

Volume 60 & Number 11 & November 2014 & A monthly newsletter for and by the members of MAGS

"Bite Me, Scratch Me, Bore Me to Death"

November Program The Study of Ichnofossils Dr. Michael A. Gibson, University of Tennessee at Martin



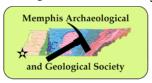
Ichnofossils (from the Greek "ichnos" = trace), also called trace fossils, are physical traces of behavior of an organism preserved within sediment and sedimentary rock. The earliest known ichnofossils are simple tubes from the Paleoproterozoic Medicine Peak Formation (2.5–2.0 billion years old). Ichnofossils make up one of the three basic types of fossil preservation: body fossil, trace fossil, and molecular fossil. Most collectors recognize body fossils readily—shells, bone, teeth usually. Molecular fossils *Continued*, *P*, 3

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2015 DUES ARE DUE

Membership Director Bob Cooper has spent many hours updating our membership list, filling in

missing information. Now he's ready to start 2015. You can renew your membership starting today. This is also a good time to verify that your contact information is up to date. Bob is hoping to get everyone to renew before January 31.



Renew your membership now.

Send checks to Bob Cooper 8695 Baylor Road Arlington, TN 38002. Categories are: Family: \$25 Individual: \$20 Junior (under 18): \$10

MAGS Rockhound News ◊ A monthly newsletter for and by the members of MAGS

2013-2014 MAGS BOARD

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MAGS AND FEDERATION NOTES

November 14 is MAGS election day. The election of 2015-2016 Board Members will take place at the November Membership Meeting. The current Board is shown on the left-hand side of this page, and the new Board nominees are listed on P. 4. Please come to the meeting and vote. You will also get to hear an interesting program on ichnofossils presented by Dr. Michael Gibson of the University of Tennessee at Martin.

2015 dues are due (see P. 1). You must be a paid-up Member to attend MAGS field trips and receive the newsletter.

Field trip plans for November and December will be announced soon. See P. 8 for a preview of 2015 trips.

MAGS General Membership Meetings and MAGS Youth Meetings are held at 7:30 P. M. on the second Friday of every month, year round. The meetings are held in the Fellowship Hall of Shady Grove Presbyterian Church, 5530 Shady Grove Road, Memphis, TN.

MAGS Website: memphisgeology.org

We aren't kidding when we say this is a newsletter for and by the members of MAGS. If an article has a byline the author is a MAGS Member, unless explicitly stated otherwise (we welcome articles by nonmembers). If there is no byline, the article was written or compiled by the Editor (a MAGS Member). Please contribute articles or pictures (everybody likes pictures) on any subject of interest to rockhounds. If it interests you it probably interests others. The 15th of the month is the deadline for next month's issue. Send material to lybanon@earthlink.net.

November DMC Field Trip

There will not be a DMC field trip for November. The next scheduled DMC trip will be hosted by the Knoxville Gem and Mineral Society this December.

Links to Federation News

- AFMS: www.amfed.org/afms_news.htm
- SFMS: <u>www.amfed.org/sfms/</u>
- DMC: www.amfed.org/sfms/_dmc/dmc.htm

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The Study of Ichnofossils are chemi-Continued from P. 1 cal in nature (oil,

coal). Ichnofossils are better described as "fossilized behavior", representing something an organism did-burrowed, bored, bit something, scratched something, or left behind fecal material. The evidence of behavior is preserved in the sediment in which the organism lived and was produced by the organism, so they are also considered "biogenic sedimentary structures". Trace fossils are not generally subject to later reworking by water, wind, or ice like body fossils, thus they also represent behavior that occurred at the place of discovery, or in situ. Types of preservable behavior include: food gathering patterns, resting traces, domiciles, crawling traces, escape burrows, borings, fossil feces (coprolites), and bite marks.

There has been considerable discussion over the naming of ichnofossils. Typically paleontologists use Linnaean binomial nomenclature of genus and species (ex. Teichichnus, Chondrites, Sko-

lithos linearis) like other fossils, which can lead to confusion. Often the trace of an organism has different names than the actual organism. For example, the burrow of the ghost shrimp Callianassa is Ophiomorpha. Trace fossil names can often be recognized by their suffixes: -ichites, -ichnus, -craterion, or -opus. The use of binomial nomenclature normally reserved for well-known body fossil organisms may seem odd, but is understandable considering the biological nature of the traces themselves and the variety of forms producible.

The location of traces (e.g., within a bed, on the bottom surface of a bed, top surface of a bed, etc.) is important to their recognition and interpretation, leading to several preservation schemes for trace fossils. The late Adolf "Dolf" Seilacher was one of the 20th century's most influential paleontologists and well known for his ability at innovative thinking in paleontology and his creative and detailed paleontological artwork. He developed the most widely used preservational classification system hinged on being able to identify the correct "up" direction of a slab of rock relative to bedding contacts and sediment infill. Traces are first subdivided into full relief (within the bed) and semirelief (on the surface of a bed) traces and then further subdivided according to whether the trace is raised on the surface of that bed or incised into the surface of that bed. The names for these traces fossils are related to the correct "up" orientation of the rock slab.

One challenge of studying traces is that a single organism can produce a wide number of trace fossils that may have subtle variations or be drastically different and that one type of trace can be made by numerous different organisms. Identifying the trace maker is an important goal of paleoichnology, but the traces remain useful even when the trace maker goes unknown. Paleontologist Robert Frey grouped traces according to behavior - resting, feeding, dwelling; whereas, Dolph Seilacher developed the first widely usable association scheme of traces, named for the dominant trace in the association and correlated to environments (e.g., Skolithos burrowing or Cruziana crawling associations).

Trace fossils are important fossils that are often overlooked by amateur collectors, but can be an enriching collecting experience. Collecting evidence of behavior of fossils organisms is akin to modern forensic science where the investigator strives to unravel behaviors and events from "trace evidence", even in the absence of the perpetrator.

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Board Election

MAGS elects a new Board of Electors at the November Membership Meeting in evennumbered years—that's the next meeting. Those elected serve twoyear terms, starting in January.

The Nominating Committee has prepared the following slate of candidates. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the November meeting.

- ♦ President: W. C. McDaniel
- Director, Field Trips: Charles Hill
- Director, Assistant Field Trips: open
- Director, Programs: Carol Lybanon
- Director, Assistant Programs: Kim Hill
- ◆ Secretary: Mike Baldwin
- ✦ Treasurer: Bonnie Cooper
- Director, Youth Program: James Butchko
- Director, Assistant Youth Program: Chris Scott
- Director, Membership: Bob Cooper
- Director, Librarian: Ron Brister

Assistant Librarian: Marc Mueller (not an official Board position)

 Director, Historian: Nannett McDougal-Dykes

The Editor, Show Chairperson, and Web Coordinator are appointed Board positions.

Anyone who enjoys field trips and who might be interested in joining the Board as Assistant Field Trip Leader should call Nannett at (901) 634-9388.

Parsons Field Trip Report Lori Carter



One advantage of a 6 A. M. start time for a field trip is that you have the opportunity to see a spectacular sunrise. That was certainly the case as we gathered in the dark for the September 27th field trip to Parsons, Tennessee. We were welcomed by gracious quarry personnel who explained all of the safety rules and boundaries for the trip.

Once in the quarry we had plenty of terrain to cover. Fossils were abundant so it was a matter of choosing what to take home. The Parsons quarry is in the Ross formation with Devonian age fossils. Crinoid stems were everywhere and once we found the right spot amongst the boulders and had our eyes tuned properly, we found several "trilo-bits".

Many thanks to everyone at MAGS who arranged the trip and to the Vulcan Materials Company personnel who made the trip possible. (*Editors Note: Thanks also to NMGMS. This was a joint trip.*)



September DMC Field Trip Report Toby Stewart

Cobb County Gem and Mineral Society

It was a beautiful sunny day on September 20, when Cobb County Gem and Mineral Society Inc. (CCGMS) hosted the September DMC trip to Sandersville, Georgia. Dr. John Anderson, CCGMS Field Trip Team Member, Paleontologist and Dean at Virginia Western Community College in Roanoke, Virginia, led the trip. John has conducted extensive research on fossils in the Sandersville Limestone and published his findings in scientific journals. So, John was the perfect person to answer all the questions the fossil hunters attending the trip had as they found pieces of bone or other parts of vertebrates in their sifting frames. Geologists Bill Waggener and Dion Stewart added their help and expertise to the field trip.

