



Paleo Footnotes

Volume 15, Number 1

January 2020

President's Note

Erich Rose

PSOA President

Welcome to a new year and a new decade. 2020, a nice round number. Hopefully auspicious in some form or another. We had a well-attended board meeting earlier in the month and talked about budgets, scholarships, field trips, etc. The coming year should be a good one.

One issue we discussed was the position of field trip chair. Ed Elliott has expressed a need for some well-deserved relief. As of now the plan is to back him up as best we can. Part of that discussion was also finding new sites to collect. So this month Emelia and I will be leading the trip to the Brownwood area and Wilson's Clay Pit.

One question I have regards the desire to have a few more meetings themed around the actual art of fossil collecting. Two years ago I did a series of pre-meeting presentations called Fossil Collecting 101. Although it is impossible for me now to do these at an early hour I could still do them in place of an academic speaker. So please let me know what you think about it. Talk to me at the next meeting or send me an email.

We will go over what was planned at the board meeting, review a tentative calendar for the year and share the proposed list of field trips.

See you there, Erich

Next Meeting

Tuesday, January 21 – 7 p.m.

Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane Austin, Texas

Next Field Trip

Saturday January 25 – 8 a.m.

Brownwood – Meet in Early, Texas

See directions in upcoming field trip report.

Upcoming Meeting Program

Paul Hammerschmidt

Programs Chair

'Near the End of the Ice Age: The Macy Fork local fauna and Late Pleistocene Community Composition on the Southern High Plains of Texas' - **John A. Moretti**

Speaker Bio: I am a first year Ph.D. student in the Jackson School of Geosciences at the University of Texas, Austin, in Chris Bell's lab. My research focuses on faunal change throughout the Quaternary (so past ~3 million years). I am interested in documenting the diversity and geographic distribution of vertebrates in the Great Plains and western North America in order to characterize episodes of faunal change and understand their causes and consequences. For my MS, I worked under Dr. Eileen Johnson to describe a new late Pleistocene local fauna from Garza County, Texas.

Synopsis: I will discuss the results of my Master's thesis and will describe the late Pleistocene Macy Fork local fauna. Intensive, interdisciplinary investigations of two late Pleistocene depositional units on the Southern High Plains of Texas have produced large samples of vertebrate skeletal remains. These samples, spanning in time from ~11,550 – 11,000 years ago, provide evidence of the regional animal community from the end of the 'Ice Ages' (Pleistocene). Skeletal remains accumulated during the late Pleistocene through a combination of the behavior of flowing water and predators. Taxonomic analysis of a sample of these faunal remains assigns 1,628 individual specimens to 63 vertebrate taxa. This sample, termed the Macy Fork local fauna, contains members of all vertebrate classes and a range of body sizes. Present are Pleistocene megafauna such as dire wolves, extinct camels, and the American lion as well as a diverse array of small creatures. In total, the Macy Fork local fauna from Macy Locality 100 provides a diverse and detailed record of the vertebrate community from the Southern High Plains during the final centuries of the Pleistocene.

December Meeting Minutes

Lisa Izzi

PSoA Secretary

PSoA White Mammoth Holiday Party

Election of Club Officers

Upcoming Field Trip

Ed Elliott

PSoA Field Trip Chair

We will be meeting at the Heartland Mall in Early at 8:00 Saturday morning. Early (essentially part of Brownwood) is north of Austin on Highway 183 about 2 ½ hours from central Austin. As you approach Brownwood, 183 makes a left turn at a light. The mall will be about a mile ahead on your right. Look for a group of cars in the parking lot – we will be the only ones there. Please be on time as we have about a 30 minute drive to get to the site.

Most material will be small to hand size but there are larger blocks with nice things in them. And some in large boulders with things you might want to remove. Bring containers of various sizes, hammer and chisels, eye protection and something to wrap fragile things in. Bring bags for the larger items. Bring lots of water, sturdy footwear, food for lunch or snacks, and watch the weather for Brownwood for appropriate clothing. It can be colder there than here. It is a long way back to town and there are no facilities, so be prepared.

Given the quantity and quality of fossils, it's always a good trip to Wilson Quarry.

PSoA Board Meeting Notes 1/4/2020

Budget:

- We reviewed and approved the budget (with a few slight changes)
- We discussed donating \$2000 in scholarships this year. (perhaps \$500-\$1000 increments)
- We should reach out to Lisa B, Dr. Sprinkle, Rowan and Kenny (pardon the spelling) for recommendations on how we can donate the scholarships.
- Emelia agreed to look for past scholarship letters or draft new ones to send to the above named.
- **NOTE to PSoA Members Only** – If interested in getting budget details, please contact Erich Rose or Mike Smith.

