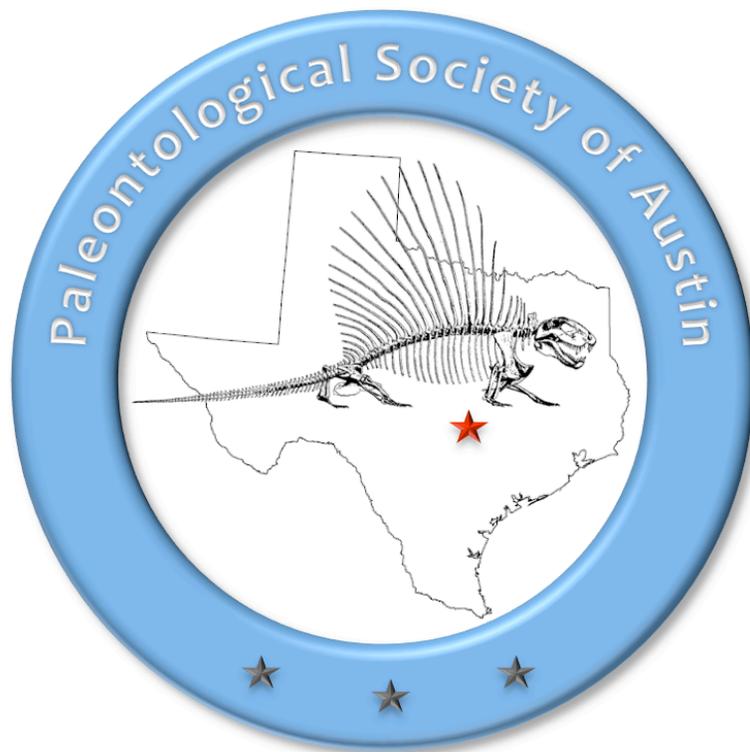


Paleo Footnotes

Newsletter of the
Paleontological Society of Austin

Austin and Central Texas



Volume 6, Number 11
November 2011

President's Note

Well, we've had two very successful events since our last meeting: Gem Capers here in Austin and Fossilmania up in Glen Rose...if you missed either, you missed a lot of fun! I'd like to say a very special 'Thank-you' to everyone who volunteered to come out and work at the shows...your effort, energy, and enthusiasm are greatly appreciated.

We will be voting on our 2012 officers this month, so make sure you come to the meeting and make your voice heard. Until then...

Happy hunting,

Melody

Next Meeting Tuesday November 15, 2011

**7:00 p.m. at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building
6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX**

Dinosaurs and Birds

By Dr. Julia Clarke

Dr. Julia Clarke is a paleontologist in the Department of Geological Sciences, Jackson School of Geosciences, The University of Texas – Austin, as well as research associate with the American Museum of Natural History. Clarke was lead author of an article in the September 2010 issue of the journal *Science*. The article is about her research team's discovery of the first fossilized penguin species found with evidence of feathers. Her research interests include vertebrate paleontology and evolution of morphology, as well as avian anatomy and evolution.

Professor Clarke has brought the study of dinosaurs to life and explores questions of where birds fit in the paleontological record. Her recent research and discoveries have enabled scientists to paint a vibrant picture of what these animals looked like, to compare them with living ancestors, and to explain how everything you knew about dinosaurs may be wrong.

November Field Trip, TBD Saturday November 19th, 2011

As of the printing of this newsletter the trip to the quarry in Clifton has not been confirmed.

The field trip will be determined by/or at the November meeting.

Once the field trip is determined, we will send out e-mail notices.

If you are a member who *does not receive e-mails*, and you wish to attend the field trip,

Contact: Ed Elliot, 512-657-7581, for details.

VOLUNTEER AT FOSSIL FEST

That's right PSA members! It's time to gear up for FOSSIL FEST! Volunteer to work the Admissions, Kitchen, Wheel of Fossils, Dig Pit or Microscope table. We need all hands on deck! Dust off all those fossils you've collected throughout the past year and show them off in a display case at Fossil Fest. We want to see your fossils!

WHEN?

Friday, Dec. 2, 2011: Display Case and Show Set-up, 12noon 'til ?

Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011: Fossil Fest Day 1, 9am to 5pm

Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011: Fossil Fest Day 2, 9am to 5pm

5pm til ? - Display Case and Show Tear Down

WHERE?