Participants collected fossils in a creek that had eroded the limestone bedrock into a karst topography with sinkholes, a cave, and natural bridges. The fossils were found in the Sandersville Limestone, an Upper Eocene Jacksonian marine unit, which was deposited between 26 to 28 mya when ancient seas covered the central part of Georgia. Participants sifted the sand and gravels of the creek finding skate teeth, shark teeth, shark coprolite, manatee and reptile bones, as well as invertebrates. Many fossilized sand dollars were hidden in the limestone that made up the bed of the creek. The geology team taught participants how to recognize Continued, P. 5

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September DMC Field Trip Report Continued from P.4

the small discrete signs of sand dollars in the bank, and demonstrated how to remove them carefully with chisels and hammers. They also explained how to clean the sand dollars after the trip. Although all of the participants found a wide variety of fossils, the finds of the day were an especially large shark tooth and a whale tooth!

Seven different DMC clubs were represented by members who were able to attend the trip. The trip was limited to 38 participants due to private land restrictions. Water, snacks, and plastic containers to put small fossil finds of shark and skate teeth were provided to participants by CCGMS. ALCONT.

CGAMS Show

The Columbia Gem & Mineral Society (Columbia, South Carolina) will hold its 47th Annual Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show 2014

> Fri., Nov. 21, 10:00-6:00; Sat., Nov. 22, 10:00-6:00; Sun., Nov. 23, 12:00-5:00

Jamil Temple 206 Jamil Road Columbia, SC 29210

- Jewelry, beads, loose stones, fossils, minerals, gold, silver, & tools for sale
- ★ Geodes sold & cut
- Club member's rock collec-★ tions on exhibit & lapidary demonstrations.
- ★ Lots of fun for the whole family.

South Carolina amethyst on ★ display.

\$5.00 for adults, children sixteen & under are free with adult.

All military & their dependents are free.

Information: (803) 736-9317, ashrader@mindspring.com, or www.cgams.org.

September Board Minutes

Carol Lybanon

The MAGS Board of Directors met September 4 at St. Francis Hospital, 5959 Park Avenue. The meeting was called to order by W. C. McDaniel at 6:35 P. M.; President Paul Sides took charge of the meeting when he arrived. Present were: Mike Baldwin, Ron Brister, James Butchko, Bob Cooper, Bonnie Cooper, Charles Hill, Carol Lybanon, Matthew Lybanon, W. C. McDaniel, Nannett McDougal-Dykes, Paul Sides, and Marc Mueller. Secretary: The minutes were ap-

proved as submitted.

Treasurer: No report.

Membership: Bonnie is updating the membership roster. Bob would like to put together membership packages again. He asked if the membership application on the website has the new address; Mike said yes. Bob asked for the authority to deposit membership checks into the club account; the Board agreed. Bonnie has also made up a membership directory, which will be available online.

Field Trips: W. C. reported that the club reimbursement for the two recent museum field trips was \$87.50. Our September 27 field trip will be to Parsons, Tennessee. This will be a combined trip with the North Mississippi club, limited to 25 adults. On October 11 we will visit one of the Memphis Stone & Gravel sites. The November field trip to Black Rock

may be postponed because of water in the dolomite pit. W. C. may change the November trip to one going to the Arkansas rock quarry. We will also have a trip to Richardson Landing Thanksgiving weekend, if the river isn't too high.

Adult Programs: Ron reported that the program schedule for the rest of the year remains the same.

Junior Programs: September-Native American war shields; October-fossil dig; November-cave paintings.

Show: Bonnie has been working on the Show postcard mailing list, eliminating duplicate entries. Jim reminded everybody that the first Showteam meeting will be Monday, September 8, 6:30 P. M. at the Agricenter. Saturday, September 6, there will be a cleanup at the shed. Anyone who would like to help is welcome.

