



Paleo Footnotes

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March 2020

President's Note

Erich Rose
PSoA President

Spring has sprung. I saw just a few Bluebonnets heading for Mineral Wells a few weeks back and then Mexican Plum on the drive home. Now here in town and the Hill Country the rest are popping out and filling the roadsides. The East Texas field trip should be spectacular. Everyone take lots of pictures!

This month I will be resurrecting Fossil Collecting 101 for our meeting topic. This will be a condensed version of what I did in three parts a few years back. The idea is to offer a bit of how to for our newer members and share tips on how many of us established collectors get things done. I hope to cover everything from how we find places to collect fossils to how we identify and catalog them.

I want to also encourage members to bring in items for show and tell or if they need identifying. I will have some of my library with me and hope to use a few unknowns in my demonstration. Hopefully we will have time to do at least a handful.

The scholarship committee has been busy reviewing the 9 different proposals we received. Pretty much all are worthy so picking who gets what will be a challenge. We will announce the winners the beginning of April.

Well that's all for now...Erich

Next Meeting

Tuesday, March 17 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane Austin, Texas

Next Field Trip

Saturday March 21 – 8 a.m.
East Texas – Meet in Nacogdoches, Texas
See directions in Upcoming Field Trip Report section.

Upcoming Meeting Program

Paul Hammerschmidt
Programs Chair

'Fossil Collecting 101- A Brief Introduction to the Hobby of Fossil Collecting - Erich Rose, President, Paleontological Society of Austin

Speaker Bio

I have been collecting fossils since I was 10 growing up in Southwest Ohio. My collection includes Paleozoic, Mesozoic and Cenozoic material from Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado and of course Texas. I wrote field guides for the NYPS as well as many articles on collecting in various newsletters. Currently I am busy reworking major parts of my collection making sure they are properly stored and copying paper catalogs into computer data bases.

Synopsis

A few years back I presented a number of pre-meeting sessions on amateur paleontology and they were fun to do. Since then the club has picked up a number of new members and many are new to the hobby. And amongst them I often hear the same "how did you, how do you and how would I's that suggest we need to offer some basics on what for many of us has now become old hat.

I hope to briefly cover the following topics and the open the meeting up to questions and maybe even some demonstrations.

- Where to look for fossils
- What tools do I need?
- How to clean or preserve fossils
- How do we identify them?
- How to catalog your collection
- Why is all of this important?

I will use examples from my own collection and experiences but we will count on also hearing the collected wisdom of many of our other members as we answer questions and give advice to those who ask.

February Meeting Minutes

Emelia Rose

PSoA Secretary

The meeting began with a presentation by Dr. Leon Long who is Professor Emeritus at UT in the Department of Geological Sciences. His highly informative presentation on Texas geology had an attendance of over 30 members.

The next part of the meeting went over various items beginning with the treasurers report which is the same as last month. Next, Erich talked about the upcoming field trip and passed out guides on what to expect. The meeting concluded with door prizes.

Upcoming Field Trip

Ed Elliott

PSoA Field Trip Chair

March Field Trip – East Texas (Eocene)

Melvin Noble Field Trip Leader

Details for the trip will be provided at the next PsoA meeting. We have permissions from all landowners to collect. It will be the usual sites and we will be collecting Eocene fossils.

We will meet at 8 a.m. on Saturday, March 24 in Nacogdoches, Texas. We will meet at the O'Reilly Auto Parts located at 614 N. University Dr. in Nacogdoches. If you get there early enough, you can collect a bit behind the store along the cliff wall. The caravan will leave from this spot to our first location.

Bring lunch, water and the usual collecting materials. Watch the weather and dress accordingly.

Lake Jacksboro Field Trip Report

Jamie Shelton

Field Trip Leader

As the “new field trip leader” (myself, Melvin Noble and Lisa Izzi are helping out being Co-Leaders with Ed...and yes, it takes all three of us to maybe, almost equal Ed! Not really, but hey, we try) , I got to the meeting spot on the Jacksboro Square plenty early. So early I wondered if anyone else was actually coming! It was a chilly morning, but that didn't deter Yoli and Will Lins, Erik ad Evan Encornacion, Jahanett Ramirez, Jeanne Bowman, Lucinda Collins, Cathy and Gary Rylander, Brian and Emerson Bedrosan, Ron DiPronio, and Erich Rose from getting bundled up and out to the Lake Jackson site. (John Hinte joined us after a while!)

The walk across the dam was breezy and chilly, but once across, we were quite protected from the wind, and the day warmed up considerably! It was a gorgeous day for Fossil Hunting! I love how people out on a hunt have an unspoken “rule” of space (although I have heard this rule gets broken sometimes!). So as we walked along the embankment, various pairs and groups settled into their spots and some of us ventured further down the hill line. As this is a very abundant site, everyone was quickly finding fossils. Especially the kids....the piping voice of “Daddy! I found a Fossil!” was heard many times.

I have to give a shout out to Erich (and Ed, when he is with us) at this point for always helping out at the beginning of a hunt by explaining what formation we are hunting in, what we can expect to find and for being on hand to give expert opinions on finds in the field. For someone like myself, although not new to fossil hunting, I am not as familiar with the Pennsylvanian era as I am Cretaceous, so I still am not sure exactly what to be on the look out for!

As for fossils – I know Lucinda found quite a few nice pieces of Tainoceras ammonites, I was super happy to find a full nautiloid, Gary was lucky enough to find a whole ammonite and John found some really interesting tiny tiny algae stems. But the best find of the day was Brian's son Emerson, He found.....a shark tooth. Everyone always wants the shark teeth. Self included! But he was the lucky one this time!

Since Jacksboro is a bit of a road trip, we also had a couple of other sites to visit on our own, as some people were staying over Saturday night and some of us had come in on Friday. Erich and a couple of others had already gone to the Mineral Wells Fossil Park on Friday and I headed over to the Union Hill site after leaving Lake Jacksboro. Although finds were similar to Lake Jacksboro (beautiful spiral gastropods and small cephalopods) I was on the look out for Crinoid Cups which Erich said could be found here. I was happy to find three of them. Something new to add to the collection!

So all in all, the Pennsylvanian of Texas has such a surprisingly rich and varied fauna, it is a treat to go collect something “different” than our Austin area usual!



Some pictures from the trip

Odds and Ends

Gigantic Turtles Fought Epic Battles 10 Million Years Ago—and Have the Scars to Prove It

Their shells were 10 feet wide and equipped with foot-long horns on both shoulders.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/these-giant-turtles-fought-epic-battles-10-million-years-ago-180974203/>

A Pair of Horses Helped Excavate a Hulking Brachiosaurus Fossil in Utah

Last May, a trio of fossil experts in Utah discovered the hulking humerus of a Brachiosaurus jutting out of the Morrison Formation, a Late Jurassic rock unit that stretches across the western United States

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/pair-horses-helped-excavate-hulking-brachiosaurus-fossil-utah-180974223/>

Oldest Known Cave-Dwellers Are 99-Million-Year-Old Cockroaches

A pair of 99-million-year-old roaches found in amber are now the oldest known animals that unambiguously adapted to life in caves, according to a study published this month in *Gondwana Research*.

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/99-million-year-old-cockroaches-are-oldest-known-cave-dwellers-180974284/>

215-Million-Year-Old, Sharp-Nosed Sea Creature Was Among the Last of Its Kind

Researchers gave the marine reptile the genus name *Gunakadeit* in honor of a sea monster from Tlingit oral history

Read more at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/215-million-year-old-sharp-nosed-marine-reptile-was-among-last-its-kind-180974276/>

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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