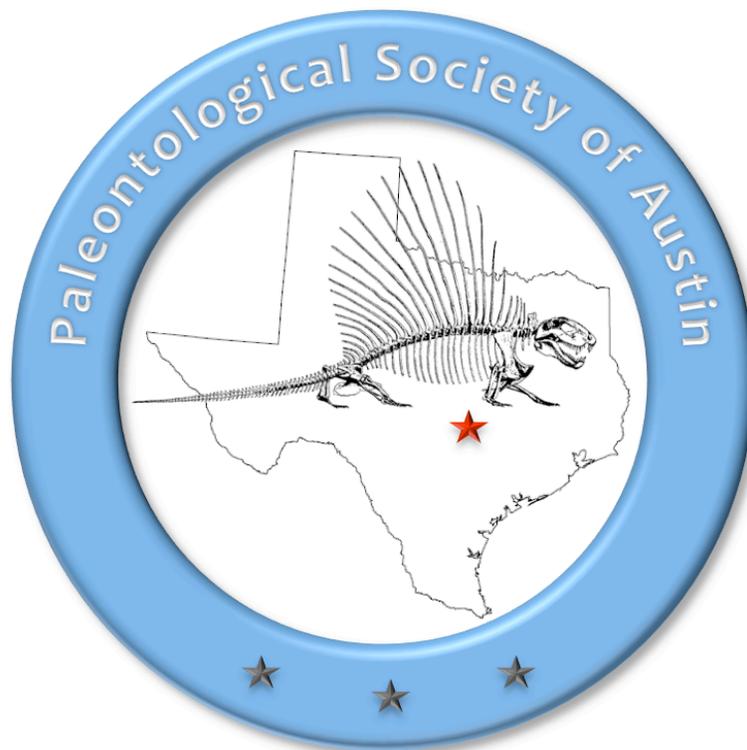


# Paleo Footnotes

Newsletter of the  
Paleontological Society of Austin

Austin and Central Texas



Volume 7, Number 5  
May 2012

## President's Note

Rain, rain, rain. We like rain, or at least I do. April showers bring May fossils (sorry that was bad...) But seriously the rains have been pretty good for us collectors. It's a good day when you go to the local road cut that is well known and collected by many people and there are no footprints! Last year about this time it was already getting hot and dry. In August I was still looking at the prints I made in May. Let's hope for fresh prints all summer long.

In the last few weeks I have been hitting some of my favorite local Walnut Formation sites, and with good results, including one tiny, but "new-to-me" echinoid, a great crab claw and various other "keepers". We are fortunate here in Central Texas to have some excellent collecting right on our doorstep. I know we almost never do local field trips but if there are any new (or old) members who want to join up for a weekend morning of collecting close to home I would be happy to lead the way.

I haven't heard the final tally and balance from the auction but it looked like we did ok this year. We will know more at the next meeting. The food was good, a good turnout and I think everyone who attended had fun. Thanks once again to Westcave Preserve for making the facility available to us, and special thanks to Gary, Cathy, Suzzanne, Mike and David for pitching in the extra bit needed to pull things together.

Our May field trip will be to the classic "Whiskey Bridge" site on the Brazos River. It's an easy drive at just under two hours and not hard to find. For our new members this is a place you are guaranteed to find great and plentiful fossils. The huge variety of snails, clams, corals and other "neat things" will keep you quite busy most of the day. It's also *very* easy collecting. See the trip description for details.

See you at the next meeting.

-- Erich



Typical Whiskey Bridge fossils.  
Scale: smallest squares are quarter inch.

## Next Meeting Tuesday May 15, 2012

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

### Ice Age to Icon: The History of the Armadillo in Texas

Dr. Pam Owen

*Armadillos are fascinating mammals with a rich history here in Texas. Come learn about extant species and Pleistocene relatives, including the “beautiful” armadillo, pampatheres and glyptodonts. We’ll discuss the fossil and historical record and learn how the nine-banded armadillo became an icon and the State Small Mammal of Texas.*

#### **BRIEF BIO**

Pamela R. Owen, Ph.D.  
Senior Paleontology Educator  
Texas Natural Science Center  
The University of Texas at Austin

Dr. Pamela R. Owen is Senior Paleontology Educator with the Texas Natural Science Center (TNSC), The University of Texas at Austin. She is a vertebrate paleontologist and mammalogist with a research focus on the evolution of the Carnivora. Dr. Owen is a native Californian who has been from an early age, interested in natural history. Her formal education includes a B.A. and M.S. in Biology from California State University, Long Beach. Dr. Owen conducted her master’s thesis research on saber-toothed cats, American lions, coyotes and dire wolves at the Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries (the infamous “La Brea Tar Pits”) in Los Angeles, CA. In May 2000, Dr. Owen was awarded a Ph.D. in Geological Sciences from The University of Texas at Austin. Her dissertation focused on the evolution of American badgers and included a detailed description of a new fossil species, *Chamitataxus avitus*.