Old Settler's Park, Round Rock, Hwy 79, 3.3 miles east of IH 35, next to the Dell Diamond

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

I'm glad you asked! The Sign-Up Sheet is accessible 24/7 ONLINE!!

- 1) Please visit the web based sign-up page at: <http://www.mysignup.com/fossilfest>
- 2) The link above will direct you to a page titled **Fossil Fest 2011**. There you will see the message, "This signup is private. You will need the passcode to continue. Please enter the passcode:" followed by a white text box. Type the word **paleo** in the text box in all lowercase letters and then click the "Enter Passcode" button. You will now be directed to a page containing the sign-up, information about the show and instructions on how to sign-up.
- 3) Review the Volunteer Schedule. You may volunteer by clicking on any slot showing I'LL DO IT! (You will be asked to provide your name, email and home/cell phone number. Also, you may provide an optional UNDO code in the event you need to change your volunteer date/time. Write your code down!!)
- 4) Click on the CONFIRM button to select your volunteer time slot and enter the passcode again. (The passcode is the word **paleo** in all lowercase letters)
- 5) You're done!

FYI - ONLY your name will appear on the website. E-mail and home/cell phone number is only visible to the PSoA Volunteer Scheduler for this event.

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING! THIS EVENT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOUR HELP!!!

FOSSILS NEEDED

Fossil Fest is just around the corner!! Time to clear out your house and garage of all the fossils you can stand to part with! PSoA will gladly take your purged material for use in the **DIG PIT** and **SPINNING WHEEL**. Here's what we are currently looking for:

DIG PIT

- **VERY SMALL and SMALL, RECOGNIZABLE FOSSILS** to be "hidden" in sand (very small) and gravel (small) for kids to "dig" up at Fossil Fest. These just need to be clean and recognizable as a fossil. We need LOTS and LOTS of these because the kiddos will do this activity over and over and over... So, please bring all that you can!

SPINNING WHEEL

- **EVERYTHING ELSE** that is **CLEAN** and a **NICE SPECIMEN** that can be carried out. Just think about what you would want to win if you paid to take a spin on the Wheel of Fossils.

FOSSILS MAY BE DROPPED OFF AT ANY UPCOMING PSoA MEETING / EVENT

- Tuesday, November 15 at 7pm - PSoA Meeting at AGMS Facility
- Saturday, November 19 - Clifton Quarry Field Trip
- Friday, December 2 from 12noon to 9pm- Fossil Fest Set-up at Old Settler's Park

If you are unable to attend an upcoming meeting and you have fossil donations, please feel free to contact me to make alternate arrangements.

Suzanne Galligher - email: suzanbg@gmail.com or phone: (512) 751-1351

THANK YOU! MERCI! DANKE! GRACIAS!



Monthly Minutes, October

Meeting Minutes 10/18/2011

Mike Smith presided over this meeting.

Mike called the meeting to order and introduced guests.

Marilyn Austin introduced our guest speaker, Mark Connolly. His presentation was about Chaetetes. Over time they have been placed in three different phylum corals, sponges and bryozoa. They have been called Pencil lead coral or hair coral. As late as 1981 they were considered corals. Recently they have been considered sponges, Sclerosponges and currently are classified as demosponges.

The specimens Mark found in El Paso County were found in ooid sand bars. These sand bars are indicative of very shallow water. One indicator of the growth in shallow water was the fact that they would often grow to a common horizon (the water surface) then flare out laterally.

It is also believed that they lived in higher energy environments with lots of water movement, strong currents. Evidence of this is that the growth of chaetetes was not symmetrical. It is believed that they grew towards the currents.

Mark showed slides of several locations (Texas, Kansas, Arizona) and varieties of chaetetes.

A break was taken.

It was decided that the minutes from the last meeting (which were not received in time for the newsletter) would be placed in the next newsletter and be brought up for approval in the next meeting.

A short report was given of club Fossil Day participation at Texas Memorial Museum

The UT Mass Inventory continues and there is still need of volunteers. If you are interested ping Mike Smith and he will give you the particulars.

Erich Rose asked for volunteers (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) for the Gem Capers show at the Palmer Event Center. You will get free admission however

you will be responsible for your own parking.

If there are no volunteers to coordinate the clubs participation, this may be the last year for Fossil Mania.

Fossil Fest will be the first weekend in December. Reserve the weekend.

A trip report was given.

