

The Paleo Times

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Rick Poropat, Editor

President's Corner

Hi all,

I was sorry to miss Dr. McDonald at the last meeting. I heard he gave an excellent talk. Many thanks to Vice-President Tom Lee for taking over the meeting during my absence!

I hope to see you all in March for our winter holiday party re-do, thanks to the only winter weather we have had so far this year. On the up side, it has been really warm so hopefully you have had the opportunity for some winter collecting trips or at least getting out and enjoying nature. I hope to check out the spring wild flowers this weekend.

Abby

Fossil of the Month



The fossil of the month is the Butternut Seed *Juglans* sp. from Pleistocene deposits along Coldwater Creek in North St. Louis County. The deposits were once a good source for a variety of Pleistocene-age fossils, including several types of seeds, freshwater mollusks and the bones of large (and small) mammals such as sloths and mastodons (or is it mammoths?), but no more.

Visiting the creek by canoe to collect fossils such as these was a favorite annual field trip for our club. In recent years, however, the concern over radioactive contamination in the area, including the creek itself, has caused EMSP to end these trips.

March Meeting

Our next meeting is **Friday, March 10, 2017** at 7:30 pm on the second floor of the Earth and Planetary Sciences building on the Washington University campus. Instead of the regular meeting, we will have the holiday party that was cancelled last December.

There will be entertainment! Bring cash or your checkbook because we will be auctioning off a new rock tumbler and a new tile saw. A variety of hobby-related books (and maybe some fossils) will also be sold by silent auction.

YES, we will have our traditional fossil trivia game plus a slide show or two!

Looking to do some early spring cleaning and have a lot of extra fossil material to get rid of? Members are invited to bring fossils to sell, with 20% of the sale price going to the club.

A big change from our December plans is that the club will not be furnishing 'big meal' items such as a turkey or ham. Instead, members are asked to bring finger-foods, snacks, salads, non-alcoholic drinks and desserts to share with others. Hot dishes are welcome, however, there are a limited number of electrical outlets for slow cookers or crock pots.

The club will furnish plates, napkins, cups, utensils and ice. **No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the building.**

Treasurer's Report

The end of February 2017 maybe requested at the monthly meeting.

Calendar

Mar. 4	Dinosaurs & Cavemen Expo. Columbia, Missouri
Mar. 10	Monthly EMSP Meeting Washington University
Mar. 10-12	Greater Kansas City Show KCI Expo Center
Mar. 24-26	Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show Machinist Hall, Bridgeton, MO.
Mar. 25-26	ESCONI Annual Show DuPage Co. Fairgrounds Wheaton, Illinois
Mar. 31-Apr.2	MAPS Fossil Exposition. Sharpless Auction Center, Iowa City, Iowa
May 26-28	Aurora Fossil Festival Aurora Fossil Museum Aurora, North Carolina
June 9-11	Park Hills Swap Missouri Mines State Park
June 23-25	Bedford Rock Swap Lawrence Co. Fairgrounds S. of Bedford, Indiana

Rick's Ramblings

The annual MAPS Fossil Expo, billed as the largest fossils-only show in the world, is rapidly approaching. (March 31 through April 2) The theme for this year is the Silurian and the keynote speaker (Friday night) will be Dr. Carlton Brett.

Professor Carlton E. Brett, PhD, earned his Ph.D. at the University of Michigan in 1978, and in that year accepted a faculty position in Geology at the University of Rochester. He joined the University of Cincinnati Geology faculty in 1998 and in 2014 was awarded the title of University Distinguished Research Professor. Dr. Brett's research lies at the interface between paleontology and sedimentary geology. He is pursuing studies relating regional and global changes of climate, sea level, and the carbon cycle to episodes of biotic change (bioevents) and extinction, as well as unusual sedimentary deposits, primarily in the middle Paleozoic.

Dr. Brett also maintains active research interests in taphonomy (fossil preservation), paleoecology, especially the evolution of organism interactions such as predation, paleobiology of invertebrate animals, especially crinoids and trilobites, and cyclic stratigraphy. He is an expert in the geology and paleontology of the Cincinnati region.

Dr. Brett is author or co-author of more than 250 scientific papers, 80 guidebooks, and five books. He was honored in 2010 with the University of Cincinnati's Rieveschl Award for research and has received numerous other honors, including an Alexander von Humboldt Research Prize in 2006, the 2008 Digby McClaren Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Stratigraphic Paleontology, the 2012 Raymond C. Moore Medal (Outstanding Paleontologist) from the Society of Sedimentary Geology, and the 2013 American Association of Petroleum Geologists Outstanding Educator Award.

I encourage all of you to make the drive to Iowa City. Attend the Expo and listen to Dr. Brett's talk. Stay the night, stay the weekend. There are plenty of accommodations nearby and lots of things going on daily at Expo and at the hotel show. It's not often that you get to hear from such an outstanding scientist or see such an amazing array of fossils.

