



PALEO FOOTNOTES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

VOLUME 16 | NUMBER 3

MARCH 2021



President's Note

Holy cows! What the heck was that last month? I tried really hard to get away from that stuff. Gail and I were lucky enough not to experience any long blackouts and we only lost water at the end. We had a good store of food and water already on hand and actually shared food with several of our neighbors who couldn't get down off this hill we live on. We made the most of it cooking hearty meals and watching movies and of course I spent some time fondling rocks.

And now that we are past that and back to normal, whatever that means, the time is ripe for hitting the cuts and creeks. (continued page 2)

This Month's Talk

The Rediscovery of the Texas Redbeds

Presented by Christopher Flis

Seymour in Baylor County is world renown for its Permian age fossils of reptiles and amphibians that date back to more than 285 million years. Essentially everything a scientist knows about the planet's first land-walking animals is due to the abundance of world-class fossils found in Baylor County. It is this reason for which the Whiteside Museum of Natural History came into existence. Since 1875, fossils of the world's first terrestrial animals have been studied (continued on page 2)

MARCH 2021

PSoA Regular March Meeting Tuesday March 16, 2021

Meeting will be held on Zoom
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86328359122?pwd=Z0RNbTJ4ZDB0eUpMa3hRbEFydG9lZz09>

Meeting ID: 863 2835 9122

Passcode: 206783

PSoA March Field Trip
Saturday March 20th, 2021
Lake Brownwood Spillway
(see page 2)

Fossil Fest Show Chair Meeting
April 11 2pm on Zoom
(see page 2)

President's Note

(continued from page 1) I quickly visited one or two spots near work and it was amazing to see the ground had gone through a serious freeze and thaw. It just needs some good rain to wash off the mud and clay and really expose what has been brought up from below.

It will be quite interesting to see what things look like in Brownwood this month. Hopefully we will be able to get into the spillway site. I've been here 15 years and so far, have never been to the spillway. Hopefully we will be able to get access. If not, we still have Wilson's Clay Pit.

So I hope you are all safe and sound after that crazy winter cold snap with heat and running water. And I hope to see you all at the next meeting or somewhere in Brownwood later this month.

Erich Rose
PSoA President

This Month's Talk

(continued from page 1) and excavated by legends of the paleontology world, such as Edward Drinker Cope, Charles Sternberg, and more recently Dr. Robert T. Bakker. Prior to the Whiteside Museum of Natural History's existence, virtually no fossils remained in Seymour, or North Texas, and were promptly transported to major institutes and private collectors. The WMNH Director and Paleontologist Christopher Flis collects, researches, and exhibits the incredible fossil assemblages found within 5 miles of the museum, as permanent collections that will remain in Seymour and Texas forever. The Whiteside Museum of Natural History is proud to offer "**The Rediscovery of the Texas Redbeds**", a one-hour lecture tailored to science and paleontology lovers of any age.

This Month's Speaker: **Christopher Flis**
Museum Director Christopher Flis was born in Midland, Texas, but lived in more than 12 locations, including England and Ireland. Flis studied English and Geology at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, receiving his first museum job at the Lafayette Natural History Museum as a curatorial assistant. Flis possesses 16 years of experience in the museum industry, having worked for 4 natural history museums in his career, including the Houston Museum of Natural Science and the Black Hills Institute for Geologic Research, under Pete Larson. Flis currently works closely with his mentor of 15 years, Dr. Robert T. Bakker and continues to publish academically.



Minutes from February's Meeting

The meeting was well attended despite the power outages.

The February field trip was postponed one week due to the weather.

Emelia Rose
PSoA Secretary



Fossil Fest 2021

Earlier this year we contacted the vendors that participated in our 2019 event to gauge their interest in having a booth at Fossil Fest this year. We specified that this was tentative due to the evolving nature of COVID19. We are pleased to say that the majority of those vendors are interested in partaking in Fossil Fest this year. However, vendor participation is only one component of having a successful event. We would like to hold a show chair meeting on April 11th at 2:00 pm to discuss the logistics of holding a successful event this year. We invite anyone that wishes to be on the show chair committee to participate in this virtual meeting. Please email fossilfestchair@gmail.com for the zoom link.