We need fossils for Fossil Fest (Wheel, Dig Pit etc...). if you can donate get them to Suzanne.

Eric mentioned that there will be a Scholarship Committee report at the next meeting.

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers and Board members (Actual nominations will be next meeting)

- Erich Rose – President & Editor
- Suzanne Galligher – VP & Show Chair
- Dennis Stock – Secretary
- Gary Rylander – Treasurer
- Ed Elliott – Field Trip Chair
- Fredric Falk – Board Member at Large
- Kevin Bills – Board Member at Large

The following individuals have agreed to continue as chairs next year.

- Marilyn Austin – Presentation Chair
- Mike Smith – Membership & Web Chair
- Cathy Rylander – Hospitality Chair
- David Lindberg – Audio/Visual Chair

There was a request for other nominations. None received.

Officers will be selected in November.

A payment needs to be made to the Storage Locker.

Door prizes were awarded.

Meeting was adjourned.

Monthly Minutes, September

Meeting Minutes: September 20th, 2011

The meeting was brought to order at 7:00pm.

Marilyn Austin introduced the speaker.

A presentation "Central Texas in the Ice Age – Friesenhan Cave Tells Its Story" was given by Dr. Laurence Meissner of Concordia University.

Texas is loaded with fossils of large herbivores dating from the Pleistocene. There is a lot of bone material, not a lot of which is mineralized.

The environmental features of Texas during the Pleistocene were very different from today. The weather was colder and wetter. The vegetation was comprised of mostly tall prairie grass with scattered hardwood forests. There were lots of rodents and other small mammals, fewer reptiles and of course the mega fauna.

This was a very visual presentation with Dr. Meissner showing many slides of the fossils found at the Friesenhan cave located close to San Antonio. Among the fossils recovered from this site were:

Mammoth, Scimitar Cats, Homo Therium Serum, Dire Wolf, Short Face Bear American Lion, Giant Ground Sloth, Pig, Deer, Bison, Tapir, American Camel

Dr Meissner stated, "Besides the La Brea Tar Pits in California, it is believed that no site in the United States has yielded a greater variety of significant Pleistocene vertebrate fossils."

It is believed this cave served as a den for many generations of carnivores. This would explain why there was such a variety and volume of fossils in one site.

Note: More information about the cave can be found on Concordia Universities website at: http://www.concordia.edu/page.cfm?page_ID=2274

A break was taken.

Business:

Minutes from prior meeting were approved.

Treasures report given:
Checking - \$4,899.88
Savings - \$20,045.76
Total - \$24,945.64

Treasures report approved.

Committee Reports:

Mass inventories continue and Dr. Ann Molineux would welcome volunteers!

National Fossil Day is October 13th 2011. We are looking for volunteers for to help out at the Texas Memorial Museum. Erich Rose will be there all afternoon. Parking will be validated for volunteers. Many others volunteered to help out.

October 22-23 is the AGMS Show. Kelcy Suzanne and Linda are organizing our clubs participation. Suzanne will setup an online signup, which she will send to Mike so he can send info to club members.

Fossil Mania in Glen Rose. All tables are sold. This will be Frank and Joan's last year working on this show. They have been doing this for 29 years!!! For many of these years Jammie and Rochelle have helped on this. We will need a volunteer(s) to take over these responsibilities if the club wants to continue participation.

Fossil Fest, We need Fossil Wheel fossil donations. We have Fossil Fest and Fossil Mania "Tear Pad" announcements. If you can distribute please pick one up.

Other Business:

The field trip will be to TXI Quarry. We leave from the TXI parking lot at 8:00am, please do not be late.

The nominating committee has been formed. It will be headed by Mike Smith, helped by Jammie Young.

Door prizes awarded.

Meeting adjourned.

October Field Trip Report

It was an exceptionally lovely morning as I drove into Eisenhower State Park to meet this day's participants. We had 19 members and guests: Kevin Bills, Ron and Janet Root, Frederick and Melinda Falk, Dennis and Morgan Stock, Beki Pool, Joe Watkins, Cathy and Gary Rylander, Bob McDonald, Shawna Graves, Abram Millar, Mike Smith, Terry and Hunter Collins, and Melvin Noble. As we hadn't been able to hunt here for several years due to high water and once due to conflict with the Dallas Paleo. Club.....we were all excited about the possibilities to come.



