



Paleo Footnotes

Volume 15, Number 2

February 2020

President's Note

Erich Rose
PSoA President

This is one of my favorite times of year in Texas. The beginnings of spring are showing and yet there is still the possibility of things like SNOW on my deck in the morning. In a month it will be Bluebonnets and Mexican Plum. Back east I had to wait until late April for any decent show and May before there wasn't a chance of snow.

I believe Paul has a great speaker lined up this month. And we will be going on our annual pilgrimage to the Lost Creek Spillway at Lake Jacksboro to collect from the phenomenally productive Finis Shale.

For new members stay tuned. For march we will be returning to Fossil Collecting 101. I have been consolidating the presentations I did a few years back into condensed form. But the main thing will be to give everyone a chance to ask lots of questions and glean some great knowledge from those of us who have been doing this a long time.

See you all soon enough.

Erich

Next Meeting

Tuesday, February 18 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane Austin, Texas

Next Field Trip

Saturday February 22 – 8 a.m.
Lake Jacksboro – Meet in Jacksboro, Texas
See directions in Upcoming Field Trip Report section.

Upcoming Meeting Program

Paul Hammerschmidt
Programs Chair

Topic

'Geologic Wonders of Central Texas'- **Leon Long**

Speaker Bio

Leon Long is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geological Sciences, UT, where he spent his entire career of more than a half-century. Before his arrival he had been a post-doc in Oxford University, England at a time before internet and common jet travel. After trans-Atlantic conversations by snail mail, one day he just showed up at UT, ready for work. There had been no interview, no seminar, no tour of the department, no visit with the dean. Would he like to teach an introductory course? OK, and since then Leon has taught introductory geology to nearly 33 thousand students.

When he had a lab, Leon analyzed naturally-occurring long-lived radioactive isotopes as a clock to date geologic events. He is mostly into igneous rocks, and for his current research he needs only his laptop, MATLAB (powerful computational software), and data that other people have already published.

Synopsis

I will discuss a general geology talk and not explicitly a paleontology talk about Texas Geology.

December Meeting Minutes

Emelia Rose

PSoA Secretary

The meeting began with a highly informative presentation by PhD candidate, John A. Moretti, who spoke about the Macy Fork local fauna and late Pleistocene Community Composition.

The field trip was confirmed to be going to the Wilson Clay Pit in Brownwood, Texas.

The current treasure's report is positive, if you would like more information about the budget please contact a board member.

Fossil Fest will be on the first weekend of November. If you would like to be on the Fossil Fest Show Committee please contact Lisa Izzi at ShowChair@AustinPaleo.org. The Show Committee works with Lisa to make our show a success and the Club looks forward to the support of members in our main outreach event.

At the board meeting in January, the Board approved a budget for scholarships. This spring we will be giving grants to doctoral candidates studying paleontology at the University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences. We anticipate a good number of candidates and look forward to hearing grant recipients present at a future meeting. The decision of grant recipients will be chosen by the board in March and announced at the April meeting.

We'd love to hear from you! If you would like to present at a meeting or know someone who would like to present on a paleontological related topic, please contact our program chair, Paul Hammerschmidt, at ProgramChair@AustinPaleo.org to refer names or inquire about presenting.

Lastly, we greatly appreciate having members get more involved to help support the club. If you have an interest in any of the board or cabinet positions or would like to be more involved in Club decisions, please reach out to any board member at the next meeting to see how you can get involved.

Upcoming Field Trip

Ed Elliott

PSoA Field Trip Chair

February Field Trip – Lake Jacksboro

Saturday February 22, 2020

Join us for one of the groups' favorite hunting spots – Lake Jacksboro. This Upper Pennsylvanian site is replete with fossils from the Finis Shale, Graham Formation of the Cisco Group. Most fossils will be marine in origin, including brachiopods, trilobites, corals, bryozoans, molluscs, crinoids, and teeth. Fossils will generally be small and loose, so bring plenty of small containers or sectional boxes. The drive back into downtown Jacksboro is not far, but coupled with the walk back across the spillway, it will waste valuable collecting time – bring food and plenty of water to maximize your time. If you stick around for more collecting on Sunday, we will visit various road cuts and possibly the Mineral Wells Fossil Park.

