

The Paleo Times

Volume 16 Number 5

May 2017

The Official Publication of the Eastern Missouri Society for Paleontology

Rick Poropat, Editor

President's Corner

Hi all,

I hope you enjoyed Dr. Gibson's talk at the April meeting. I found him quite engaging and learned a lot more about the rock formations I was already familiar with. Among those new insights include the fact that bryozoans, not corals, made up a major portion of the reefs in the late Silurian to Devonian and sea floor conditions fluctuated between clear water and silt-laden, leading to alternating ecosystems adapted to each water or sea floor condition. I always wondered about special crinoids that floated top-down; they circumvented a soft, muddy sea floor unfit to anchor upon.

In other news, we have a great field trip to northern Mississippi in the works for June. Also, don't forget to let Carl know if you're going to Paleotrek, **ASAP!** Confirmed attendance is looking low this year, but hotels need to be booked well in advance, as do Carl's field plans. It's a great trip so I encourage members to look for dinosaurs in Big Sky Country!

See you at the May meeting for a discussion of how (and why) to use a GPS device in the field, plus a short presentation by Mike Fix.

Abby

A New Paleontology Club is Born

In January, 2017, over sixty Georgians gathered at the Macon Museum of Arts and Sciences with the intention of establishing a new *Paleontological Association of Georgia*. No such group has existed in the state for decades.

After a long decline in funding, the Georgia

than a century of solid research. Through the late 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, the survey not only produced excellent research, but also kept abreast of the commercial and academic work going on across the state. As a result, it acted as an informal networking service. When that network was broken, communication between state institutions declined, worsening over the years through competition for resources. This led to natural history and science museums specializing in their region but often with a lack of basic knowledge about the rest of Georgia's paleontology. In addition, very little information about state resources found its way into K-12 classrooms.

The new *Paleontological Association of Georgia* (PAG) is a scientific, non-profit, community-based organization devoted to the study of Georgia's natural history. Their mission is to preserve Georgia's paleontological resources for education, future research and future generations by bridging the gap left by the loss of the geological survey.

Responsible, legal fossil collecting is required in order to preserve the science of Paleontology. PAG's vision includes hosting club-sponsored field trips and digs in the near future.

May Meeting

Our next meeting is **Friday, May 12, 2017** at 7:30 pm in Room 203 on the second floor of the Earth and Planetary Sciences building on the Washington University campus. Our program for the evening will be a team effort combining the talents of EMSP members, Carl Campbell and Mike Fix.

Please join us for an interesting and informative program, plus an update on field trip plans and other club business.

Don't miss out on the next field trip!

Calendar

May 12	EMSP Meeting 7:30 pm Washington University
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
Nov. 17-19	Mineral, Gem & Fossil Show Affton Community Center

Treasurer's Report

A detailed report is available by request from the treasurer.

Rick's Ramblings

MAPS Fossil Expo has come and gone and with it the chance to acquire unusual, low-priced specimens for your collection. At the main show, I "collected" a number of items for my own collection, including three large, Pennsylvanian *Trigonocarpus* seeds on the same sandstone block from Oklahoma, an Eocene crab in a concretion from Alabama, an unusual Pennsylvanian bivalve, *Prothyryus elegans*, from southern Indiana, a large bivalve, *Inoceramus grandis*, from the Kansas chalk, and a partial *Metasequoia* frond from Alaska.

There were bargains to be had at the hotel show as well and I managed to pick up several flats of assorted fossils, including trilobites and cystoids, for our club to re-sell. On the last day, the Mazon Creek nodule dealer clearance-priced everything and I fought the crowd to purchase a few nice ones (some for less than \$1) for the club.

I was encouraged to see so many EMSP members attending the show and I hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did. Although cold and wet for part of the weekend, both the hotel show and the Expo were a big success. I heard the live auction on Saturday night brought in more than \$17,000.00 worth of donated fossils, books and equipment, by far the best they have ever done. The daily silent auctions also did well. I spent part of the weekend week-end helping to sort and price items for that area. One treasure,

discovered in a donated box of the Mazon Creek material, was a half nodule containing a complete fish. This small, but very rare, fossil sold for nearly \$500.00.