Our first stop has always been one of my favorites, both for its beauty and because of the lovely Weno/ Pawpaw Formation fossils that can be found. As with all sites, you don't always find them.....but when you do, it makes the trip. Being on a shoreline, we were scattered and I didn't see a lot of what was found. I was shown quite a few nice scallops, mostly *Neithea texana*. Quite a few oyster slabs, mostly with *Rastellum carinatum* and *Texigryphaea washitaensis*. A favorite was the search for the plates of the large echinoid *Phyllacanthus hemigranosus*. Gary found a large band that crossed horizontally (6-8 plates?) while Melinda found most of an ambulacrum section. We all wanted the whole thing. The small oyster *Peilinia quadriplicata* was found all through the gravels. Further up the lake, the Duck Creek Formation takes over the shoreline and a lot of ammonites and large echinoids were found. I ran into Gary, and he said that he'd hunted the red crystalline material and had managed to chop out two partials and one complete ammonite with nacre still attached. My main find was spotting and chopping out a fairly nice *Kirklandia texana*, a jellyfish imprint.

Mike had gone to a marina close by and wanted to go back, so he led us to some more Duck Creek shoreline. A few more ammonites were found. I saw Shawna pick up a nice one from the waterline. From here we went on to Lowe's Highport. Lowe's was disappointing. The part of the shore, which had been out of water for a while, was picked over and the newly exposed shore

was covered with algae – which made it hard to see anything except large, well-shaped things. We picked up a good number of ammonites (mostly inner whorls) and some beat up *Holaster simplex* echinoids. There were a good number of the large *Amphidonte walkeri* present, mostly single valve and the occasional scallop. Not the great collecting we've grown used to in the past. We hunted almost until dark and then headed out for Wendy's. Getting together for dinner in Oklahoma has long been a tradition and one I really enjoy.



On Sunday, we met again and went close to the dam. We hadn't been there for many years due to the amount of walking we have to do. With a lot of new members who hadn't had a chance to chop out a large *Eopachydiscus marcianus* ammonite this would give them a chance. Not many tried. Most didn't make it around to where the ammonites are present. I believe that most stopped near the boat ramps to look for shark teeth and the micro ammonites. When we returned to the vehicles, the few of us left tried to go to Lake Randell. For the first time that I've seen, it was closed. I have no idea why.

While I believe that it was a good trip, it wasn't what it has been in the past. As the drought continues, we may see more of our sites produce less. We need the rain for fossils just as we do for everything else. Shorelines that stay high and dry for extended times will get picked over. I hope that everyone had as good a time as I did. See you next time.



Places to be, Things to do...

DALLAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY, 54th Annual Show, "The Crystal Craze"
Saturday, November 19th 10am-6pm, Sunday, November 20th 10am-5pm
Rodeo Center Exhibit Hall, 1800 Rodeo Drive, Mesquite, Texas 75149
(I-635 @ Military Parkway, Exit 4)

Adults: \$8.00, 12 & under: \$3.00, 3 & under: FREE!
Family of 4 or more: \$20.00, Scouts & Leaders in uniform FREE!

Rocks/Mineral Specimens, Polished/Faceted Gems, Fossils, Lapidary Equipment, Jewelry Supplies, Games & Demonstrations, Fluorescent Display, Prizes & Silent Auction, Rock "Food" Table, Gem Identification, Gem and Mineral Identification
www.DallasGemAndMineral.org

THE CLEAR LAKE GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, 36th Annual Show, Feb. 25 and 26, 2012 (Friday and Saturday), Location: Pasadena Convention Center, 7902 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, TX, Hours: Sat., 2/25, 10 to 6pm, Sun., 2/26, 10-5 pm.

Donations: Adults \$5, Kids under 12 free, students 6th to 12th grades \$1., boy and girl scouts in uniform free. Lots of free parking. There are 10 spots for RV parking but electric/water hookups cost \$10/night. For more information see the club's web site at www.clgms.org

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 the third Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building, 6719 Burnet lane, Austin, TX. The public is cordially invited to attend.

Annual Dues: \$15/individual, \$20/family and \$10/associate (non-voting, receiving newsletter) Send to: Treasurer, Paleontological Society of Austin, PO Box 90791, Austin, TX 78749-0791

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Web master: Michael Smith: msmith17@austin.rr.com

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DATED MATERIAL – MEETING NOTICE

FIRST CLASS MAIL