Calendar Notes:

- Auction 4/18 (Field Trip 4/25)
- Fossil Fest 11/6,11/7,11/8
- Holiday Party 12/15

Field Trips:

- We discussed Lisa I, Jamie & Melvin would try to meet with Ed in February sometime to get some field trip tips, contacts and locations, and perhaps ask for any binders or documents he might have.
- It was suggested we ask Lisa B. if we could do a private tour of the lab as our summer field trip.
- Here is the tentative field trip schedule for 2020:
 - 1 - Brownwood / Wilson Clay Pit (Erich and Emelia will host this month on 1/25)
 - 2- Jacksboro or Mineral Wells
 - 3 - East Tx
 - 4 - Oklahoma (Ada)
 - 5 - Midlothian or Waco
 - 6 - Brazos or Whiskey Bridge
 - 7 - Harker Heights / Lab Tour
 - 8 - Lab Tour / Museum
 - 9 - Bandera / Bergheim
 - 10 - Texoma
 - 11 - Brady or Santa Anna
 - 12 - TBD

Fossil Fest 2020:

- Theme: Texas Dinosaurs
- Ask for new shirt designs at the Mar/Apr Meeting.
- Highlight the state dinosaur.
- New shirt idea maybe a stegosaurus (something with an easy outline) Triceratops was done 3 years ago
- Ask Bob McDonald to help with theme cases.
- Erich is researching a new indoor sign system for the vendor booths.
- It was suggested we look at the signs AGMS uses.
- It was discussed that we would talk to the Brandts and see if they are interested in doing a dinner again next year, one suggestion was to host it onsite Friday night instead.
- Ask for fossil donations for the dig pit at monthly meetings.
- Erich and Mike will work on ideas for new large signs, Erich's idea was a map of Texas highlighting locations.
- One idea for a case was to showcase tools for collecting.

Other Items:

- We briefly discussed an informal "Meet Up day" - hosting a fossil swap or fossil ID event

Looking forward to a fun year with the PSoA!

Thank you,
Lisa Izzi

Special Notice

Paleontology/Geoscience academic summer camps 2020 (junior high and high school)

My name is David Levering. I am the director of the Sternberg Museum Science Camps. I'm wondering if you would be willing to distribute information about our summer programs to your members? I have included below the geology/paleontology-themed junior high and high school-age camp programs we are offering in 2020. States they are taking place in are also included in parentheses.

High School:

- Field Volcanology Camp (OR)
- Field Paleontology: Kansas Camp (KS)
- Paleontology Research: Ancient Beasts Camp (OR)
- Introduction to Fossil Preparation Methods Camp (KS)
- Paleontology Technical Illustration Camp (OR)

Middle School:

- Paleontology Explorers: Kansas (KS)
- Paleontology Explorers: Oregon (OR)

For more information, contact:

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Odds and Ends

World's oldest known fossil forest found in New York quarry

The world's oldest known fossil forest has been discovered in a sandstone quarry in New York state, offering new insights into how trees transformed the planet.

Read more at <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/dec/19/worlds-oldest-known-fossil-forest-found-in-new-york-quarry>

300m-year-old fossil is early sign of creatures caring for their young

Fossil hunters say they have unearthed the earliest evidence yet of four-limbed vertebrates looking after their young, after discovering the entwined remains of two lizard-like creatures preserved in an ancient plant stump.

Read more at <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2019/dec/23/300m-year-old-fossil-is-early-sign-of-creatures-caring-for-their-young>

Teenage T. Rex Fossils Reveal Haphazard Growth spurts

A new study reaffirms that two debated dinosaur fossils named Jane and Petey weren't a separate species

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/teenage-it-rexi-fossils-reveal-tyrant-kings-haphazard-growth-spurts-180973891/>

Lice-Filled Dinosaur Feathers Found Trapped in 100-Million-Year-Old Amber

Prehistoric insects that resemble modern lice infested animals as early as the mid-Cretaceous, living and evolving along with dinosaurs and early birds.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/lice-filled-dinosaur-feathers-found-trapped-100-million-year-old-amber-180973727/>

Ancient Whale Fossil Helps Detail How the Mammals Took From Land to Sea

A 39-million-year-old whale with floppy feet, which may not have been very good for walking, helps illuminate the massive animals' transition to the oceans.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/ancient-whale-fossil-helps-detail-how-mammals-went-walking-land-swimming-seas-180973758/>

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 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.

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

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