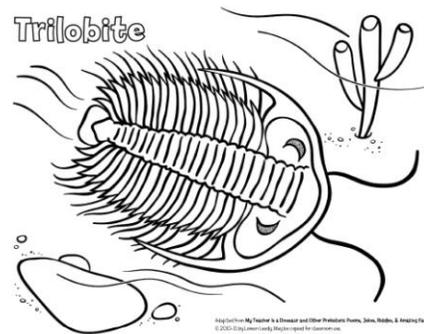
In addition to the auctions, there were a number of excellent mini-programs given throughout the weekend. On Friday night, a well-attended, highly entertaining keynote address on the Silurian was given by Dr. Carlton Brett of the University of Cincinnati.

DID YOU KNOW?

Trilobites are extinct marine animals belonging to the phylum Arthropoda, which contains more than 75 percent of all known animals, living and extinct. Familiar examples of this group, still living today, are crabs, lobsters, spiders, scorpions and insects.

Trilobites first appeared in the stratigraphic record at the beginning of the Cambrian Period, 542 million years ago. Their sudden appearance was part of the 'Cambrian Explosion' and is believed to be a result, in part, of the calcification of their endoskeletons. They were very successful, spanning some 290 million years, but their numbers gradually decreased due to increasing numbers of predators and they eventually went extinct, along with most other life forms, at the end of the Permian Period.

Trilobites have been under scientific study since 1749, when Charles Lyttleton discovered the "Dudley Locust", although at that time it was thought to be an insect. Today, there are approximately 21,000 described species encompassing 165 families and nearly 4,000 genera.



"It is not necessary to be large to be a perfectly good arthropod (or mollusk, come to that)."

— Richard Fortey, *Trilobite: Eyewitness to Evolution*

Dallas Paleontological Society Releases New Book-Guide to Fossil Collecting

By Roger Farish

We are excited to announce the publication of the *Guide to Fossil Collecting* by the Dallas Paleontological Society. This 256-page, full-color work was painstakingly written by 20 of the Society's finest member-specialists and academic advisors. Some of the topics covered are:

- Introduction to and History of Paleontology
- Stratigraphy of the Dallas-Fort Worth area
- Fossil Collecting Basics
- Proper Collecting Procedures
- How to Excavate Fossils
- How to Prepare Fossils
- Micropaleontology
- How to Photograph Fossils
- How to Display Fossils
- Taphonomy of Fossils
- DPS Contributions to Paleontology

The 8.5x11" publication made its debut at FOSSILMANIA (large, annual fossil festival at Glen Rose, Texas) in the Fall of 2016. The book retails for \$30/book and can be purchased on-line at www.dallaspaleo.org.

The editors are Dr. George Maxey, retired Earth Science Adjunct Professor/Teaching Fellow from the University of North Texas and Mr. Roger Farish, longtime member and officer of the Dallas Paleontological Society, who has co-authored other texts such as *Fossil Sharks and Rays from the Cretaceous of Texas*.

Originally, the Guide to Fossil Collecting began as an idea from one of the Society's education committee meetings. Knowledgeable members, educators and scientists submitted articles to George and Roger for editing. Initially, just four chapters, the volume grew to around twelve chapters. It was a labor of love, as the venture ended up taking six years to complete. George and Roger followed through with its assembly and editing and Heritage Auctions (through DPS member Craig Kissick) very graciously facilitated the first printing in 2016.

The book is an excellent "how to" guide for those

especially of the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Considered an occasional paper, the Society hopes to add subsequent chapters in future editions of the book. Learn more about this text and other DPS publications at www.dallaspaleo.org/store.

Editor's Note: I haven't seen a copy of this book yet but I have several of the other books offered by the Dallas club. They are all very excellent.

Fossil of the Month



The fossil of the month is *Lithostrotionella castelnaui* (Yabe & Hayasaka, 1915) from the St. Louis Limestone (Mississippian) of St. Louis County. Resembling a bee hive, this common colony coral can be found along small creeks and in newly-cleared construction areas where the St. Louis Limestone has been exposed. It can be found in southern St. Louis and northern Jefferson counties in Missouri as well as in northern Kentucky and central Tennessee. Large colonies, greater than two feet in diameter, are popular as garden rocks.

Several species of this colony coral have been described from the St. Louis Limestone. The following is the accepted taxonomic information for the illustrated specimen.

Taxonavigation:

Phylum: Cnidaria
Class: Anthozoa
Subclass: Hexacorallia
Order: Rugosa
Family: Petalaxidae
Genus: *Lithostrotionella*
Species: *castelnaui* (Yabe & Hayasaka, 1915)

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 in Room 203, 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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