Library: The last book sale netted the club \$26.25. Ron would like to sell all duplicate books. W. C. suggested that Ron talk to other clubs, so that we might donate some of our duplicates to their libraries.

Newsletter: Matthew reported that our newsletter got some national recognition. The newsletter and some articles won awards in the AFMS Bulletin Editors Contest. Mike reported that the newsletters have been printed and mailed to those Members who don't have email.

Webmaster: The current newsletter is posted on the website. Mike arranged for the domain name payments to be automatic. He said he would like to turn the job of webmaster over to someone else, since he has been doing it for 17 years.

Historian/Rock Swap: Nannett is continuing to work on our October Shelby Farms picnic. It will take place October 25, 8:00-1:00. She will send a new map for the October newsletter. Shelby Farms is listing our event on their

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September Board Minutes website, so Continued from P. 5 that we will be able to

sell rocks/minerals/fossils at the picnic. Nannett is also working on the December party. She is gathering gift certificates so that she will have a lot of door prizes. She also mentioned that she needs more pet rocks for the children's programs she is presenting for MAGS. W. C. will check with Alan Parks. Carol and Matthew will do a presentation for MAGS at Shelby Farms on October 6.

Old Business:

- Ron reported on the MAGS Archaeology Interest Group at Chucalissa. We are finishing up on our first project. The next project will be putting together an index collection of artifacts.
- Carol showed the Board two possible designs. After some discussion, a motion was made and carried to go ahead with the full-color badge.
 Carol will proceed to order them.
- Paul reported that the nominating committee has been selected and is working on a slate.

New Business:

- ➤ W. C. suggested that the club prepare some set programs that our Members can use when they are asked to give programs. The Board thought this was a very good idea. Bonnie suggested that we set aside an area in the shed for the programs and associated materials, so that we don't have to search the shed every time we need them.
- W. C. suggested a two-year renewable membership. This item was tabled.
- The Board decided on two donations to be made from the 2014 Show proceeds: \$1,000 to Ronald McDonald House Charities of Memphis and \$1,600 to the C. H. Nash Museum at Chucalissa.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 P. M.

September Meeting Minutes

Carol Lybanon

The MAGS Membership Meeting was held at Shady Grove Presbyterian Church on September 12. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 P. M. 40 Members and 6 visitors were present. **BUSINESS: Membership Chair Bob** Cooper introduced the visitors and one new Member. Charles Hill, in the absence of W. C. McDaniel, told Members about the next two field trips. The September 27 trip to Vulcan Quarry is already filled, but you can add your name to the list in case there are cancellations. The next field trip is to Memphis Stone & Gravel Co. on October 11; there is a signup sheet. Ron Brister reported that our library is growing. We have information on any topic of interest to our group. Everybody should use the library; the checkout time is two months. Jim Butchko reported on the Show. The Showteam met last Monday. There is still time to join the Showteam. Jim asked for additional donations of grab bag material. Matthew Lybanon again asked for articles and pictures for the newsletter. If you are not getting your newsletter please contact him and update your email address. He informed the Members about the recent awards the newsletter won in the AFMS contest. Paul Sides asked the membership if anyone is interested in taking over as club webmaster. Mike Baldwin will be stepping down at the end of December.

DISPLAYS: There was one display, by Chris Scott, containing specimens he collected at Nonconnah Creek.

PROGRAM: Ron Brister introduced Herb Nicholson, who presented a program on "The Geology of East Tennessee."



November Birthdays

W. C. McDaniel Ι Carley Crawford 3 5 Keagan McMann Mike Soroczak 12 Matthew Lambert 13 Phillip Goossens 15 16 **Chris Scott Regina Richards** 17 18 Cathie Jacobs Clyde Chrisman 19 Nina Riding Tabitha Lambert 21 Melba Cole 22 Angela Hill Shirley Ruth Chrisman 23 James Brown Brittani Lambert **Charles** Carter 24 28 Alan Parks **Charlize Phillips** 29 Crystal Dunn Ashley Von Boeckman Robert Neill 30

MAGS At Big Scoop



Look at the line! MAGS participated in the 20th Annual Big Scoop Ice Cream Festival, a fundraiser for Ronald McDonald House Charities of Memphis. The event took place at AutoZone Park on September 27. Photo credit: Marc Mueller.

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MAGS Field Trip

Memphis Stone & Gravel Co.

October 11, 2014



Hope we're first at the new site



2015 Fee-Free Days

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Forest Service (USFS) and the National Park Service (NPS) have announced Fee-Free days for 2015. Normally, use fees supplement the small (compared to other Federal agencies) appropriations these agencies receive. But some days are free.

The fee-free dates for 2015 and the participating agencies for each date are shown below:

- ✓ January 19, 2015, Martin Luther King Jr. Day (BLM, NPS, USFS, USFWS)
- ✓ February 14-16, 2015, Presidents Day weekend (BLM, NPS, (USFS -16th Only), USFWS)
- ✓ April 18-19, 2015, Opening



Weekend of National Park Week (NPS)

- ✓ June 13, 2015, National Get Outdoors Day (USFS)
- ✓ August 25, 2015, National Park Service Birthday (NPS)
- September 26, 2015, National Public Lands Day (BLM, NPS, USFS, USFWS)
- ✓ October 11, 2015, First Sunday of National Wildlife Refuge Week (USFWS)
- ✓ November 11, 2015, Veterans Day (BLM, NPS, USFS, USFWS)

More information is available on the websites of the agencies.



MTGMS Show

The Mid-Tennessee Gem & Mineral Society sponsors a show the second weekend of each December. Details of this year's show follow.

34th Annual "Earth Treasuures"

Ag Expo Park 4215 Long Lane Franklin, TN 37064

Saturday, December 13 9 AM-6 PM

Sunday, December 14 10 AM-5PM

Admission:

Adults, \$4.00 (2-day pass, \$6.00) Children under 12 with adult, **free** Scouts in uniform, **free** *Free parking!*

More information: <u>www.MTGMS.org</u>

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2015 Field Trip Plans

Charles Hill Director, Assistant Field Trips

Hello, MAGS members. I have been nominated for the position of Field Trip Director for 2015. If elected, I have plans to do a few things differently. I don't have the time or resources to go on ten field trips a year. I will seek help, as every field trip director does, for some of these trips. I am also planning a series of day trips. A day trip is a limited excursion to smaller local hunting sites. These sites are some I go to that are not big enough for a lot of people. These trips will be on weekends other than the larger field trips, which are scheduled on a monthly basis. The day trips will be announced in the newsletter, with a signup sheet provided at the regular members meetings. Most of these trips will be limited to ten people or less. In the interest of fairness, first come, first served will not always be the deciding factor in who goes and who does not. I will keep the signup sheets and make sure that people who have not gone on previous trips will have the opportunity to go on later ones.

All of the following will be regular monthly first trips, and not day trips. The January 11 trip will be to the Twin Creek Crystal Mine in Mt. Ida, Arkansas. This is a fairly new mine on the same crystal vein as Fiddler's Ridge Mine. At this mine you are allowed on the actual wall face of the mine. This will be hard, hammer and chisel mining. They also have tailing piles for those who prefer them. The Twin Creek Crystal Mine has an extensive Facebook page. Take some time to look it up.

Trip two will be to Nonconnah Creek by Brooks Road. It will be scheduled on Sunday, February 15 to avoid Valentine's Day. I believe we need a short, easy trip after Mt Ida. At this site you can find petrified wood, banded river agate, fossils, river-polished stones, and river-tumbled glass.

Trip three will be to Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro, Arkansas. If you have not been there, please look at their website. I have spoken to the good people there and a geologist will give a 20-minute class on site about what to look for and what to do. She will also give a brief geological talk *Continued*, *P. 9*

October 25 MAGS Picnic and Rock Swap



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2015 Field Trip Plans about the vol-Continued from P.8 canic vent on which the site

is located for those interested.