Throughout her career, Dr. Owen has been sharing her knowledge of vertebrate anatomy and evolution. She has taught laboratory sections in biology, geology, and paleontology, and developed a new course in mammalogy at The University of Texas at Austin. More recently, Dr. Owen has been an invited speaker for several Continuing Education and Community Outreach programs at UT. Dr. Owen currently serves as an Associate Editor for *Mammalian Species*, a publication of the American Society of Mammalogists. She has provided training in mammalogy for the Capital Area Master Naturalists for the past three years and has been a guest presenter at meetings of local organizations including the Austin Regional Group of the Sierra Club, Friends of the Fredericksburg Nature Center, Llano Uplift Archeological Society, and the Paleontological Society of Austin. Prior to her appointment as the Senior Paleontology Educator in 2003, Dr. Owen was the Collections Manager for the Vertebrate Paleontology Laboratory of the TNSC. Not only did she fulfill the standard collections management duties, she also developed and implemented collection-based teaching and outreach programs. Dr. Owen continues that aspect of her work today as a participant in docent training and several education programs at the Texas Memorial Museum, notably *Evolution Professional Development*, *Museum Express*, *Identification Day*, and *Family Fossil Fun Day*. She is also the manager and staff supervisor for the TMM *Paleo Lab*.

## May Field Trip

# Whiskey Bridge

### Stone City Bluff, Middle Eocene Marine Fossils

**Meet at 8AM on the northwest side of the TX Highway 21 bridge over the Brazos River, Burleson County east of Caldwell, TX.**

Known for excellent fossils since the mid 1800's, this site continues to produce a wide variety of well-preserved marine fossils. More than 220 species of molluscs, corals, bryozoa, worms, plus invertebrates in the form of shark, ray and bony fish teeth can be found. The collecting is easy.

All you need is a small tool to slowly dig into the soft matrix. A small pointed trowel, screwdriver, butter knife, etc. all work well. There is some hard matrix to sample, so a rock hammer can be handy, but is not necessary. More than anything you will want to bring along PLENTY of small containers such as plastic divider boxes, film cans, ziplocks, etc. The fossils are small and delicate so tissue paper for packing is a must. A magnifying lens, tweezers, small brush and dental pick would be useful as well.

Typically we start in the sun and end in the shade. It can get hot and humid along the riverbank. It is a soft matrix and can be quite muddy. Boots are better than sneakers. You will be sitting, kneeling or crawling in the dirt so maybe a change of clothes for the end of the day. Poison Ivy grows everywhere! Gonna be bugs too. Prepare.

We will be halfway between Caldwell and Bryan so food and facilities are less than 15 minutes in either direction on 21. But pack a lunch and lots of water and make a full day of it.

#### **Directions:**

(travel time just under 2 hours)

From Austin take either US-290 or TX-71 east.

Turn left onto TX-21 heading north toward Caldwell.

Past Caldwell continue on TX-21 another 11 miles.

Just after FM-50 (on right) & Co Rd-221 (on left) you will see the rusty railroad bridge.

**SLOW DOWN** and prepare to cross the highway and onto a small pull off on 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.)*

Park along the small road/grass above the river. **DO NOT PARK** near the railroad equipment!

We will be collecting along the west bank of the river near the bridges. If you get there late just walk down to the river. We will be right there.

## April 2012 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order.

The Houston Fine Mineral Show was announced. It will be held April 27th thru 29<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Ann Molineux has changed how the inventory at the Memorial Museum is being done. It is more fun! Volunteer and find out for yourself.

**Business:**

Prior minutes were approved.

**Treasurers Report:**

Was not announced in the meeting:

Checking \$5,415.30

Savings \$17,902.88

Total \$23,318.18

Our next field trip will be to Whiskey Bridge.

Dino Days will be held May 12<sup>th</sup> at Champion Par in Cedar Park. The event will start at 9:00am.

Meeting was adjourned and pot luck began! The auction followed.

FYI

# **PINE COUNTRY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY and SCFMS\* Regional Show & Convention**

**August 25th & 26th, 2012  
Jasper, Texas**

\*South Central Federation of Mineralogical Societies

The annual show and meeting is being held in Jasper, Texas this August.

This is the regional umbrella group we belong to and for those who are as much an all-around rock hound as you are a fossil collector the show and convention might be a great way to spend a summer weekend.

If you would like more info contact Erich Rose <[president@austinpaleo.org](mailto:president@austinpaleo.org)> and I will send you the package of information.

Check out the show flyer for an overview.

**All  
Roads  
Lead to  
Jasper  
Texas**

**JEWEL  
OF  
THE  
FOREST**



**Site  
of  
SCFMS  
Annual  
Meeting  
and**

**PCGMS  
18th  
Annual  
Show**

**August 25-26 2012**

**Show Hours - Saturday 9 to 5 and Sunday 10 to 5  
The Event Center, 6258 Highway 190, 5 miles West of Jasper**

The South Central Federation of Mineral Societies Annual Meeting Hosted by PCGMS

**Editor's & Web Master's Breakfast - Saturday 8:30 A.M.**

**SCFMS Annual Business Meeting - Saturday 2:00 P. M.**

**Awards Dinner - Saturday 6:00 P. M.**

**All SCFMS meetings to be held at First National Bank Community Room**

**Rolling Rock Club Meeting  
Sunday 9:00 A.M.**

**Field Trip - Thursday August 23rd  
Collecting Petrified Wood**

The Field Trip will be open to members of any Rock Club affiliated with the SCFMS and will require pre-registration. The number of participants will be limited. Contact Paul James, (409) 429-7444 or Fred Brown, (936) 661-1024, Field Trip Chairmen for information.

**Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society, P O Box 2513, Jasper, Texas  
[www.pinecountrygms.org](http://www.pinecountrygms.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. See web site for April & December dates.

Annual Dues: \$18/individual, \$24/family and \$12/associate (non-voting, receiving newsletter) Send to: Treasurer, Paleontological Society of Austin, PO Box 90791, Austin, TX 78749-0791

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The Paleontological Society of Austin is a member of and affiliated with:

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**PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN**

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DATED MATERIAL – MEETING NOTICE

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**