Research & Collections News

The Occasional Newsletter of the Research and Collections Staff

Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

re•search (rī-sûrch′, rē′sûrch) *n*. **1.** Scholarly or scientific investigation or inquiry. See synonyms at **inquiry**. **2**. Close, careful study. **3.** When performed on collections, the *raison d'être* of all great natural history museums.

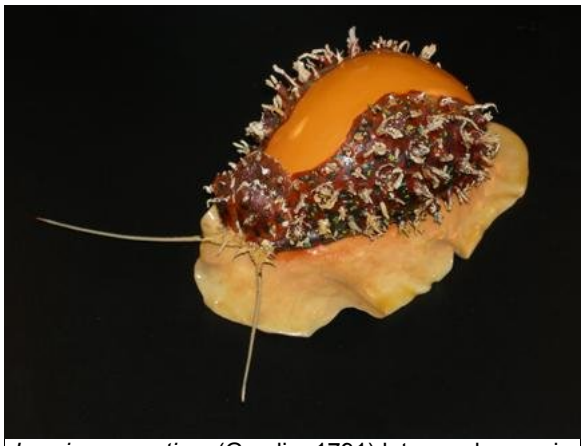
September, 2008

(covering the months of May, June, July, and August, 2008)

Collection News

Malacology

In August the Malacology section received the worldwide cowry collection of the late John W. Catlin of La Cañada, California. An estimated 500 lots and 2000 specimens will greatly enhance the already extensive LACM holdings of cowries (family Cypraeidae). A particularly interesting 'specimen' included was a latex and ceramic model of a Golden Cowry, *Lyncina aurantium* (Gmelin, 1791), which will be used for educational purposes. This is a very detailed model that has few inaccuracies. Anyone who would like to see this specimen up close and personal should come by Malacology.



Lyncina aurantium (Gmelin, 1791) latex and ceramic model from the Catlin cowry collection.

Vertebrate Paleontology

The Cenozoic Hall is due to close on September 2. Many, but not all, of the fossil mammal skeletons featured in that hall will reappear in the Age of Mammals Hall in 2010, along with a number of important new specimens that have never been on display before. Many thanks to Jack Tseng, who created a video that documents the history and content of the Cenozoic Hall in its current incarnation before he left for his trip to China. The video includes comments by Larry Barnes, Xiaoming Wang, Sam McLeod, John Harris and research associate Don Prothero, all of whom have been involved in planning the Age of Mammals Hall. You can view the video at:

http://www.nhm.org/expeditions/rrc/tseng/videos.htm

Dinosaur Institute

The Dinosaur Institute has been focusing their efforts on work for the new permanent dinosaur galleries. In addition to opening the Thomas Lab exhibit at the end of March, the DI has been working very closely with the Public Programs Division in the preparation of specimens and plans for the new galleries, as well as collaborating with Research Casting International and Phil Fraley Productions for the mounting of many of the specimens to be displayed. We are all very excited about this opportunity to create a new, dynamic dinosaur exhibit!

A visitor watches as Robert Cripps prepares an element of Thomas in the Thomas Lab Exhibit.

Reconstructive work done by Phil Fraley Productions.

Doyle Trankina sculpting a more accurate skull for *Mamenchisaurus* based on new discoveries in China.

Mineral Sciences

A major new display was installed recently in the Hall of Gems and Minerals. Entitled "COLLECTIONS," the display stresses the importance of donated collections to the growth of the Museum's mineral and gem collections. Remarkably, 97% of the 150,000 specimens in the Museum's Mineral Sciences collections have been acquired through donations. The collections of several important donors are highlighted in the display, which includes more than 100 spectacular specimens. Mineral Sciences staff members were assisted in the development and installation of the display by the Public Programs Division and particularly Leonard Trubia, Chris Weisbart and Liam Mooney. *(See next page.)*

Vertebrate Paleontology

We obtained a substantial collection of Late Pleistocene fossil vertebrates from Owens Lake Basin, collected during a paleontological mitigation program for dust abatement. This collection supplements the few specimens that we had in the past from the Owens Lake area, which include a mammoth tooth that was collected by William J. Mulholland, who was the developer of the Los Angeles Aqueduct project.