Heather Radford
Show Chair

March 2021 Field Trip: Lake Brownwood Spillway

We will meet on Market Place Blvd (parking lot of strip mall just past the Abundant Life Church) off of 279 at 9am, Saturday March 20th. Look for my Dark Blue Scion XB with Turquoise wheels. This is a new place as we usually meet at the Early Mall, so Melvin will be waiting there for anyone who goes there! We will caravan to the Spillway.

It is a Pennsylvanian site with very well preserved fossils, including echinoids and crinoids. It is not exactly a "kid friendly" place, apparently a steep incline, so if that is of concern, we have some other sites we can recommend in the area. Also, if there is water being released from the dam, we will not be able to go to the site but will instead go to Wilson's Pit. See you there!

February 2021 Field Trip Report: Loop 360 Road Cuts

Another Foggy Field Trip

The Fog seems to be the weather of choice of our last couple of field trips! This time the fog was even thicker than last month, driving was actually a bit hazardous, but that did not deter our field trippers! Alan Keith, Eric and Jack and Lily Jones, Yoli and Will Lins, Heather Aziz, Rick Goldgar, David Lindberg, Alison and Haley Dixon, Becki Smith, Don McDaniels, Gene Wu, and myself, Jamie Shelton all gathered in the gloom hoping that we'd be able to see the fossils!

Fortunately, the fog lifted a little and we had a productive hunt. This area of Walnut formation (Bee Caves Member if I remember correctly) is super productive with oysters, *Texigrypheas* and *Ceretostreans* but also with many different gastropods, a variety of species of echinoids as well as some more unusual things like *Parasimilia* coral and some nice forams. It's always fun to see the Society clambering all over the hills finding fossils!

Haley, our youngest field tripper that day found a couple of nice, tiny *Loriolias* which I think she was pretty excited about. It's not the *Megalodon* tooth she's been looking for, but a good find nonetheless. Becki found the best *Phymosoma* of the day (fig. 1) and Lily found a great *Neithia* (with both upper and lower valves- fig. 4). Alan and I both found a couple of *Leptosalenia mexicana* (fig. 3) and he also found a really nice gastropod *Semineritina aparata*. And of course, Yoli found the most gastropods. My favorite find of the day was a lovely little *Parasimilia* coral (fig. 2).

Although it was a bit of a smaller turnout (due to the postponement and the recent weather issues we were all dealing with) I think it was a nice respite from the winter weather! Hopefully spring is finally here and the fossil hunting should be pretty good!

Jamie Shelton
Field Trip Co-Chair



Echinoids in situ basking in the fog! Photo by Jamie Shelton



Loop 360 blanketed in morning fog. Photo by Jamie Shelton



fig 1: *Phymosoma* echinoid test found by Becki Smith



fig 2: *Parasimilia* coral found by Jamie Shelton



fig 3: *Leptosalenia Mexicana* echinoid test found by Jamie Shelton



fig 4: *Neithia* bivalve found by Lily Jones



Odds and Ends

Last Month's Presentation

Last month club president Erich Rose dusted off his Fossil Hunting 101 presentation that he had typically given before the club meetings for new members. During the talk a number of helpful websites were posted to the chat room by various members - a selection from the chat are as follows:

+ **macrostrat.org**: this is a assemblage of over 200 geological maps from around the world that are overlaid to provide a rich assortment of information - including known fossil localities.¹

+ **Geological Database of Texas**: overlaid Texas geological maps.²

+ **University of Texas GeoData**: clickable map that provides access to other associated maps.³

+ **University of Texas Field Trip Guides**: library of geological tour guides of our area and beyond.⁴

+ **Texas Bureau of Economic Geology**: USGS maps of Texas.⁵

+ **Fossil Identification on reddit**: place to post photos of fossils for others to aid in identification.⁶

+ **The Fossil Forum**: an amateurs online forum for discussions about all things fossils, including places to post questions about ID's, field trip reports, recommendations in particular areas, etc.⁷

2021 Field Trip Schedule

March:	Brownwood Spillway - Pennsylvanian
April:	Harker Heights - Walnut
May:	Canyon Lake - Glen Rose Johnson City Road Cut – Glen Rose
June:	Little Walnut Creek – Austin Chalk
July:	Bandera – Glen Rose
August:	Mammoth Museum Waco Pit - Del Rio
September:	Brady Road Cut - Pennsylvanian Santa Anna - Pennsylvanian
October:	Moody Road Cut - Comanche Peak Evant Road Cut – Comanche Peak
November:	Brownwood or Jacksboro - Pennsylvanian
December:	TBD