We will meet at 8:00 am in front of the Jack County Extension Office located at 100 N Main St. in Jacksboro (the town square). To get there, take 183 North from Austin and, in Lampasas, turn onto 281 North, which will take you straight to Jacksboro. Or, take I35 North to the EI35/ WI35 split just North of Hillsboro. Take WI35 to Ft Worth and take I20 West. On the West side of Ft Worth take the loop 820N and just North of Lake Worth exit for West 199 (the Jacksboro Highway). This will take you straight into Jacksboro. Saturday morning look for a group of fossil hunters huddled near the sign proclaiming the Jacksboro Tigers "State AA Football Champs" from 1962 to 1971.... what a feat. Remember that Jacksboro is about four hours from Austin, so either drive up the night before or be prepared to leave early Saturday. Jacksboro motels are somewhat bare-bones, so if you want top quality accommodations.... some people stay in Mineral Wells as we will be in that area for Sunday. We will caravan as a group to the first site, so please be on time.

There will be a \$3 admission fee per person (children are free) to cover our parking in and crossing the spillway in the state park. Please have CASH handy to put into envelopes at the pay station. Check the local weather before leaving so that you can dress appropriately. It is February in North Texas.

Wilson Clay Pit Field Trip Report

Erich Rose

Field Trip Guide

We had a great turnout this last month for the first field trip of the year. Both new and old members alike. By 8:15am Lorne Ledger, Mike Zimmer, Kevin Bills, Bob McDonald, Leslie Riddel, Brian, Diane and Emerson Bedrosia, Jami Shelton, Rose Farmer, Janneba, Lucinda Collins, David Lindberg, Mark Watkins, Cathy & Gary Rylander had met up with Emelia and me in Early before caravanning to the pit. Not long after arriving there we saw Ed Elliott, Melvin Noble and John Hinte arrive.

The weather was very pleasant if a bit overcast and breezy. Pretty quickly the group scattered to all corners of the site. Some headed to the back to see the exposed layers in situ while some stuck close to the entry. I headed to an area that has always been good for me. It wasn't this time, so after getting my lunch I ventured in some new directions.

There were some great fossils collected that day. My daughter Emelia proved she can still skunk me and picked up a perfect *Delocrinus* cup right next to where I had set my bag and then to make it burn a bit more the cup had some arms attached. She goaded me all day. She then went on to fill a gallon bag of crinoid stems for next year's Fossil Fest. Of course everyone was hoping for teeth and a few were found. Bob showed me a nice complete *Petalodus*. Jami found a huge broken root that made you wonder what the entire tooth would have been like. And after finding fragments all day I finally found a mostly complete *Petalodus* at the end of the day. Probably one of the most unique specimens picked up was a conularid found by Leslie. I have found small conularids in the past but they are not common at Wilson's. Leslie's piece was from a good-sized individual.

Overall I saw lots of cool specimens, including more crinoid cups and other pieces, lots of brachs, some good corals and much more. And to finish the day nicely the sun came out around 3:30-4ish. Wilson Clay Pit never fails to make for an enjoyable and productive day of collecting. I think all who attended will agree.

Maybe I'll see yall there again next year. But before then I hope to see a bunch of you in Jacksboro this month.

Erich



Some finds

Odds and Ends

Pterosaur Tooth Found in Rare Ancient Squid Fossil

A tooth embedded in prehistoric cephalopod offers a glimpse into predator-prey interactions from 150 million years ago.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/rare-cephalopod-fossil-may-have-escaped-pterosaurs-bite-180974118/>

Ancient fossil 'may prove scorpion was first land-dwelling animal'

Fossil is earliest evidence of breathing structure compatible with life on land, scientists say.

Read more at <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/jan/16/ancient-fossil-may-prove-scorpion-was-first-land-dwelling-animal>

New species of tyrannosaur discovered in Canada

The fossil of a new species of tyrannosaur has been discovered in Canada. The monstrous beast was named the "reaper of death" due to its fearsome predatory behavior.

Read more at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/02/10/tyrannosaur-dinosaur-new-species-discovered-canada/4713828002/>

Newly Described Meat-Eating Dinosaur Dominated During the Jurassic Period

The new species is the oldest Allosaurus described yet and was a top predator of its time.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/meet-allosaurus-jimmadseni-newest-terrifying-jurassic-carnivore-180974056/>

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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PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN