

SOCIETY OF VERTEBRATE PALEONTOLOGY NEWS BULLETIN

Number 189 \$ Fall 2005

— TABLE OF CONTENTS —

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Official Business | 2 |
| New Members..... | 2 |
| News From Members | 7 |
| Obituaries..... | 26 |
| Statement of Ethics..... | 30 |
| SVP Sponsors..... | 30 |
| Sponsorship Application Form | 30 |
| SVP Order Form | 31 |
| SVP Membership Application Form..... | 31 |
| Contributions..... | 31 |

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— OFFICIAL BUSINESS —

BARBARA STAHL BEQUEST

The SVP gratefully acknowledges a bequest from the estate of Barbara Stahl as a contribution for the purpose of supporting the Student Roundtable at the annual meeting in Mesa, Arizona. Barbara Stahl was a longtime member of SVP having been nominated by Tillie Edinger. She wrote extensively publishing "Vertebrate History" in 1974 and Volume 4 "Chondrichthyes II" of the Handbook of Paleichthyology in 1999. She was Alfred S. Romer's last graduate student at Harvard. (Annalisa Berta)

WELCOME TO NANCY WITTY

Join us in welcoming Nancy Witty as the SVP Executive Director. Nancy joined the SVP headquarters office on 3 May 2005 and we are delighted to have her on board. Nancy was most recently the Associate Director of Research Administration at New York University's Child Study Center. She has also held executive positions at several national organizations, including the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Nancy can be reached via e-mail at nwitty@vertpaleo.org or via phone at (847) 480-9095, ext. 224.

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— NEWS FROM MEMBERS —

CANADA (Kevin Seymour, Canada Editor, kevins@rom.on.ca)

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With the retirement of Des Collins and Joan Burke, and the deaths of part-time cataloguer Pam Purves and former cataloguer Pierre Lacasse, the paleo section is shrinking. In this respect we welcome new Department Associate Grant Hurlburt, and Research Associate Sean Modesto (honorary positions only, of course!). As well, Rob Holmes has been assisting Janet Waddington as Academic Advisor for the new Age of Dinosaurs gallery, and Gerry De Iuliis has been assisting Kevin Seymour as Academic Advisor with the new Age of Mammals gallery. Gerry was also the Contract Curator for the “Feathered Dinosaurs and the Origin of Flight” show that is presently at the ROM. All four technicians (Ian Morrison, Brian Iwama, Kathy David, and Pete Fenton) are working full time on gallery specimens (both invertebrate and vertebrate) for the new exhibits.

This spring, all four remaining curatorial staff (Peter von Bitter, Dave Rudkin, Janet, and Kevin) managed a few days of field work in the Ordovician Gull River Formation of St. Joseph Island, Ontario, in order to collect disarticulated material of *Astraspis* and maybe other early “fish.”

We continue to thrive partly because of valuable volunteers: Eleanor LeBlanc, who has been assisting in the preparation lab for many years now; Shawn Doran, who is preparing Recent skeletons and doing Kevin’s screenwashing of the Don Valley Brickworks sediment; Mary-Lou Lamont, who is soldiering through integrating Basil Cooke’s and Chris McGowan’s reprint collections into the main reprint collection; and David Stermole, who has rearranged and relabeled the drawers of the hadrosaur and Recent osteology collections, and reorganized the departmental journal collection. We also welcome co-op student Gila Sasson, who is working on cataloguing part of the Brayfield collection of Pleistocene vertebrates from Florida into the main collection. (Kevin Seymour)

University of Alberta Laboratory for Vertebrate Palaeontology (UALVP)

The scientific disciplines of vertebrate paleontology, evolution, and systematics, along with the good-old-fashioned discipline of whole-organism biology, are alive and prospering in the vibrant academic atmosphere of the University of Alberta. Centennial celebrations (province and university) along with pricey oil, have provided sizeable economic spill-over to the U of A not just in terms of infrastructure, but in terms of actually hiring new people.

With a bit of work, the U of A, and specifically myself and Mark Wilson, have managed to lure Dr. Phil Currie away from the Royal Tyrrell Museum to accept a full-time, full-professor appointment here at the U of A in the UALVP. Phil will be joining the University as an academic staff member of the Biological Sciences Department. Our complement of vertebrate paleontologists will be the largest academic unit in Canada: Mark Wilson, Mike Caldwell, Phil Currie, and Richard Fox (Professor Emeritus and active). A new full-time technical position will be filled shortly after Phil starts at the U of A on 1 October 2005. We can only begin to imagine the impact on our program, our students, and our research as a result of the arrival of Phil and his wife and collaborator, Eva Koppelhus.

Since we last contributed an update to the *News Bulletin*, Mike Caldwell’s lab has had several successful field seasons around the world and here at home. With a team from the Royal Saskatchewan Museum in Regina, we collected and are now preparing a spectacularly complete specimen of a mosasaur from the Bearpaw Shale Formation of southern Saskatchewan. Timon Bullard is writing up his MSc research on the tylosaurine mosasaurs of North America with emphasis on specimens from Saskatchewan.

During the summer of 2004, with the assistance of an NGCRE grant, Mike Caldwell took his team (Bullard, Dutchak, Lindoe, Diedrich, Gingras) into the field and off to the Island of Hvar, Croatia, where they spent five weeks prospecting for Cenomanian squamates. Two new lizard specimens were located, exacting paleoenvironmental reconstructions were made, and Alex Dutchak got to see the localities where his aigialosaur specimens were collected some 150 years ago. As of 6 June, Alex successfully defended his MSc thesis and is now off to the University of Colorado, Boulder, where he will begin work in Jaelyn Eberle's lab on fuzzy, furry animals called mammals—or something like that.

Two new grad students have joined Mike's lab—Takuya Konishi and Braden Barr. Both Takuya and Braden are working towards PhDs and both are working on lizard projects. Takuya is revising the plioplatecarpine mosasaurs and is on his Cope-Marsh mosasaur museums tour for two months this summer. Braden is working on an articulated and well-preserved Maastrichtian anguimorph from southern Saskatchewan and on the larger question of anguimorph phylogeny and paleogeography, and is very importantly playing dad to a new baby.

Mike's advisory work has expanded beyond his own lab. Mike is working closely, in an unofficial role, with Laszlo Makadi, a graduate student at the University of Budapest, Budapest, Hungary. Laszlo's research project is focused on an exciting new mosasaur from the Upper Cretaceous of Hungary, along with a number of terrestrial lizards. Officially, Mike is co-advising Alessandro Palci from the University of Modena, Modena, Italy; Alessandro's project is a revision, redescription, and description of old and new material of Cenomanian squamates from Komen, Slovenia. This summer Mike and Alessandro will return to the localities to prospect for new material. Finally, Mike is also co-advisor with Dr. Victor Reynoso, UNAM, one of Mike's fellow graduate students from Bob Carroll's lab, on the PhD thesis project of Francisco Trujillo-Cornejo. Francisco's project is a systematic revision of the teiids and gymnophthalmids using both molecular as well as morphological data, and most importantly fossil specimens; Dr. Randy Nydam is also a key advisor on Francisco's project.

Mark Wilson is no longer acting as Associate Chair Undergraduate, and that fact combined with a just-concluded study leave has allowed progress on a number of fronts (although being Senior Editor of *JVP* has taken its toll as usual). He continues to work on the amazing Early Devonian fossils of the MOTH locality in the Northwest Territories; has completed, with Tiiu Märss and Ray Thorsteinsson, a monographic study of Canadian Arctic thelodonts; has published and continues work also with Märss on thelodont phylogeny; has submitted, with Märss and Gavin Hanke, new ideas on the homology of paired fins; and is co-editing the H.-P. Schultze festschrift "Recent Advances in the Origin and Early Radiation of Vertebrates." Mark spent time in Tallinn, Estonia, this January getting intimately familiar with thousands of specimens of the Silurian thelodont *Phlebolepis elegans*. Mark continues to pursue opportunities in the Mesozoic (e.g., Albian fishes from northeastern British Columbia) and the Cenozoic (e.g., collaborating with Mike Newbrey of North Dakota State University on Paleocene teleosts and with Alison Murray on Eocene osteoglossomorphs from Africa).

Two new graduate students joined Mark's lab last September, and one will arrive in September 2005. Lindsay Mackenzie is studying the morphology, histology, and homologies of toothlike structures in early gnathostomes with emphasis on the species in the MOTH assemblage. Todd Cook has begun a study of Turonian sharks based on teeth from a Turonian locality in northwestern Alberta. Jessica Hawthorn will begin her MSc thesis on poraspidine and related heterostracans from northwestern Canada this coming September.

Craig Scott, supervised by Richard Fox, is continuing his doctoral dissertation research on Paleocene mammals. He is publishing his work as swiftly as he can and is looking at defending his thesis in the not-too-distant future. Craig and Dick have been working on a number of co-authored publications, one of which will shortly bring them no end of notoriety. (Mike Caldwell)

University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario

Jeff Thomason has successfully collaborated with Steve Wroe (University of Sydney) and Colin McHenry (University of Newcastle) in Australia on the estimation of relative biting forces in a variety of extant and extinct mammals. The Aussies were patriotically excited at the hard bites that *Thylacoleo* could apparently generate. Jeff is now working on calibrating the method in vivo to give absolute estimates for future studies. (Jeff Thomason)

FRANCE (Xiaobo Yu, International Editor, xyu@cougar.kean.edu)

Département Histoire de la Terre, UMR 5143 du CNRS, Paléobiodiversité (Lab. Paléontologie), Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris

Philippe Janvier is currently working in collaboration with John Maisey (AMNH, New York) on the cranial anatomy of *Pucapampella* and other chondrichthyans from the Middle Devonian of Bolivia. In the framework of his research on Devonian vertebrates of South America, he did field work in Bolivia in June 2004 and Colombia in November 2004, and plans new field trips there in the fall of 2005. In addition, he is finishing the description of new material of the two enigmatic agnathans *Euphanerops* and *Endeiolepis* from the Late Devonian of Miguasha, Québec, with new information about their internal anatomy. His plan in the longer term is to resume field work on the Silurian–Devonian of Vietnam.

Vincent Pernègre is working on the Pteraspidiiformes (heterostracan) fauna of the Wood Bay Formation which reveals a previously unsuspected level of diversity. The genus *Doryaspis* contains five named species (Pernègre, 2005, *Geobios*) and one unpublished species. The genus *Gigantaspis* includes four species (Pernègre and Goujet, in press, *Palaeontology*). This work has led to the proposal of new faunal assemblages that are correlated to previously established faunal divisions of the formation based on other taxa (Pernègre, 2004, *Fossils and Strata*). The lithostratigraphic scale of the formation is still characterized faunally and compared with the biostratigraphic scale. The Austfjorden Member is proposed as being equivalent to the Sigurdfjellet-Kapp Kjeldsen faunal divisions, and the Dicksonfjord Member as being equivalent to the Keltiefjellet division. Based on comparisons with the Russian Arctic archipelagos, the Spokojnaya Formation (Severnaya Zemlya), the Mount Veselye Formation (Novaya Zemlya), and the Sigurdfjellet-Kapp Kjeldsen divisions (Svalbard) are regarded as equivalent. Phylogenetic analysis of the Pteraspidiiformes genera from Spitsbergen is in progress, with some recently published partial results.

Vincent Dupret is working on placoderm (Devonian armored fishes) origin and evolution. His PhD dealt with the genus *Kujdanowiaspis* from the Lower Devonian of Ukraine (only two genera and three species are retained from the eight previously supposed species; redescription of the axillar area of the pectoral fin; discovery of a new element of the vertebral column) and the relationships of Actinolepida, Phyllolepida, Wuttagoonaspida among Arthrodira (concluding to a basal paraphyly of the Actinolepida, and an absence of close relationships between Phyllolepida and Wuttagoonaspida). Field work in Podolia (Ukraine) and in Spitsbergen has led to the discovery of new material currently under study. He actually works with the Upper Devonian vertebrates from Turkey and Belgium (where regular excavations occur), together with Ph. Janvier, D. Goujet, H. Lelièvre (MNHN), G. Clément (Univ. Uppsala), A. Blicek (USTL Lille) and Belgian colleagues. He is presently involved in Frasnian–Famennian interchanges between Euramerica and Gondwana. Preliminary results were recently presented in Yerevan (Armenia—Devonian Vertebrates of the Continental Margins).

Marie-Hélène Hamel is finishing her thesis on the braincase anatomy of Carboniferous and Permian actinopterygians from USA and Brazil, by means of CT-scanning, under the supervision of Philippe Janvier and Cécile Poplin.

Cécile Poplin, although retired, is still working on the chapter on actinopterygians (excluding the teleosts) for the Handbook of Paleichthyology. She published with D. Dutheil a paper in

Geodiversitas (2005, 27-1) entitled “Les Aeduellidae (Pisces, Actinopterygii) carbonifères et permien: Systématique et étude phylogénétique préliminaire.” She has also organized with A. De Ricqlès the ceremony of the Academy for the formal introduction of Ph. Taquet.

Didier Dutheil is struggling with the final phase of his thesis on the Cretaceous bichir *Serenoichthys*, and keeps traveling worldwide on the track of Mesozoic fishes.

J. Sébastien Steyer (temnospondyls) coauthored an article in *Nature* about a new tetrapod fauna from the Permian of the Sahara, where he was invited in 2002 by C. A. Sidor (NYCOM) for field work (Sidor et al., 2005, *Nature*, 434:886–889). The detailed descriptions of two temnospondyls of this new Nigerien fauna are in press in *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*. Thanks to a National Geographic Grant he obtained in 2004, J. Sébastien was the principal investigator of an international field expedition in the Permian of Laos (February–March 2005). The team discovered several mammalian reptiles and a new amphibian. The material, still under preparation in the MNHN, will lead to interesting contributions in tetrapod anatomy and paleogeography. J. Sébastien also redescribed, with Ross Damiani (ex-BPI postdoc) a jaw fragment of a giant temnospondyl from the Triassic–Jurassic of Lesotho. The size of the fragment suggests a total body length of 7 m, and represents, with *Mastodonsaurus* (Triassic of Germany), the largest amphibians ever known (in press, *Bulletin SGF*). J. Sébastien is also working with C. A. Sidor and R. Damiani on a description of new material from Triassic of Antarctica.

Sophie Sanchez (sophie.sanchez@noos.fr) just defended her Master's thesis on the bone histology and skeletochronology of *Discosauriscus austriacus*, a seymouriamorph from the Lower Permian of the Czech Republic, under the co-supervision of J. Sébastien Steyer (CNRS/MNHN), Jacques Castanet (Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Paris), and with the help of Jozef Klemba (University of Bratislava, Slovak Republic). Sophie's results are interesting: the somatic age of *Discosauriscus austriacus* has been determined, and a shift from an aquatic to a rather amphibious or terrestrial way of life has been shown along the growth of that species. This is the first time that these methods have been applied to such old fossil material. Sophie is now starting her PhD under the supervision of Anick Abourachid (biomechanics, MNHN) and J. Sébastien Steyer. She will use microtomography to analyze and reconstruct the bone structures of early tetrapods. This nondestructive method will allow her to make detailed observations on rare specimens. She is also looking for a possible collaboration to analyze Devonian “fish” (e.g., panderichthyids) and then to better understand the modification of the bone structures around the “fish”/tetrapod transition.

As in 2004, Stéphane Jouve is intensively carrying on the study of the crocodyliforms. He currently holds a post-doctoral position in the Cadi Ayyad University of Marrakech (Morocco), with the financial support of the “Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie.” His work deals with several topics: the study of the crocodyliform fauna from northern Africa, the phylogenetic analysis of crocodyliforms and the problem of the longirostrine forms, and the crocodyliform diversity and the K–T crisis. Regarding the description of the crocodyliforms from northern Africa, he has eight recent papers describing new species, or revising and adding new material of previously known species. The main taxa studied are the dyrosaurids, a neosuchian taxon with a longirostrine morphology. This taxon makes it possible to apply a phylogenetic analysis to the problem of the longirostrine morphology. For the same purpose, a new longirostrine thallosuchian from the Jurassic of Algeria, and a further prepared teleosaur, are being studied. Finally, his main field of study on the Oulad Abdoun Basin, Morocco, is particularly timely for studying the evolution of the crocodyliform diversity and its implication for understanding K–T extinction.

In addition to paleontology, Nathalie Bardet and her husband Xabier Pereda Suberbiola are now fully involved in the care of their son Gaizka, who is already one year old. They spend their time between Paris and Bilbao (where Xabier works), where Nathalie collaborates with the vertebrate team of the Departamento de Estratigrafía y Paleontología of the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) on the study of the reptile remains from the Cretaceous of the Basque-

Cantabrian Basin. For the past few years, Nathalie focused most of her work on the study of the marine reptiles from the Maastrichtian phosphates of Morocco, and more especially on the mosasaurids. New papers include the description of a new species of the basal mosasaur *Halisaurus* (*Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society*, 2005, 143:447–472) and of a new species of *Globidens* (*The Netherlands Journal of Geosciences*, 2005, in press). Current research deals with the histology and systematics of the varanoid *Pachyvaranus*, in collaboration with V. de Buffrénil and J. C. Rage (both MNHN, Paris) and on the systematics of a (new?) species of *Prognathodon*. Other studies in progress deal with the biostratigraphy and biodiversity of marine vertebrates in the Maastrichtian phosphatic series, in collaboration with H. Cappetta (CNRS, Montpellier) and X. Pereda (UPV/EHU, Bilbao). Finally, after Stéphane Jouve who successfully defended his PhD thesis on the crocodyliformes from the phosphates of Morocco last year, Nathalie is now in charge of a new PhD thesis student, Peggy Vincent, who works on the phylogeny of Plesiosauria.

At the end of 2004, Philippe Taquet was elected to the French Academy of Sciences. Following the usual custom, his relatives, colleagues, and friends offered him his academician sword (with a bronze *Ouranosaurus* dinosaur on the pommel). They gave it to him during a ceremony held at the MNHN on 13 June 2005, the day after he was officially set up at the Academy. Before him, Camille Arambourg, Jean Piveteau, and Jean-Pierre Lehman from the Museum have been members of the French Academy of Sciences. Philippe attended the 2004 International Geological Congress in Florence (Italy) where he was elected as President of the International Commission for the History of Geology for four years. The field excursion following the congress was perfect, with the visit of the Val d'Arno on the steps of two precursors of paleontology, Leonardo da Vinci and Nicolas Stenon. In November, he visited Kevin Padian in Berkeley and during the spring of 2005, he was in the field with Emilie Lang in Algeria, collecting middle Jurassic sauropod bones, and then in Morocco with Ronan Allain, Nour-Eddine Jalil, and Dale Russell, collecting lower Jurassic sauropod bones. With his Belgian colleague Yohan Yans and with French paleobotanists, Philippe Taquet has published in *Palevol* a paper giving the correct—and hopefully definitive date (Barremian) for the locality of Bernissart where the *Iguanodon* skeletons were excavated at the end of the 19th century.

Jean-Claude Rage and Zbigniew Szyndlar (Cracow) have studied booid snakes from the latest Oligocene and early Miocene; during that period, faunas of booids of western and central Europe were different from those from older and younger levels. Jean-Claude and Salvador Bailon (Nice) have completed their work on the rich and diverse herpetofauna from the early Miocene (MN 4) of Béon 1 (France); the MN 4 level appears to be of interest as far as European herps are concerned. Jean-Claude and Marc Augé submitted a manuscript on Paleocene and Eocene herpetofaunas from Morocco to the *Annales de Paléontologie*. These Moroccan assemblages are the only diverse herpetofaunas from the Paleogene of Africa. Jean-Claude and Zbynek Rocek (Prague) are studying the well-preserved skull of a frog from the Eocene of the Phosphorites du Quercy. Jean-Claude is also trying to transform a draft (written some years ago) on various snakes from the Paleocene of Itaboraí (Brazil) into a true manuscript. When published, this work will be the third and last part of the study devoted to the snakes from Itaboraí. Jean-Claude has seen several of his papers on the Cretaceous published: a pachyostic aquatic lizard from France (with D. Néraudeau), frogs (with G. V. R. Prasad) and snakes (with G. V. R. Prasad and S. Bajpai) from India.

Aside from his teaching duties in northern France, Marc Augé has been busy editing his doctoral thesis for publication in the *Mémoires du Muséum*.

Estelle Bourdon is working hard to complete her PhD thesis on the late Paleocene and early Eocene birds from the Ouled Aboun Basin, Morocco. She published this year the new prophaetodontid *Lithoptila* (*JVP* 2005), and she is now working on the pseudo-toothed birds which is the most diverse group in the locality and the most diversified odontopterygiform known fauna.

Christian de Muizon has been heading the new Department of Earth History of the Museum for almost three years. This is a very time-consuming, although interesting, task and he has had to slow his research considerably. However, when Christian finds time between different meetings, he tries to do some research in his favorite fields, marine mammals and early South American mammals. Last year two papers on the skull and feeding adaptations of the aquatic sloth, *Thalassocnus*, from the Neogene of the Pisco Formation (Peru) were published. He has also in press a monograph (co-authored with V. Bouetel) on the pigmy cetothere, *Piscobalaena nana*, from the early Pliocene of the Pisco Formation. This work presents a remarkable series of five skulls and partial skeletons, which are thoroughly described and compared; a definition of the family Cetotheriidae as a monophyletic taxon is also given. Christian is preparing a comparative study of the petrosals of *Pucadelphys*, *Andinodelphys*, and *Mayulestes* from the early Paleocene of Tiupampa (Bolivia). This work (co-authored with S. Ladevèze) presents a parsimony analysis of most basal metatherians for which this bone is known. Other works are in preparation such as the study of two new cetotheres from the Miocene of the Pisco Formation and the description of the cranial anatomy of the pantodont *Alcidedorbignya inopinata* from Tiupampa, of which Christian discovered an exceptionally complete skeleton some years ago. Christian intends to reactivate his field activity (stopped since 2003) next year in the late Cretaceous and early Tertiary of Bolivia.

Sandrine Ladevèze is a PhD student at the MNHN under the supervision of Christian de Muizon. Her work focuses on the evolutionary history of metatherian mammals and their fossil relatives, and more particularly on the South American radiations. She is especially involved in the study of the auditory area since this anatomic complex turned out to carry significant phylogenetic signals. Her main material consists of complete or partial skulls and isolated petrosals of metatherians from Tiupampa (Early Paleocene of Bolivia) and diverse isolated metatherian petrosals from Itaboraí (Middle Paleocene of Brazil). Complete descriptions of these new petrosal bones have been completed (Ladevèze, 2004), and most of her current work will be submitted soon.

Emmanuel Gheerbrant is still focusing his research on the mammals from the Ouled Abdoun Basin, Morocco. He published this year in *Geodiversitas*, in collaboration with J. Sudre and P. Tassy, his monograph on *Phosphatherium* from the early Eocene, which includes the first reconstruction of the skull and the head of the species, and a phylogenetic study of early proboscideans and paenungulates. *Phosphatherium* will probably be a classical example in mammal evolution because it documents the emergence, at a very early stage, of a modern order of mammals—and of one of the most famous at that—the proboscideans. Emmanuel is describing the lower jaw of a new hyaenodontid creodont (work in prep.) which, together with the poorly known but primitive *Tinherodon* from the Thanetian of the Ouarzazate Basin, adds support for an African origin of at least the Hyaenodontidae from a local cimolestid stem lineage. New field research in the Ouled Abdoun, especially at Sidi Chennane, has yielded new significant fossil data on poorly known “condylarths” such as *Abdounodus* and *Ocepeia*. In parallel with this work, Emmanuel is working with H. Thomas and S. Peigné on a detailed description of the skeleton and systematic study of *Saghatherium* sp. from the early Oligocene of Jebel Hasawnah, Libya. In collaboration with K. D. Rose and M. Godinot, he published this year in *Acta Palaeontologica Polonica* the first report of a paleanodont from the Eocene of Europe, a poorly known species from Le Quesnoy (MP7, early Eocene), documented by a fragment of lower jaw and a few isolated postcranial bones. We discuss the paleobiogeographical implications of this new discovery for both the relationships of early Eocene European mammalian fauna and the hypotheses on pholidotans origin.

Marc Godinot is continuing his studies based on the earliest Eocene Le Quesnoy fauna. A paper on the plesiadapid lineage and its potential biochronological implications was submitted and more should follow. Studies more particularly devoted to primates include an ongoing paper on lemuriform origins, following an oral presentation at last year's meeting of the International Primatology Society in Turin. Marc is also busy with two PhD students, Sébastien Couette finishing in Dijon a PhD of the EPHE on platyrrhine skull morphometrics, and Herimalala Raveloson advancing his work on the Lemuridae in the lab of Y. Rumpler in Strasbourg.

Martin Pickford, Brigitte Senut, and their colleagues were deeply involved throughout the year in their long-term project on the paleontology of sub-Saharan Africa, which has now reached its 20th year. The focus was on the ape–human transition and the context in which this transition took place. Of major interest was the discovery of a stunning leaf, flower, and feather bed in the Lukeino Formation. This is the Late Miocene unit that yielded the earliest known bipedal hominoid, *Orrorin tugenensis*. The flora suggests that the environment was humid with heavy woodland and forest, but with some open country not far off. This is in general agreement with the fauna, which contains many forest-adapted lineages (*Hyemoschus* [water chevrotain], *Dendrohyrax* [tree hyrax], *Nandinia* [palm civet], fruit bats, colobus monkeys, a gorilline, cephalophines, arboreal rodents, and so on). Open country taxa are present but are usually rare. Additional fossils of *Orrorin* were found, including a terminal phalange of the thumb which is remarkably humanlike, and not like those of African apes on the one hand, or those of australopithecines on the other.

Prospecting and screening in Early Miocene deposits in Uganda and Kenya led to the recovery of over 30 hominoid remains, including new parts of the enigmatic “small ape” *Kogolepithecus* from Moroto II. This locality has also yielded galagids, cercopithecoids, and two species of large apes, as well as a varied micromammal fauna. From six taxa known just five years ago, a total of 30 species are known from the site, which will throw light on the age and paleoenvironment of the deposits. Their work in Sperrgebiet and the Otavi Mountains, Namibia, was fruitful, with the recovery of fossils (*Zygodon turicensis*) at a new Middle Miocene site in the Orange River Valley. In northern Sperrgebiet, we found the earliest known cranium of a suid (*Nguruwe namibensis*) aged some 21 Ma. The basicranium is exceptionally well preserved, and will throw a great deal of light on the phylogenetic relations of these early African suids. The deposits in the region accumulated under wooded savannah conditions. Hives of the polycalate harvester termite *Hodotermes* are common, as are the remains of pipid frogs, water birds, freshwater snails, and large tortoises. The contrast with the hyper-arid conditions that prevail in the same area today is striking. In the karst deposits of the Otavi Mountains, further prospecting yielded many fossils including some procaviid hyracoids aged about 10 Ma and remains of a large canid from a Late Pliocene level. Despite the fact that some of the localities have been prospected for more than 70 years, they are still finding new taxa, including large mammals.

Apart from field work, Martin, Brigitte, and colleagues continued describing fauna that they have collected, which has necessitated visits to museums in London, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Nairobi, and Kampala. Groups studied in detail include terrestrial gastropods, macroscelidids, rodents, proboscideans, hyracoids, suids, anthracotheres, rhinocerotids, and chalicotheres.

Pascal Tassy contributed to the cladistic analysis of the earliest known proboscidean, *Phosphatherium*, dated early Eocene (a paper by Gheerbrant et al. is scheduled to appear in the 30 June 2005 issue of *Geodiversitas*). He also studied the proboscideans of Akkasdagi (Late Miocene of Turkey), an article to be issued this year in a collective volume directed by Sevket Sen. In spring 2005 he continued the excavation of an early Oligocene locality in southern France and plans to end the program in the summer of 2005. A new exhibit on elephants in Jena (Germany) gave him the opportunity to deliver a lecture in June at the Gustav Schiller Universität on the evolution of proboscideans, and to visit the superb zoological laboratory directed by Martin Fischer. In Paris, after a very successful year, the exhibit “The Time of Mammoths” at the Grande Galerie de l’Evolution (Museum national d’Histoire naturelle, 2004–2005) closed in January. Life without mammoths would have been different, for sure, as our early Neolithic predecessors probably thought. At the very end of 2004, Pascal published with René Zaragueta and Hervé Lelièvre a paper he is very fond of, the topic being the connection of trees and the time dimension (entitled “Temporal paralogy, cladograms, and the quality of the fossil record”), not necessarily a very popular way to look at the arrow of time!

Still at work in spite of her formal retirement, Vera Eisenmann enjoyed several visits (China, Sweden, Peru, and Bolivia) collecting more data on equids. She is busy with making her publications available in pdf format. Recent papers include a DNA analysis of South American

samples, a study of a Mongolian *Equus*, a revision of *Allohippus stenonis* of Saint-Vallier (France), and notes on A'n Hanech (Algeria) and Melka Kunture (Ethiopia) fossils. (Emmanuel Gheerbrant)

Université des Sciences et Technologies de Lille & CNRS UMR 8014

Alain Blicek has not been reporting to SVP for the last three years: bad boy! Most of his activities were devoted to administration of the CNRS and USTL research unit UMR 8014 (ca. 30 people including permanent professors, CNRS scientists, technicians, PhD students, and post docs). This team presently includes two early vertebrate experts, i.e., Claire Derycke and Alain Blicek.

Recent and future work of Claire Derycke is concerned with two international programs, viz., the IGCP Project 491: Middle Paleozoic Vertebrate Biogeography, Paleogeography, and Climate, and IGCP Project 471: Evolution of Western Gondwana during the Late Paleozoic. Material of vertebrate microremains from the Devonian of Morocco (Maïder Basin; in collaboration with C. Spalletta and C. Perri, Bologna University, Italy) allows comparisons with other localities of the Tafilalt Basin and the southern part of the Maïder Basin to be made. The first results have been presented to the Gross Symposium 2 (8–14 September 2003, Riga, Latvia). The absence of crushing teeth in this material suggests the deepening of the Devonian platform in agreement with geological data. Comparisons with other areas such as Thuringia (Germany) and Thailand have been made and involve a connecting way between continental plates during the Famennian. Furthermore, the first discovery of Paleozoic fish material from Sardinia has yielded *Siamodus* teeth, important for stratigraphical correlations. During the Tenth International Symposium on Early/Lower Vertebrates (held in Gramado, Brazil, 24–28 May 2004), Claire presented two oral communications. The first one corresponds to the study of Permian scales from Mexico, including remarks on drag reduction and speed in Paleozoic sharks (circum-Paleopacific distribution of *Helicoprion*, a classical genus for the Permian; comparisons with Ohio, the US midcontinent, and the Urals, Russia). The second one proposed to study shark tooth bases with Fourier analysis (in collaboration with C. Crônier, USTL). Claire's future contributions will be concerned with Viséan material from Royseux (Belgium), in collaboration with A. "Sasha" Ivanov (St. Petersburg University, Russia), and will be presented in St. Petersburg (IGCP 491 meeting: Middle Paleozoic Vertebrates of Laurussia—Relationships with Siberia, Kazakhstan, Asia, and Gondwana, in relation with the Sixth Baltic Stratigraphic Conference, 22–26 August 2005). Claire's recent publications include: C. Derycke-Khatir, D. Vachard, J.-M. Dégardin, A. Flores de Dios, B. Buitron, and M. C. Hansen, 2005, Late Pennsylvanian and Early Permian chondrichthyan microremains from San Salvador Patlanoaya (Puebla, Mexico), *Geobios* 38:43–55; C. Derycke, in press, *Microrestes de Vertébrés du Paléozoïque supérieur de la Manche au Rhin: Biodiversité, Biostratigraphie et Biogéographie*. Société Géologique du Nord, Publication 33: 326pp. [In French].

Alain Blicek is going on with studies of Ordovician to Devonian fishes, with a recent contribution to the transition to tetrapods. His most recent papers are as follows: A. Blicek and S. Turner, 2003, Global Ordovician vertebrate biogeography, in: T. Servais, J. J. Alvaro, and A. Blicek (eds.), Early Palaeozoic palaeo(bio)geographies of western Europe and North Africa. *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology*, Special Issue, 195(1–2):37–54, 3 fig., Elsevier, Amsterdam [also WWW address: <http://www.sciencedirect.com>]; G. Clément, P. E. Ahlberg, A. Blicek, H. Blom, J. A. Clack, E. Poty, J. Thorez, and P. Janvier, 2004, Devonian tetrapod from western Europe, *Nature*, 427(6973):412–413, 1 fig., London [also WWW address: <http://gateway2.ovid.com:80/ovidweb.cgi>]; D. Delsate, A. Blicek, and P. Steemans, 2004, A psammosteid heterostracan (Vertebrata: Pteraspodomorpha) from the Emsian (Lower Devonian) of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, *Geologica Belgica*, 7(1–2):21–26, 3 fig., Brussels [also WWW address: http://www.ulg.ac.be/geolsed/GB/volume_7_1-2.htm]; S. Turner, A. Blicek, and G. S. Nowlan, 2004, Vertebrates (Agnathans and Gnathostomes), in: B. D. Webby, F. Paris, M. L. Droser, and I. G. Percival (eds.), *The Great Ordovician Biodiversification Event* (IGCP 410 volume), Columbia University Press, "Critical moments and perspectives in earth history and paleobiology," chapter 30:327–335, 2 fig., 1 tab., New York. Works in progress include

contributions to : The use and utility of plankton and nekton, including vertebrates, for Ordovician palaeogeographical reconstructions (in press, *Bull. Soc. Géol. Fr.*); The palaeoenvironment of an Early Devonian land–sea transition, after a case study from the southern margin of the Old Red Continent (Mosel valley, Germany; mostly from the Alken section which delivered an assemblage of fishes) (in press, *Palaios*); A study of vertebrate microremains from the Devonian/Carboniferous boundary of the Carnic Alps (northern Italy) (to be submitted to *Geobios*); A study of vertebrate microremains from the Devonian of the Asturo-Leonese facies, Cantabrian Mountains (northern Spain) (to be submitted to *Geobios*); and The Cambrian–Ordovician vertebrate database (to be submitted to *Ann. Soc. Géol. Nord*). Another subject is concerned with the Early Devonian vertebrate biodiversity, after study of the Paliseul and Wihéries localities of the Ardenne Massif, Belgium (to be included in the abstract volume of the IGCP 491 meeting in Yerevan, Armenia, 22–27 May 2005: Devonian vertebrates of the continental margins; and to be presented at the Sixth Baltic Stratigraphic Conference—IGCP 491 joint meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia, 22–25 August 2005: Middle Palaeozoic Vertebrates of Laurussia: Relationships with Siberia, Kazakhstan, Asia, and Gondwana). (Alain Blicek)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Northeast Region (Margaret Lewis, Regional Editor, lewism@stockton.edu)
(no news submitted)

Southeast Region (Richard C. Hulbert, Regional Editor, rhulbert@flmnh.ufl.edu)
(no news submitted)

Midwest Region (Joshua Smith, Regional Editor, smithjb@levee.wustl.edu)
(no news submitted)

Southwest Region (Dennis R. Ruez, Jr., Regional Editor, ruez@mail.utexas.edu)

The Southwest Region is in search of a capable person to replace Dennis Ruez, who is stepping down as editor of this area. Please contact Mary Ann Schmidt, Managing Editor of the News Bulletin, at maryanns@andrew.cmu.edu if you are interested. Dennis can fill you in on the duties of this position. You can contact him at the above address.

Mesalands Community College's Dinosaur Museum, Tucumcari, New Mexico

It is for the first time that Mesalands Community College's Dinosaur Museum reports in the *News Bulletin*. The Museum, situated in the scenic mesalands of eastern New Mexico, displays representative dinosaurs from all over the world and regional vertebrates, in particular from the Triassic. A major asset is the world's largest collection of bronze vertebrate skeletons and life-sized sculptures from the Mesozoic and Cenozoic, which were created in the College's Fine Art Bronze facility. The collections focus on the local paleontology and natural history, with particular emphasis on vertebrates of the Upper Triassic (Chinle Formation) and Jurassic (Morrison Formation) of eastern New Mexico. The Museum is an integral part of Mesalands Community College, which maintains a vigorous paleontology program and awards AA degrees in paleontology and geology.

Since he joined the staff of the Mesalands Community College in August 2003 as the Museum Curator and Natural Science Faculty, Axel Hungerbuehler was kept busy setting up his geology, paleontology, and biology classes and improving the paleontology field program. The College now offers two one-week field classes annually, which include prospecting for vertebrate fossils, collection techniques, and processing of the fossils in the lab.

The first field class of 2004 explored the Upper Triassic Trujillo Formation near Tucumcari. Unlike in Texas and its time equivalents elsewhere, this sandstone unit is fossiliferous in eastern New Mexico. The prospection yielded remains of the phytosaur *Pseudopalatus* (represented by cranial fragments and a partial snout) and osteoderms of the aetosaur *Typhorax*, and demonstrated that the Trujillo fauna is closely related to the overlying Bull Canyon Formation.

The second field class excavated a new dinosaur site in the local Morrison Formation. Numerous bone fragments were exposed on a slope, and over 500 fragments of various sizes were mapped and collected. A taphonomic investigation revealed that the bones had been eroded probably out of a sandstone and were redeposited as fragments in a shallow wash. The site contains mainly large limb-bone fragments, but these show considerable wear and the bones are difficult to restore.

Paleontology program students Teresa Allsup, Kiera Mortensen, and Ina Broughton are enrolled as interns with the Museum to learn and practice preparation techniques (using specimens from the field classes and the collection) and to reorganize parts of the collection. A highlight was the discovery and preparation of several pathologic postcrania of phytosaurs from the basal Upper Triassic. (Axel Hungerbuehler)

Midwestern University, Glendale, Arizona

This is the first report to the *News Bulletin* from the vertebrate paleontology group at Midwestern University. In the past three years we have added faculty to the medical school program whose scholarly activity includes vertebrate paleontology and/or closely related disciplines. Randy Nydam is currently enjoying being awarded tenure and promotion and growing into his new lab space in the recently renovated Foothills Research Center and is busily working on projects investigating the alpha systematics and paleobiogeography of lizards during the Cretaceous and Paleocene. The primary focus of these studies is an investigation into the lizards from the Cenomanian–Campanian of the Kaiparowits Plateau region of southern Utah.

Jeff Eaton and Jim Gardner are looking at mammals and lissamphibians, respectively. This has been an exciting project that has included student research by some very dedicated medical students: Matt Rose (now Dr. Rose), preliminary faunal analysis; Gina Voci, description of a new “teiid” lizard; Brandon Fitzpatrick, description of a new skink; Monika Kyzyzek, Cenomanian xenosaur; Chad Hills, Hell Creek “teiid”; and Grand Canyon University undergraduate Joanna Wigfield, Late Cretaceous lizards of South Dakota. As part of the southern Utah study, Randy is finally wrapping-up (I am sure to everyone’s surprise, if not disbelief) his work on the North American “polyglyphanodontine lizards.” Another project Randy is working on is an ongoing collaborative investigation of the fauna of the Goler Formation (Paleocene) that is being spearheaded by Don Lofgren (Alf Museum) and Malcolm McKenna (Boulder, Colorado).

Our resident anthropologist, Myriam Zylstra, has research interests in primate functional morphology and evolution. Most recently, she has been investigating the relationship between forelimb loading and trabecular orientation in bones of the hand and wrist. This analysis incorporates the use of microcomputed tomography scans which were conducted at The University of Texas at Austin (Department of Geological Sciences) with the gracious assistance of Dr. Richard Ketcham and Dr. Mathew Colbert. Specially designed software (care of Dr. Ketcham) enables us to visualize the distribution of bone in three dimensions and allows us to calculate the primary distribution of cancellous tissue. The study, so far, includes a sample of extant catarrhines in addition to a fossil primate, *Dryopithecus brancoi*, from the late Miocene of Hungary. This has been an exciting project and future work hopes to broaden the sample base. As any good anthropologist should, Myriam also has a freezer full of prosimians awaiting (patiently) the dissection knife.

The third member of the Midwestern paleontology group is Rebecca Fisher. A comparative anatomist and vertebrate paleontologist, Rebecca is currently studying hippos and red pandas.

With the assistance of four medical students (Melissa Cortez, Irene Czyszczon, Tony Elrod, and Michelle Hicks), Rebecca is dissecting three red panda specimens on loan from the National Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian Institution). The main goal of this project is to document the myology of the red panda, and to produce detailed muscle maps for all postcranial elements. Rebecca also continues to study the anatomy and evolution of hippos. She will be traveling to Kenya this summer to analyze fossil hippos from the Tugen Hills (Baringo District). A member of the Baringo Paleontological Research Project, led by her former graduate advisor, Andrew Hill (Yale University), Rebecca will be classifying hippo remains from fossil localities throughout the Tugen Hills sequence. In addition, Rebecca will be joined in Nairobi by Jean-Renaud Boisserie (UC Berkeley), Eleanor Weston (Cambridge University), and Fabrice Lihoreau (University of Poitiers), for the first meeting of the hippo working group under the Revealing Human Origins Initiative led by Tim White and F. Clark Howell of UC Berkeley. The group will be discussing the origin and evolution of hippos in Africa. (Rebecca Fisher)

Petrified Forest National Park, Arizona

Two words aptly describe the paleontology program at Petrified Forest National Park since our last submission: busy and exciting. First, May 2004 saw the completion of a fossil prep facility and the hiring of a full-time preparator, Pete Reser. Pete brings to the park years of fossil preparation experience and is a much-needed addition to our program.

The summer of 2004 also saw excavation of three new important sites in the park, the *Revueltosaurus* and Milkshake Quarries, and "The Giving Site." Most notable is the *Revueltosaurus* quarry which has provided numerous bones of the pseudosuchian *Revueltosaurus*, previously considered an ornithischian dinosaur. The initial finds and their implications for the Late Triassic dinosaur record are detailed in a paper by Parker et al. published in *Proceedings of the Royal Society, Biological Sciences* in May 2005. In June 2005, another skeleton and other isolated material of *Revueltosaurus* was collected from the same quarry. A full description of *Revueltosaurus* is currently being prepared by Bill Parker, Sterling Nesbitt (Columbia/AMNH), and Randall Irmis (UCMP).

A kilometer away from the *Revueltosaurus* Quarry at the same stratigraphic horizon is a prolific site we are calling "The Giving Site" because it appears to be a locality that just keeps giving. To date this site has produced material of the aetosaur *Tyothorax* (including very rare juvenile material), the "poposaurid" "*Chatterjeea*," and the rauisuchian *Postosuchus*, as well as partial skeletons of a crocodylomorph and the enigmatic diapsid *Vancleavea*. Even more interesting is the recovery of two partial coelophysoid skeletons similar to the material described from the park by Kevin Padian in 1986. This site has also provided more material from the basal saurischian *Chindesaurus*. Descriptions of much of this material are currently being prepared.

The Milkshake Quarry, in the southern end of the park, provided a well-preserved partial skeleton of the aetosaur *Stagonolepis*. This specimen is currently being prepared and is under study by Bill Parker. Bill has also been slowly publishing his graduate work on aetosaurs including a description of a new species of *Desmatosuchus* from Texas and northern Arizona in *Compte Rendus Palevol*. A redescription of *Desmatosuchus haplocerus* is currently in the works, while a description of a new taxon from the Chinle Formation and a phylogeny of the aetosaurs is currently in review.

Randall Irmis and Bill Parker have another paper in press in the *Canadian Journal of Earth Sciences* describing teeth of an unknown tetrapod from the Chinle Formation. This animal has been the basis for the presence of a cynodont in Petrified Forest National Park and is a continuation of work originally started by the late Edwin Colbert.

Other works in progress include a description of another new aetosaur from Texas and an analysis of juvenile aetosaurs by Bill Parker and Michelle Stocker (University of Iowa); a description of a new species of phytosaur by Bill and Randall, and a description of a new species

of *Trilophosaurus* by Bill Mueller (Texas Tech). The last two papers will be included in a research volume commemorating the 100th anniversary of Petrified Forest National Park and will be released in 2006 as part of a symposium. This volume will also include papers redescribing the stratigraphy of the Chinle Formation and describing numerous new fossil plants from the park.

Furthermore, just because he believes in keeping really busy (besides having a year-old set of twins at home) Bill will be co-leading an SVP field trip in October covering the Triassic rocks of northeastern Arizona.

Bill would also like to acknowledge the work of the following interns, seasonals, and colleagues for 2004–2005 without whom the paleo program at the Petrified Forest would not be nearly as successful: Randall Irmis, Michelle Stocker, Sterling Nesbitt, Jeff Martz, Lori Browne, Yasemin Tulu, Dylan Rust, Katie Brakora, and Bronson Barton. (Bill Parker)

The University of Texas at Austin

Much of the news from UT is the same as in past issues of the *News Bulletin*. Jonathan R. Wagner is continuing his work on caiman relationships and is making slow but steady progress towards publishing preliminary results of his work on the hadrosaurian dinosaurs of Big Bend. Eric Ekdale continues his dissertation research on the evolution and phylogenetic implications of the inner ear labyrinth of placental mammals.

Some UT students are getting things done. Nina Triche successfully defended her dissertation proposal "Systematics, Biogeography, and Evolutionary History of Fossil and Extant Penguins (Aves: Spheniscidae)" last fall. She has received three grants for this project, from GSA, the AMNH, and the American Ornithologists' Union, and plans to finish her project sometime in 2007. As part of her nonvertebrate interests, she also served as AV Coordinator and Technical Liaison for the Seventh International Congress on Rudists, held at UT in June and has a paper in review detailing the inventory, cataloguing, and uses of the Nonvertebrate Paleontology Laboratory rudist collection.

Ted Macrini is in the process of finishing data collection and writing his dissertation on the evolution of endocranial space in cynodonts. He is preparing several manuscripts describing endocasts from fossil mammals based on his dissertation research. Ted is also actively searching for postdoc positions for next year. At the end of May, Tim Rowe led field efforts in northeastern Arizona to collect fossils from the Chinle Formation. He was joined by Ted Macrini, Gabe Bever, Amy Balanoff, Matt Colbert, Eric Ekdale, and Rachel Rascote (from San Diego State).

A few UT students are moving on. Ron Tykoski has moved to the Dallas Museum of Natural History, and Dennis Ruez is now teaching in the Auburn University Department of Geology and Geography. (Dennis Ruez, Jr.)

Rocky Mountain Region (Brent Breithaupt, Regional Editor, uwgeoms@uwyo.edu) **Brigham Young University, Department of Geology and Earth Science Museum, Provo, Utah**

There have been several major changes in the vertebrate paleontology program at Brigham Young University. Ken Stadtman retired last June as the curator of the Earth Science Museum and now resides in Grand Junction, Colorado. He still keeps in touch and comes in to help with some projects. Ken's position has been filled by Rod Scheetz, formerly the paleontology curator at the Museum of Western Colorado. Although we miss Ken, we are excited to have Rod as part of the BYU team. Brooks Britt continues to teach geology and paleontology courses, supervising undergraduate and graduate students, and works with Rod developing long-term plans for the Earth Science Museum.

A new 4,300 ft² collections room for the Earth Science Museum (ESM) has just been completed and we are waiting for the installation of shelving/racking and an additional 2,200 ft² mezzanine in the same room. Within a year, all of BYU's prepared dinosaur specimens will be housed in this addition. This will greatly facilitate research use of the collections, particularly for those studying sauropods, which are currently housed in several separate buildings. This fall Don Tidwell's extensive paleobotanical collection, as well as Don himself, will be integrated into the ESM.

Stephen Sandau defended his thesis on the flora, fauna, and paleoecology of the Uinta Formation this spring. He did a great job of integrating paleoenvironmental information from plants, invertebrate trace fossils, and vertebrates. The thesis is available on line at <http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/ETD/image/etd719.PDF>. Stephen is employed full time as a contract paleontologist and works primarily in the Uinta Basin.

Andy Stanton is wrapping up his research on the taphonomy of Jim Jensen's Calico Gulch quarry in northwestern Colorado. This Morrison Formation quarry produced a partially articulated *Diplodocus*, disarticulated bones of another specimen of the same genus, several specimens of *Dryosaurus*, and turtle and crocodilian remains, all preserved at the base of a stream channel. Andy plans to defend his thesis in the early fall.

Brent Greenhalgh, who entered graduate school last fall, is spending his summer working on an internship with an oil company in Texas. His thesis entails putting the Cedar Mountain Formation vertebrate localities into a sequence stratigraphic framework. He has already conducted substantial field work and the field work will resume this fall.

Anne Dangerfield, an undergraduate, is working on *Allosaurus* from the Dry Mesa quarry (Morrison Formation, Colorado). She has determined that 13 individuals were present and all pertain to *Allosaurus jimmadseni*. Her preliminary data suggests some postcranial elements may be diagnostic at the species level and she will collect more data this summer to confirm or refute this idea. Anne is also working on invertebrate trace fossils on bone.

Brooks and Rod, along with Dave Eberth of the Royal Tyrrell Museum (Drumheller, Alberta) and others, have submitted two papers on the Lower Cretaceous Dalton Wells site near Moab, Utah, for publication. One paper covers the stratigraphy, sedimentology, and depositional environment of the site, while the second paper focuses on the biological aspects of the taphonomy. We are working on another paper that describes the insect burrows that occur on about 20% of the bones at Dalton Wells. We are also writing up a champsosaur femur from the same locality. The BYU crew began working with Dan Chure and Scott Madsen of Dinosaur National Monument on their Lower Cretaceous sauropod last year and we hope to submit a description of the same later this year. (Brooks Britt)

Utah Geological Survey

The Utah Geological Survey (UGS) paleontologists Jim Kirkland, Don DeBlieux, and Martha Hayden have been enjoying their brief moment of celebrity with the announcement of the new therizinosaur, *Falcarius*, from the Crystal Geyser Dinosaur Quarry in central Utah that has been the focus of their work over the last several summer field seasons. They are continuing excavation and preparation of the Crystal Geyser fossils with the help of the Utah Museum of Natural History (UMNH) and the Utah Friends of Paleontology (UFOP).

Celina and Marina Suarez from Temple University both completed Master's theses examining the geochemistry and taphonomy of the Crystal Geyser Quarry. We wish them luck as they continue their studies at the University of Kansas. Lindsay Zanno (UMNH) is continuing research on *Falcarius* and the Therizinosauria for her PhD dissertation.

This summer the UGS continued to share the paleontological bounty of Utah by teaming up with other researchers to examine several other sites in the Cedar Mountain Formation. These include

the Stikes Quarry, north of Arches National Park, with Josh Smith and his crew from Washington University in St. Louis, and the Suarez Quarry near Crystal Geyser with Reese Barrick, John Bird, and their crew from the College of Eastern Utah in Price.

The UGS completed the fourth season of inventory and excavation in the Wahweap Formation of the Grand Staircase–Escalante National Monument working with Monument Paleontologist Alan Titus, Scott Sampson's tireless Mike Getty, and crew from the UMNH, and UFOP volunteers. Several partial hadrosaurs were excavated in the spring. This fall we hope to airlift a well-preserved ceratopsian skull and begin preparation and description of this specimen.

Martha Hayden continues to update the digital State Paleontological Database with the support of the BLM. Jim Kirkland's hard work at the St. George tracksite has come to fruition with the opening of the Dinosaur Discovery Site at Johnson Farm. Jim is continuing research on this site and many other tracksites in Utah with a number of other researchers. In addition to overseeing the field and lab work associated with the Cedar Mountain and Wahweap projects, Don DeBlieux has been continuing excavation at a Miocene vertebrate site in the Sevier River Formation of central Utah. (Don DeBlieux)

Wyoming Dinosaur Center, Thermopolis

We are getting ready to reopen our dinosaur quarries in the Jurassic Morrison Formation on the Warm Springs Ranch for a new season. Burkhard Pohl (museum director) and Pam Watkins (excavation supervisor) are expecting more sauropod and allosaur remains by late September. Pam, David Gray, and Burkhard have been studying the geology and dinosaur fauna of the Wyoming Dinosaur Center (WDC) dig sites. Scott Hartman just finished a BS at the University of Wyoming and moved here as science director (contact him to access WDC collections). Scott continues working on his main interests: the origin of flight and functional morphology of hadrosaurs and ceratopsians.

Several projects, pertaining to the Jimbo Quarry (Morrison Formation) near Douglas, Wyoming, are in progress. Dave Lovelace (MS student at the University of Wyoming), Bill Wahl (MS student at Fort Hays State University, Kansas), and Scott are describing the most-complete known skeleton of a huge *Supersaurus*. They are also getting ready to submit a paper on a small theropod from the same quarry, which is part of Bill's MS thesis. Dave is planning to excavate at the Jimbo quarry this summer with Bill's help and collect more data for his studies on the taphonomy of the site. Dave is also going to describe two small sauropod braincases from the BB Quarry near the WDC.

Bill has multiple other projects including the pathology of juvenile sauropods from the BB Quarry (with Bruce Rothschild) and plesiosaurs, turtles, and fish fauna from the Cretaceous Mowry and Thermopolis formations. Judy Massare (SUNY–Brockport, New York) has collaborated with Bill in studying a large pliosaur, *Megalneusaurus rex*, originally collected from the Jurassic Sundance Formation in 1895.

Debra Jennings (University of Kansas) is planning to stay here during this summer. Deb just completed her MS thesis on sedimentology and taphonomy of the Morrison dinosaur quarries near the WDC, but still wants to collect further data associated with the SI Quarry for her PhD dissertation. She is also submitting a few manuscripts, including a paleoenvironmental reconstruction of the Morrison Formation and dinosaur tracksites near this area.

Takehito Ikejiri moved here as a research associate in January. Ike just finished an MS at Fort Hays State University in May and is currently looking at graduate schools for a PhD. His thesis contains a description of two skeletons of *Camarasaurus lentus* at the WDC and discussions of ontogenetic, sexual dimorphic, and individual variations in the genus (e-mail him for a PDF file: ikejiri_t@hotmail.com). He is busy writing papers on sauropods, mosasaurs, and the ontogeny and evolution of reptiles.

We just added spectacular skeletons of two German ichthyosaurs (containing embryos!) and a marine Jurassic crocodile, *Steneosaurus*, to our museum display. Mike Grissom has been skillfully building a fairly complete skeleton of *Triceratops* and a cast of a new *Tyrannosaurus rex* (MOR 980, the original skeleton is now housed at the Fort Peck Interpretive Center, Montana) with help of Levi Schinkle. John Hogbin has been molding and casting bones of the Jimbo *Supersaurus*. John is also writing a paper evaluating formulas for the foam plastic used for casts of skeletal material. Dave Trexler (Two Medicine Dinosaur Center in Choteau, Montana) is helping us construct a mount of our *Supersaurus*, which is supposed to be done by the summer of 2006. Our preparation lab is very active with Bill, Allen Nettles, and other preparators focusing primarily on the *Supersaurus* material this summer. (Takehito Ikejiri and David Gray)

Pacific Coast Region (John M. Harris, Regional Editor, jharris@nhm.org)
Colorado Desert District Stout Research Center

The Anza-Borrego Desert State Park® Paleontology Society volunteers finished the 2004–2005 field season with eight newly certified members. Surveys and specimen recovery work this spring has focused on an unexplored area, northeast of the Park that is dominated by exposures of late Miocene Arroyo Diablo and Olla formations. The reconnaissance work yielded few vertebrates but major deposits of fossil wood. Assistance in the project was provided by our new Senior Park Aides Jeanne Johnstone and Scott Musick. Scott also monitored a seismic study trench excavation across the San Andreas fault on the east side of the Salton Sea. The matrix recovered from a sequence of mid-Holocene lake Cahuilla deposits at the site awaits washing for microvertebrates, especially fish.

The University of California Riverside team headed by Martin Kennedy, Bill Phelps, and Dave Morafka, and working under an interagency contract with State Parks, has finished reconnaissance paleontological surveys and geological mapping of Pliocene and Pleistocene deposits in the northwestern part of the Park, primarily in the Irvingtonian Bautista beds of upper Coyote Canyon. Also, Bill Phelps has completed a three-year study of mammalian tracks in the Pliocene and Pleistocene Hueso Formation and Ocotillo Conglomerate. Each track was measured, photographed, and precisely located. We await their final reports.

Visiting researchers included Tom Deméré of the San Diego Natural History Museum, who continued his examination of marine vertebrates from the late Miocene Deguynos Formation. Mark Roeder of PaleoEnvironmental Associates compared a specimen of *Mammuthus meridionalis* recently recovered from an Irvingtonian site in the San Fernando Valley with our nearly complete 1 Ma old specimen from the Ocotillo Conglomerate. Todd Wheeler, affiliated with the Page Museum, conferred with G. Jefferson regarding their *Panthera atrox* research.

Completion of construction of the new paleontology collections hall has been delayed. We anticipate moving into the new structure later this year, and the collections periodically may be unavailable for research through the spring of 2006.

Copies of the book "Fossil Treasures of the Anza-Borrego Desert" should be available for review at the SVP meeting in Mesa, Arizona. The illustrations for the book are now finished, and Jefferson and 20 other authors have put the final touches to their chapters.

Utilizing new high-speed technology, California State Parks and California's schools have initiated the Parks Online Resource for Teachers and Students Web-cam based program. The Paleontology Laboratory at the Stout Research Center was selected for launching the statewide project. The curriculum pilot consisted of six sessions between the laboratory staff and middle schools in several southern California districts. (G. T. Jefferson)

Occidental College, Los Angeles

Don Prothero and former students Josh Ludtke and Matt Liter spent many frantic days at the AMNH in March finishing up old and new projects. Don completed his revision of the North American blastomerycines (musk deer), which will be published this fall in the Neogene symposium (*New Mexico Museum of Natural History Bulletin*). Matt and Don also completed their systematic revision of the Dromomerycinae, which will appear in the same place. Josh examined every agriochoere in the collection, trying to sort out their complicated systematics. With Scott Foss, Don is now in the process of editing contributions to the upcoming volume "The Evolution of Artiodactyls," which should be published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 2006.

Don's trade book on the Cenozoic, "After the Dinosaurs: The Age of Mammals," finally went into production, and should be out from Indiana University Press in 2006. Don also found himself working on long-neglected rhino specimens from the Arikareean Cabbage Patch beds of Montana (collected by Don Rasmussen years ago). Now that the rhino monograph is out, it was easy to show that most of the material was *Diceratherium armatum* or *D. annectens*, but there was also material of the tiny Roundhouse Rock rhino, *Skinneroceras manningi*, as well as a huge jaw and partial skull that seems to match the mysterious headless giant Frick Collection astragali and humerus reported from the Arikareean of eastern Wyoming. Contrary to earlier ideas, the giant rhino is not an immigrant indricothere like *Juxia*, but a huge new species of *Diceratherium*.

The paleomagnetic results on the Pliocene Gaotege beds of Mongolia (sampled by Oxy alum Jingmai O'Connor of USC/LACM and Xiaoming Wang of LACM) were successfully analyzed in the new Occidental paleomagnetism lab. The entire section is reversed and rotated slightly clockwise! These results will be published this fall in the same New Mexico Museum Neogene volume mentioned above.

Finally, Don's Web site (<http://www.faculty.oxy.edu/prothero>) has been upgraded, and ALL of his publications are now available as PDFs and can be downloaded from the Web site. The days of photocopying and mailing hundreds of paper reprints are finally over! From now on, any of you (including those who were on my regular mailing list) can print out any of my papers (including those out of print, or for which I no longer have copies) at almost no cost! Isn't technology wonderful? (Don Prothero)

The Paleontology Portal

The Paleontology Portal (<http://www.paleoportal.org/>) went public on 1 May 2005 and can now boast an additional award. The site was selected as the Best Website Award for 2005 by the GeoScience Information Society (GSIS). The award will be given at the GSIS luncheon, 18 October, in association with the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America in Salt Lake City. The site continues to gain in popularity as the community adds to its resources and image gallery. Of particular note is the expanding distributed collections database search (<http://www.paleoportal.org/portal/index.php>), which now includes the ability to search the paleontology collections of four institutions: The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, the American Museum of Natural History, the UC Museum of Paleontology, and the Yale Peabody Museum.

The Paleontology Portal is produced by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology, the Paleontological Society, the US Geological Survey, and the UC Museum of Paleontology, in collaboration with the Paleontological Research Institute, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science which serve as hubs for the project. The project is funded by the NSF under award no. 0234594. (Judy Scotchmoor)

San Diego Natural History Museum

From 1998 to 2001, a new wing was added that doubled the size of the San Diego Natural History Museum. This addition includes a larger fossil preparation lab and curation room, which

are nearly twice the size of the previous facilities. An NSF collections grant provided funds for the acquisition of new collections cases, a compactor system, and the hiring of a collections management assistant to assist with the move of the Department of Paleontology's collection of approximately 1,650,000 fossil specimens (350,000 vertebrates, 1,296,200 invertebrates, and 3,800 botanical) from approximately 3,850 localities primarily in southern California and Baja California Norte, Mexico (a searchable version of collection database is available at <http://www.sdnhm.org/research/paleontology/searchdata.html>). The Department of Paleontology currently has 20 full-time and 2 part-time staff.

In 2004, Department of Paleontology staff worked with exhibits staff to develop a temporary exhibition highlighting activities and fossil discoveries made by the Department of PaleoServices, the Museum's paleontological mitigation program (<http://www.paleoservices.org/>). The exhibit, entitled "Fossil Hunters San Diego," focuses on field work, lab procedures, collections management, and research on fossils. It features many of the specimens salvaged from construction excavations in San Diego County during the last 20 years, including skulls and postcrania of Eocene miacids (*Tapocyon*), brontotheres (cf. *Duschesneodus*), and protoreodons (*Protoreodon walshi*); articulated and disarticulated skeletons of Oligocene diminutive oreodonts (*Sespia californica*); partial and complete skeletons of Pliocene baleen whales, giant sea cows (*Hydrodamalis cuestae*), and walruses (*Valenictus chulavistensis* and *Dusignathus seftoni*); and partial skeletons of Pleistocene mastodons (*Mammuth americanum*) and mammoths (*Mammuthus columbi*). The Fossil Hunters exhibit will be replaced by the Museum's permanent paleontological gallery in 2006. This exhibit, entitled "Fossil Mysteries," will examine the geologic and biotic history of peninsular California. It demonstrates how scientists use evidence provided by rocks and fossils to study topics such as paleoecology, extinction, phylogeny, and functional morphology. It also reconstructs Cretaceous through Pleistocene environments of our region and includes many spectacular fossils. "Fossil Mysteries" is being developed in partnership with the Science Museum of Minnesota. An NSF grant is providing a large portion of the funds for construction of this exhibit.

The booming construction industry in San Diego County has resulted in the salvage of over 28,000 vertebrate fossils by PaleoServices staff since 2001. A number of highly significant collections have been made. The Ocean Ranch development, located in Oceanside, produced a large number of beautifully preserved Duchesnean vertebrates including *Harpagolestes*, cf. *Duschesneodus*, *Protoreodon*, and a diversity of small mammals from member C of the Santiago Formation. The Bressi Ranch development, located in Carlsbad, produced a lagoonal fauna and flora of late Uintan age also from the Santiago Formation. Along with coprolites and crocodile teeth, several taxa of nearshore marine fish were discovered. The fish skeletons are particularly important because Eocene marine fish from the west coast of North America are so rare. Other recent noteworthy collections include bird tracks, eggshells, and several partial skeletons of a large species of *Sespia* from the early Arikarean Otay Formation.

Tom Deméré has returned to working on mysticete cetaceans after a hiatus of almost 15 years. An NSF collaborative research grant with Annalisa Berta (SDSU) and John Gatesy (UCR) has taken Tom to Italy, Germany, Belgium, and Japan to study fossil and modern mysticete skeletons. This work has focused initially on developing a robust set of morphological characters for investigating the mysticetes phylogeny. The comprehensive survey of nominal fossil mysticetes is also providing a foundation for evaluating the taxonomic status of species described in the 19th Century. Reports on the early results of this work have been presented at annual or semiannual meetings of the SVP, Society for Marine Mammalogy, and Evolution of Aquatic Tetrapods. A report with co-authors Annalisa Berta and Rocky McGowen on the taxonomy and phylogeny of balaenopteroid whales (Balaenopteridae + Eschrichtiidae) is in press in the *Journal of Mammalian Evolution*. Tom and Annalisa are also looking at the base of the mysticetes clade and have just submitted a manuscript to *JVP* providing a detailed morphological description of the Oligocene toothed mysticetes, *Aetiocetus weltoni*.

Paul Murphey joined the SDNHM as Associate Curator of Paleontology and Associate Director of PaleoServices in April 2004. As a recent transplant from Colorado, he is greatly enjoying learning the local geology and paleontology in addition to his curatorial and PaleoServices duties. Paul is headed out to continue field projects in Utah and Wyoming in August. He is currently working on the paleoecology of facies faunas in the Bridger Formation, publishing additional geologic mapping of the southern Green River Basin, and co-authoring a paleoecology textbook. He hopes to do some prospecting in Baja California next winter.

Steve Walsh continues to publish papers on theoretical aspects of stratigraphy, including Walsh, Gradstein, and Ogg, 2004, History, philosophy, and application of the Global Stratotype Section and Point (*Lethaia* 37:201–218); Walsh, 2004, Solutions in chronostratigraphy: The Paleocene/Eocene boundary debate, and Aubry vs. Hedberg on chronostratigraphic principles (*Earth Science Reviews* 64:119–155); Walsh, 2005, The role of stratotypes in stratigraphy, Parts 1, 2, and 3 (*Earth Science Reviews* 69:307–332; 70:47–73; 70:75–101). Part 3 is especially relevant to mammalian stratigraphic paleontology and hopefully will generate some productive discussions.

Research Associate Hugh Wagner is currently working on several projects. These include an analysis of terrestrial faunas from the Pliocene of the Southwest with an emphasis on *Neotoma*, a description of an Irvingtonian fauna from Gypsum Ridge on the 29 Palms Marine Base, and a re-evaluation of a large late Miocene Mustelid from the mid continent.

Ian Browne joined the museum in May 2003 after completing his MS at UC Riverside. Most of his time is split between monitoring construction sites for fossils and preparing mitigation reports. His current research focuses primarily on a small saber-toothed felid from the Miocene-age Barstow Formation. Ian hopes to return to graduate school in the fall of 2006.

Kesler Randall defended his Master's thesis on an Irvingtonian fauna from Anza-Borrego Desert State Park in December of 2003, and graduated from San Diego State University in May 2004. Kesler is currently working on publishing his thesis and has recently been promoted to Collections Manager of fossil vertebrates.

Lynett Gillette is preoccupied with exhibit development these days—8,500 ft² of new paleontology displays, titled "Fossil Mysteries," are now scheduled for opening at SDNHM in the mid summer of 2006. Lynett belatedly learned that one of her manuscripts on Chinle invertebrate ichno fossils finally made it to publication in *Ichnos* but sadly, instigator and one co-author Bill Sargeant is no longer with us. (Tom Deméré, Paul Murphey, and Kesler Randall)

University of California, Santa Cruz

Paul Koch and his current and former students in the Earth Sciences Department have been pursuing a range of projects. Paul spent his sabbatical in 2003–2004 writing grant proposals to keep his large cohort of graduate students fed. Along with Tony Barnosky and other colleagues, he has been working on several papers reviewing the current state of the debate over Pleistocene extinctions.

Rob Burton (PhD 2000) will be leaving the Moss Landing Marine Lab to become the manager for the Nature Conservancy's Lower San Pedro Preserve in southern Arizona. The position will offer Rob a chance to use both his longstanding interests in conservation biology (particularly of birds and herps) and his recent growing expertise in wetland restoration and ecology. For the last two years, Mark Clementz (PhD 2002) has been doing a post doc at the Smithsonian Marine Station in Fort Pierce, Florida, studying modern manatee ecology, in part as follow up to his PhD research on fossil sirenians and desmostylians. This fall he will start as an assistant professor in the Department of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Wyoming. Gabe Bowen (PhD 2003) has continued his work on the chronology of the Paleocene–Eocene boundary in Asia, as well as shifts in the global carbon cycle across the boundary, while on a post doc in the

Department of Biology at the University of Utah. His main objective in Utah, however, has been to conduct a series of projects on isotope ecology and isotope forensics. Next year Gabe will move to the Department of Geology at Purdue University to become an assistant professor.

Seth Newsome will finish his PhD research on the historical ecology of northern fur seals this fall. Next year he will pursue several projects, including studies of Holocene southern elephant seals in Antarctica, modern and historical otters from Alaska, ancient DNA in seals from the northern Pacific, and shifts in the feeding habits of killer whales over the 20th century. Kena Fox-Dobbs continues her PhD research on avian and mammalian carnivore ecology and paleoecology. She is involved in several stable-isotope projects, including an investigation of marine resource use by fossil condors, studies of foraging behavior in modern grey wolf populations, and an investigation of Beringian megafaunal paleoecology. This summer Brooke Crowley will complete her MS research on the timing of uplift of the Sierra Nevada mountains, as recorded in the oxygen isotopes from fossil horses; next year she will begin studying lemur ecology and paleoecology for her PhD research. Sora Kim has launched her PhD project on the paleoecology of sharks with a series of ground-truthing isotopic studies of modern sharks from Mexico and California. She is spending the summer of 2005 in Japan studying the diets of deep-water sharks. Patrick Wheatley is the newest addition to the VP group in the Koch lab, having recently completed his MS at UT Austin. He will follow up on his MS research on isotopic proxies for vivipary vs. ovipary, and is busily hatching a PhD project that will include a study of the osmoregulatory evolution of crocodylians. Justin Yeakel (BS, Kent State, 2004) has spent the past year working as a tech in Koch lab. In conjunction with Nate Dominy (new faculty, Anthropology Department), Justin has initiated a project on foraging behavior of mole rats that will take him to Africa in the summer of 2005.

Zooarchaeologist Diane Gifford-Gonzalez and her students in the Department of Anthropology continue tracking the prehistoric biogeography of northern fur seals in the greater Monterey Bay, California. A large Holocene archaeological site near the Monterey Submarine Canyon at Moss Landing has yielded thousands of fur seal specimens, including those of individuals younger than weaning age. An intensive program of radiocarbon dating is planned to determine dates of the species's disappearance from the region. (Kena Fox-Dobbs)

University of Oregon, Eugene

Our fledgling program in vertebrate paleontology was sadly curtailed by departure of Ryosuke Motani for the University of California at Davis, and will not immediately be restored because his replacement position was filled by Qusheng Jin, a microbial biogeoscientist from Berkeley. The faculty was divided in enthusiasm for SVP-GSA-style paleontology versus AGU-style biogeosciences. Nevertheless, life goes on with the Condon Collection still under the capable curatorial guidance of Liz and Bill Orr, and a variety of other VP-related projects.

Greg Retallack continues research on Cenozoic climate and vegetation of North America, and recently submitted a long paper with detailed precipitation, temperature, and seasonality curves for the past 45 million years in Oregon, Montana, and Nebraska. The gist of this work will be presented at the SVP annual meeting in Mesa. Comparable paleoclimatic curves are being developed for the Neogene of Kenya, Mesozoic of Utah, and Devonian–Carboniferous of Pennsylvania. Contrary to some recently published opinions, vertebrates appear to have responded to climate with migrations, evolutionary innovations, and extinctions at all time scales ranging from millennial to eonal.

Christine Metzger, who this year advanced to PhD candidacy, is pursuing a project that involves middle Miocene vertebrate localities in Oregon, Idaho, South Dakota, Nebraska, Argentina, and Australia. She will compile a soil map of the world for 16 and 15 Ma, the thermal maximum and its aftermath. These data will be used to refine a GCM paleoclimatic model in collaboration with Dave Pollard of Pennsylvania State University.

David Levering, an junior honors student, has begun a study of cursoriality of Oligocene equids, oreodonts, and nimravids with measurements of specimens in the Berkeley Museum of Paleontology. More data will be needed so you may hear from him. (Greg Retallack)

— OBITUARIES —

MIKLÓS KRETZOI (1907–2005)

The distinguished mammal paleontologist Emeritus Professor Miklós Kretzoi died from



Miklós Kretzoi at home, November 2004. Photo by O. Fejfar.

pneumonia following a bout of influenza on 13 March 2005 in Budapest. He was 99 years old. With his passing the European community of mammal paleontologists has lost one of its most outstanding scholars.

Miklós was born in Budapest, Hungary, on 9 February 1907. His early professional training was at the Pázmány Péter University of Budapest where he studied geology, paleontology, and geography from 1925–1929 and received his doctor's degree in 1930. A second doctor's degree (DrSc) was gained in 1950. From 1929–1933 he served as a volunteer at the Geological Survey of Hungary (Magyar Állami Földtani Intézet) in Budapest. Afterwards he worked for various periods as a geophysicist and oil geologist. He spent the years 1940–1950 at the Department of Geology and Palaeontology of the Natural

History Museum of Hungary (Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum) in Budapest, rising to the rank of Head of the Department in 1946. In 1950 he moved again to the Geological Survey of Hungary Budapest) and worked for 20 years at this institution, of which he was Director from 1956–1957. In 1970 Miklós was called to the Chair of the Department of Zoology and Palaeontology at the Kossuth Lajos University of Debrecen, Hungary, a position he held until 1974, when he retired, although he never stopped his research activities during the following years.

Miklós focused for more than seven decades on the paleontology of mammals and became one of Europe's leading and most-renowned experts on Cenozoic mammals. The taxonomy, evolution, phylogeny, and paleoecology of mammals, as well as problems in paleoanthropology and the biochronology of the European continental Neogene and Quaternary were the main focus of his attention. Elsewhere, his research covered other groups of vertebrates such as amphibians, reptiles, and birds. Miklós authored about 160 papers, both at home and abroad. Among mammals, his first important paper was a detailed account of the fossil carnivores from Gombaszög in 1938, which focused on the stratigraphy of the early Pleistocene, although he had already published some articles on felids and hipparions, and several progressive reports on the excavations in the Csákvár and Eserházy caves (with O. Kadic). Miklós excavated many sites in Hungary containing Pliocene and Pleistocene mammals and always paid much attention to the stratigraphy of the deposits yielding the fossil remains. He published many papers regarding the subdivision of the European Neogene and Quaternary and established several European "Mammal ages" such as the the Ruscinian (1962), Csarnótian (1959), Villanyian (1941), and Biharian (1941). Among his most notable works are the excavations in the famous fissure fillings of the Villány Mountains in southern Hungary (e.g., Csarnóta, Beremend) in the mid 1950s, where Miklós continued field work begun by his renowned forerunners, the Hungarian paleontologists S.

J. Petényi (1799–1855), L. Méhely de Kisapsa (1862–1953), and T. Kormos (1881–1946). He discovered new sites and collected abundant material of small mammals by using screen-washing techniques. In 1956 Miklós's work in the Villány Mountains resulted in a comprehensive monograph entitled "Die altpleistozaenen Wirbeltierfaunen des Villányer Gebirges" (The Early Pleistocene vertebrate faunas of the Villány Mountains) that became a classic in mammal paleontology owing to its fundamental contributions to the faunal history of mammals and the biostratigraphy of the continental Pliocene and Quaternary of Europe. Six years later this extensive work was completed with an extended article on the "Fauna und Faunenhorizont von Csarnóta" (Fauna and faunal horizon from Csarnóta), focusing mainly on biostratigraphical implications. Among Miklós's papers, those on voles and lemmings should be specifically mentioned here, since arvicolid rodents were one of his favorite groups of mammals. During the First International Symposium on the Evolution, Phylogeny and Biostratigraphy of Arvicolids in 1987 in Rohanov, Czechoslovakia, he expressed in his opening address two of his favorite ideas: "Arvicolids are the forams of the terrestrial Pliocene and Pleistocene," and "The continental stratigraphy is superior towards the marine one—the main stream of evolution happened on the changeable continents and not in the conservative marine world." He questioned the validity of certain species and genera, revised the nomenclature, and



Miklós Kretzoi with his first student and colleague Dénés Jánossy, in the field at the type locality Villány, southern Hungary, in 1959. Photo by O. Fejfar.

described many new taxa, among them *Kislangia* (1954), *Lagurodon* (1954), *Promimomys* (1954), *Villanyia* (1954), *Dinaromys* (1955), *Propliomys* (1959), and *Pannonicola* (1965). Special attention was given to the tooth structure and evolutionary trends evident in the dentition of this highly diversified group of rodents and resulted in detailed arguments on the affinities and classification of voles and lemmings that enabled him to make a valuable contribution to the phylogeny of arvicolids in 1969. Two papers dealing with the taxonomy of Mesozoic mammals should also be mentioned here, since in one of them the term Docodonta was introduced.



Miklós Kretzoi with Pierre Mein, in Rohanov, 1987. Photo by O. Fejfar.

During his paleontological career, Miklós became deeply interested in the history of man, and several of his papers relate to the vertebrate fauna and age of the well-known archaeological sites of Tata, Érd, and Vérteszölös in Hungary. Most notable in this context, however, is a series of papers on the Middle Miocene site of Rudabánya in northeastern Hungary that yielded a rich mammalian fauna, among them ramapithecines (e.g., *Rudapithecus*

hungaricus, *Bodvapithecus altipalatus*) and pliopithecines (*Anapithecus hernyaki*, *Ataxopithecus serus*), both represented by dental and skull material. The highlight of these studies includes perhaps one of Miklós's most important scientific contributions, a comprehensive monograph entitled "The fossil hominoids of Rudabánya (northeastern Hungary) and the early hominization" published in 2002. This work gives a surprisingly detailed amount of information concerning these Middle Miocene hominoids including taphonomy, the taxonomy of all late Miocene hominoids,

broad comments on and reviews of all existing theories of hominization, and a new concept of hominoid phylogeny. Indeed, this monograph—written during his final years—will certainly have lasting importance. Finally, Miklós made many valuable contributions to the taxonomy of mammals, culminating in the compendium “Index generum et subgenerum Mammalium, I–II,” which was jointly published with his wife Marika in 2000.

Miklós was an outstanding person in many aspects. To those of us who had the privilege to know him personally, he was our patient teacher, reliable mentor, and good friend. He was a kind and delightful person, always a generous host and extremely helpful to anyone who visited him at home or in the field. Miklós was a very energetic and productive paleontologist. We will miss his untiring energy, sharp mind, breadth of knowledge, memory for details, sense of humor, and of course, the “hallmark” of all meetings with Miklós, the legendary extremely strong black coffee which was a must in all discussions with him. He certainly was not afraid to stick his neck out, arriving at conclusions that many colleagues thought were wrong, but which later proved correct. In November 2004 he said to one of us (O.F.), “During my whole life I only ardently played a game with fossils”—and he added a message to all of us “You should continue to play that game onward...” Miklós is sadly missed by the community of mammalian paleontologists. Miklós Kretzoi is survived by his wife Marika. (Oldrich Fejfar, Wolf-Dieter Heinrich, Laszlo Kordos, Everett Lindsay)



Miklós Kretzoi with Heinz Tobien (left) and his wife Marika during the First International Symposium on the Evolution, Phylogeny and Biostratigraphy of Arvicolid in 1987 in Rohanov. Photo by O. Fejfar.

JOHN H. OSTROM

From the taxacom listserv:

John H. Ostrom, Influential Paleontologist, Is Dead at 77

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/21/nyregion/21OSTROM.html?ex=1122696000&en=b88e1622bd3779a9&ei=5070&emc=eta1>

By JOHN NOBLE WILFORD

John H. Ostrom was influential in the revival of scientific research about dinosaurs, notably previously unsuspected clues to their probable ancestral link to modern birds.

CHARLES REPENNING

Tears for Rep...

I met Rep on 12 August 1975 at the bus station in San Jose, California. I got down from the bus after a wonderful drive along the Californian coast that started early morning from Los Angeles. I was the guest of Larry Barnes for three days and mostly spent my time in the Museum of Natural History examining periotic bones of seals and cetaceans. I was also able to include a visit to Rancho La Brea and evening walks on the famous Hollywoodian boulevards of LA.

It was my first visit to America and everything was fascinating. The visit was organized by Clayton Ray who managed to invite me, an obscure paleontologist from a communist country, to visit the Department of Paleontology of the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC, and to take part in a symposium on Fossil Marine Mammals held in Corvallis, Oregon. My visit started in

New York where Eric Delson, my first American friend whom I met five years ago in Bucharest, was waiting for me at the Kennedy airport.

During my six-week visit to the states I met many scientists whom before I knew only from publications. Among them, Malcolm McKenna, Frank Whitmore, Daryl Domning, Richard Tedford, Al Sanders, and Bob Savage from Bristol, UK. All of them were so kind and helpful making me feel as if I were not among strangers, but surrounded by friends. I felt their encouragement, especially before my presentation in the auditorium of Corvallis University (I was so scared having to speak for the first time in America to so many well-known scientists in the field of fossil marine mammals).

But nobody was so close to me those days (as many years after) as Rep. He tried to show me as much geology and biology of the Californian coast south of San Francisco as possible. He took me to the Geological Survey of Menlo Park where he worked and showed me his collection of fossil sea lions and walruses; he took me to fossiliferous sites along the coast near Santa Cruz and showed me the large colonies of sea lions (*Zalophus californianus* and *Eumetopias jubata*) nearby. With him I visited for the first (and last) time Stanford and Berkeley universities, a part of San Francisco with its magnificent bridges and the famous meandering Lambert Street, and the famous paths with giant redwoods in northern California. Rep was restless, he wanted to show me everything he thought was important and couldn't be missed; I felt embarrassed for the efforts he did for me. Coming back from the long trips we enjoyed the peaceful evenings with a glass of bourbon in the garden of his family house in Montagne Vue. Of his four children only Billy (six years old then) and Pat were home.

This was Rep, hospitable and helpful as nobody else. I found later that many European paleontologists had been his guests in Montagne Vue and enjoyed his hospitality before me, among them Miklós Kretzoi and Kazimier Kowalski.

After I came back to Romania at the end of the six weeks spent in America I wrote a letter of thanks to Rep and his family. The letter ended, with the key word of those days that we both found funny—"kalenikta." Rep seem to love this Greek word meaning "good night" and all our letters since then ended with kalenikta. I was astonished when, a few days before the Christmas of 1975, I received from Rep an envelope with a Christmas gift—a one-year subscription to *National Geographic* magazine. Since then, every year for 30 years I've gotten from Rep this marvelous Christmas gift. The last one was in December 2004, a few weeks before he was incredibly murdered in his house in Lakewood, Colorado.

In spite of the many invitations I extended to him to visit me in Romania, he never came. The last time I saw Rep was in August 1996 in Lakewood, Colorado, to where he moved from California. I came from Boulder where I examined, together with Emily Bray, a small part of the dinosaur eggshell collection of the regretted Karl Hirsch. In spite of the 20 years that had passed since our last meeting Rep was still vigorous and the same optimistic person I knew in California. A PhD student (I can't remember his name) was his guest in the house, preparing a paper on a group of rodent micromammals. At his disposal was Rep's large personal library that occupied many superposed wooden shelves along the rooms.

This time I spent only three days with Rep (It was my first and last time when I slept on a water bed), but Rep, even a little bit older, insisted to show me some places in Colorado: one of the Buffalo Bill's houses, a colony of marmots. He took me to Denver to see the Department of Paleontology in the Museum of Natural History where he used to come periodically to assist the young researchers.

I was shocked to learn, a few days ago, from the short note in *SVP News Bulletin* No.188, that "Rep was the victim of a robbery and murder at his home." I still cannot believe that a man so generous and so devoted to people, could have such an end, being killed by a monster. Until my end I will pray for Rep's great soul. Now I will say only—Kalenikta, Rep! (Dan Grigorescu)

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In 1986, the Society established an Endowment Fund to meet the urgent needs of the science as determined annually by the Executive Committee. Initially, the income was applied largely to support the Bibliography of Fossil Vertebrates. In recent years, endowment funds have also been used to support other strategic initiatives of the Society. Currently, members may support the dedicated funds of the Society (Patterson, Skinner, Estes, and Romer) in addition to supporting the endowment.

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