I do want to put out an early notice to let everyone know that on March 18, 2016, our field trip will be to North Carolina. It will be a four-day trip, with Friday the 18th and Monday the 21st being travel days. Limited hunting may be possible on Friday and Monday. All sites will be no-fee locations:

- I) Buck's Creek for garnets and sapphires.
- 2) Chunky Gal Mountain for sapphires and rubies in zoisite matrix.
- 3) Bridal Veil Falls for individual garnets and garnets in mica schist matrix.
- 4) a nearby lake for sapphires and tourmaline.

Jewelry Bench Tips by Brad Smith

SOURCE FOR PLASTIC

We often use plastic in our studios, like for a single part die or for a template. So it's handy to have a small supply along with the rest of your sheet, wire, copper and bronze. But we seldom think to buy and stock any plastic.

The plastics store I go to has a scrap bin out back where they give away small pieces and scraps. I usually opt for the 3/8 and 1/2 inch thicknesses for use as forming dies, but there's always a variety of sizes and colors to choose from including thin sheets that are good for templates.

You can find a shop with Google or the Yellow Pages. Next time you go to your local shop, ask if they have a scrap bin.

SMALL PARTS CONTAINERS



I'm always on the lookout for small containers to hold those various little parts and tools we deal with in making jewelry, especially since I go back and forth to classes and workshops. My latest find are some plastic vials about 15 mm in diameter and 75 mm long. Best part is they are free.

The vials are used in hospitals and doctor's offices to draw blood samples. They must be thrown out after their expiration date. On my last doctors visit, I asked the nurse if they had any expired vials. She tried to give me 400 of them. We settled on 200.

The ones I have are called "Vacutainers", but there are probably other brand names. They are sterile and made of clear plastic with a rubber stopper and a paper label all ready to write on. I find them really handy for small parts like jump rings, prong settings, small drills, nuts & bolts, faceted stones, and precious metal filings.

Also shown are some other handy containers—pill bottles, the old 35mm film cans, and metal breath mint boxes.

Get all 101 of Brad's bench tips

in "Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" on <u>Amazon</u>.

Two Ancient Villages Emerge



Archaeology reports that two villages estimated to be 1,300 years old have been discovered in the high desert of northern Arizona. The sites, recently acquired by Petrified Forest National Park, feature walls and floors lined with slabs of sandstone. "Last year we found a large habitation site, and this summer we found a match, less than a mile away, a site that has dozens and dozens of different features. We have now two large groups of pit house structures, both of them with probably more than 50 structures associated with them," according to park archaeologist William Reitze. He and his team also recovered ceramics and stone points from the late Basketmaker period, when the residents of the village were transitioning from nomadic foraging to a more sedentary society based upon agriculture. "These sites are often in large sand dunes, but there is no rock there. So any kind of slab at all that you find out there was brought in by people," Reitze explained.

One tectonic plate bumped into another. "Sorry, it's my fault." Now you know why there aren't any geologist standup comedians.

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Another Ammonite Hunting Chance



Who cares about the weather? MAGSters have collected druse quartz in single-digit temperatures and ammonites in triple-digit temperatures. Real rockhounds don't let little things like the weather bother them.

But wouldn't it be nice to collect in comfortable temperatures? Quite a few people have said they wanted to go (back) to Texas for some of those big ammonites. We are looking at two date ranges: February 26-March 2, 2015, or March 19-23 (including two travel days).

It's a 500-mile drive, but that's where the ammonites are. We

would like to find out who is really considering making the trip. Contact Matthew or Carol Lybanon, (901)



757-2144 or <u>lybanon@earthlink.net</u>, to let us know.

If you missed the last trip, here is another chance.

Calendar

November 6, 2014

Board Meeting, St. Francis Hospital, 6:30 P. M.

November 14, 2014

Membership Meeting and Board Election, Shady Grove Presbyterian Church, 7:30 P. M.

November 15, 2014

Volunteer Day at Chucalissa and Archaeology Interest Group Meeting

November 21-23, 2014 CGAMS Show, Columbia, SC

Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society 2019 Littlemore Drive Memphis,TN 38016