Everyone should already be aware that a group of EMSP members attended the Tucson Show again this year. We found many exciting, reasonably-priced fossils and fossil-related items for the club to re-sell, including some new items we haven't sold before. Our purchases include: Wyoming fish, Madagascar polished wood slabs and branches, carved stone dinosaurs in two sizes, scarce Pennsylvanian-age blastoids from Oklahoma, fossil keychains & lapel pins, bookends, carved Orthoceras boxes and assorted metal & plastic stands for the fish, petrified wood and polished eggs. We hope to make some additional club purchases at the MAPS Expo.

Speaking of club sale items. Tom & Keri Lee have graciously stored the club booth equipment and sales items in their basement for the last 10 years, but it's time to pass the duty on to someone else. The Lees would like to begin a basement remodeling project and need to have the club material gone. This job not only involves storing the material, but also transporting it to the show site, setting up the booth, taking down the booth and returning the material to storage. A large SUV or pickup truck will be required.

This is not a job to be taken lightly, thus we are looking for someone who has been an active member for several years; someone who also has experience working in our show booth. If you think you might be interested in taking on this responsibility, please contact a club officer at the March meeting.

DID YOU KNOW?

The savvy fossil collector has learned to be wary of venomous snakes, poison ivy, ticks, mosquitos and bees while in the field. Now comes another menace in our woods. Thanks to Holly Rivet for providing the following article. (she isn't the menace, by the way)

DANGER: ATTACK OF THE WILD PARSNIP

All of this cold weather has had me daydreaming of hiking around our fair state in warm weather. Thinking of that reminded me of a horrible invasive plant a friend of mine encountered last year. Wild parsnip has finally made a foothold in Missouri. It is the same delicious parsnip we all know and love, but the other side of it. On the surface side, they can grow more than four feet in height on a thick stem that produces several rosettes of small yellow flowers. From a distance, they look like yellow Queen Anne's Lace. The leaves can grow as long as six inches, are compound, arranged opposite in pairs, and have saw-toothed edges.



These irritating fellas will usually spring up between June and July. Unlike the itchy plants we are accustomed to here in Missouri, the toxic sap causes a chemical burn rather than an allergic reaction. It contains a type of chemical called furocoumarins, which are absorbed into the skin and then energized by ultraviolet light. This burn can lead to blisters or a dragged look where the stems have brushed across the skin in just one to two days after exposure! Just as important to know, the oil can seep into fabric and still burn the hiker. Tall socks and pants aren't enough. Keep your eyes peeled and your rubber boots nearby.

The Wisconsin DNR has excellent resources (including how to control it) for those interested. Get outdoors, but be safe about it.

FINAL REMINDER

If you haven't paid your 2017 dues, this is the last newsletter you will receive and you will no longer be eligible to attend field trips or other club functions.

Dues are always payable in January and are \$20.00 per household per year if receiving the newsletter by e-mail or \$25 for those receiving the newsletter by regular mail. Since the January meeting was cancelled, the deadline for being dropped from the mailing list has been extended to the March meeting. Please see Rick at the March meeting or mail your check (payable to Eastern Missouri Society for Paleontology) to:

EMSP

P.O. Box 220273

St. Louis, MO. 63122

DID YOU KNOW?

When working at the Science Center Prep Lab, I always get a kick out of all the loud roaring sounds coming from the kids battling each other on the dinosaur table. I suppose the kids think they sound realistic, but did you know that dinosaurs probably did not roar? Their anatomy just wasn't built for it, but they weren't mute either.

A June 2016 study in published in *Evolution* looked at the anatomy and sounds of birds and crocodylians, the nearest living relatives to the extinct dinosaurs. The conclusion is that dinosaurs probably made closed-mouth sounds such as the crocodylians make today.

Study co-author Julia Clarke, a paleontologist at the University of Texas at Austin, recalled a heart-pounding experience years ago, when she visited a Chinese alligator breeding project at the Bronx Zoo in New York. "A door slammed shut and the room exploded in deep thumps. THUMP, THUMP, THUMP. Every male alligator was making that noise." Now consider that ominous thumping coming from a T.rex, more than 100 times the size! – Gemma Tarlach, Discover Magazine, via John Stade.

The Eastern Missouri Society for Paleontology (EMSP) is a registered Missouri not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting the enjoyment of fossil collecting. It is open to all individuals interested in learning about the history of ancient life on earth. The club membership includes professional paleontologists as well as amateur hobbyists. EMSP provides an open forum for the exchange of information and access to expertise on collecting, identifying, preparing and displaying fossils.

EMSP meetings are held on the second Friday of every month (except July, August and December) at 7:30pm on the second floor of the Earth and Planetary Sciences Building on the campus of Washington University. The building is located at the SW corner of the intersection of Forest Park Parkway and Hoyt Drive. Each meeting includes an informal exchange of information and speakers on a variety of fossil-related topics. Note: the building doors automatically lock at 7:30pm.

Club activities include field trips lead by experienced collectors and are a fun way to augment discussions at the monthly meetings. The club also participates in joint field trips with other paleo clubs, visiting fossil sites throughout the United States. EMSP is also proud to be involved in partnerships with the St. Louis Science Center and the Greater St. Louis Association of Earth Science Clubs, Inc; as well as STEM outreach to classrooms, community events and science fair special awards.

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