1. <https://macrostrat.org/map/>

2. <https://portal.tnris.org/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=81eea4ec315a487da73a981685aba480>

3. https://geodata.lib.utexas.edu/catalog/utaustin_73104

4. <https://guides.lib.utexas.edu/geo/virtual-field-trips>

5. <https://txpub.usgs.gov/txgeology/>

6. <https://www.reddit.com/r/fossilid/>

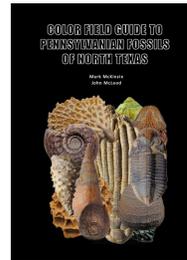
7. <http://www.thefossilforum.com/>

8. <https://www.lulu.com/en/us/shop/john-mcleod-and-mark-mckinzie/color-field-guide-to-pennsylvanian-fossils-of-north-texas/paperback/product-wvgned.html?page=1&pageSize=4>

9. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/ravenous-teens-may-explain-fossil-records-missing-medium-sized-dinos-180977125/>

10. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/climate-change-may-have-aided-herbivores-journey-south-america-greenland-180977120/>

Publications



Color Field Guide to Pennsylvanian Fossils of North Texas by Mark McKinzie and John McLeod 2021 This is a spiral bound field ready version of their seminal volume available for \$22 from Lulu.com. The book includes descriptions of the exposures at Lake Brownwood as well as the Wilson Claypit where the club is headed this month, along with numerous other Texas Pennsylvanian sites.⁸

In The News

Why Medium-Sized Dinosaurs Are Often Missing From the Fossil Record - Smithsonian Magazine March 2, 2021: Study suggests huge carnivores like T. rex may have occupied the ecological roles of medium-sized predators as juveniles.⁹

Climate Change May Have Aided Dinosaurs' Journey From South America to Greenland - Smithsonian Magazine March 1, 2021: A shift in CO2 levels millions of years ago made conditions on Earth milder, allowing herbivores, like sauropodomorphs, to migrate to Greenland.¹⁰

Save the Date - April Online Auction!

We will be hosting an Online Auction this year! Sunday April 25th from Noon till 5pm, the Society Auction will shift to Online at the Facebook PSoA Members Group. Next month I will post information about how it will all work. So be thinking about what you might donate to the Auction! And save your pennies for what you might bid on!

If you are not in the group yet, here is the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/153405801141>

Just request to join and we will add you in!

Jamie Shelton
Field Trip Co-Chair

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 normally 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.

Please note, due to COVID 19, in person meetings have been temporarily paused, and monthly meetings are instead being held on Zoom. Please see instructions above to attend the meetings virtually. Please note all virtual meetings are recorded and the Society may elect to publish the video of these meetings, in part or in total, to the Society's website or another publically accessible venue as benefits the goals of the club listed above.

Membership Information

2021 Officers

<p>Annual Dues: \$18/individual \$24/family \$12/associate (non-voting, receiving newsletter)</p> <p>Send payment to: Treasurer, Paleontological Society of Austin, P.O. Box 90791, Austin, TX 78749-0791</p> <p>PSoA Web Site: www.austinpaleo.org Webmaster: Gordon Galligher, webmaster@austinpaleo.org Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/austinpaleo Twitter: @Austin_Paleo</p>	<p>President Vice President Treasurer Secretary Field Trips Programs Editor Webmaster Show Chair</p> <p>Science Advisors:</p>	<p>Erich Rose Heather Radford Mike Smith Emelia Rose Melvin Noble & Jamie Shelton Paul Hammerschmidt Brian Bedrosian Gordon Galligher Heather Radford</p> <p>Pamela R. Owen, PhD. James T. Sprinkle, PhD.</p>	<p>president@austinpaleo.org vicepresident@austinpaleo.org treasurer@austinpaleo.org secretary@austinpaleo.org fieldtripchair@austinpaleo.org programchair@austinpaleo.org editor@austinpaleo.org webmaster@austinpaleo.org showchair@austinpaleo.org</p> <p>powen@mail.utexas.edu echino@mail.utexas.edu</p>
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The Paleontological Society of Austin is a member of and affiliated with:

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