History

Vehicle Collection

The preparation and movement of the NHM vehicle collection from the Petersen Automotive Museum to a new storage site took several months (March through July) and involved asbestos abatement, fumigation, and extensive condition reporting. History department collections manager Beth Werling – in collaboration with registration, conservation, facilities, and history staff – oversaw this process, which culminated in the physical move of 64 cars and 11 motorcycles from the Petersen to a new warehouse facility in Gardena.

Vehicle fumigation at Petersen site.

This valuable collection of vehicles includes a 1900 steam car built by a high school student in his family's downtown L.A. blacksmith shop, a 1929 Ford Model A Roadster, a 1931 Twin Coach Helms Bakery van, and the 1917 Woods Dual Power Coupe, an early gas/electric hybrid. Six cars will continue to be on display at the Petersen Museum through a one-year loan agreement.

Ongoing work with the collection at its new storage site will involve cleaning, photographing, compiling a parts inventory, preparing the collection for public tours on a limited basis, and completion of a final report to the County Board of Supervisors.

Above and at left: Petersen museum staff offloading vehicles at Gardena warehouse

Material Culture and Seaver Center Collections

Photographic images from the Seaver Center for Western History Research collections were licensed for use in a public service announcement by Friends of the Los Angeles River and for two recent publications: Scott Zesch's article "Chinese Los Angeles in 1870-1871: The Makings of a Massacre" in the *Southern California Quarterly* 90 (2) and Paul Spitzzeri's *The Workman and Temple Families of Southern California* (Booksurge Llc, 2007)

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences exhibited Charlie Chaplin costume and props from the history department's material culture collection during its July 2008 event "Techno Chaplin," which explored the science and technology of filming *Modern Times*.

David Rickman, an historic clothing consultant, historian, and illustrator, has been cataloging and making patterns of clothing from the history department's collection of *Californio* clothing for a forthcoming publication. This collection, some photographs of which are shown here, is the largest of its kind in the United States.

Field Work

Entomology

Training group at Kaeng Krachan.

In late June and early July, Entomology Curator Brian Brown joined a team of entomologists to initiate the third year of the NSF-funded TIGER (Thailand Inventory Group for Entomological Resources) project, for which Brown is co-principle investigator. The group trained staff from a number of nearby national parks to collect insects for the project during a three-day training session at Kaeng Krachan National Park. Kaeng Krachan is Thailand's largest park, with the full roster of large mammals (elephant, gaur, tiger, leopard) and habitat ranging from lowlands to misty mountains overlooking the Burmese border, immediately to the west. Even in the preliminary sampling of this short visit, Brown collected some fantastic phorid flies (his research group), including many new to science. After Kaeng Krachan, the group moved on to Khao Sam Roy Yod and Khao Kitchakut National Parks, where they similarly trained park staff. In total, 7 National Parks will be surveyed over the next year, in addition to 20 other parks sampled in years 1 and 2 of the project. Already, many species new to science have been uncovered by this massive insect survey.

Above left: Misty, high elevation forest at Kaeng Krachan.

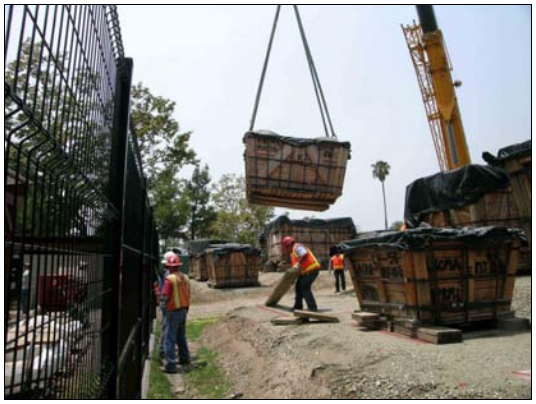
Right: A previously unknown, and still unnamed, phorid fly from the trip.

Rancho La Brea

As reported in the May 2006 issue of this newsletter, new asphaltic deposits were discovered during the construction of LACMA's recent underground parking structure. This summer Page Museum staff assisted in moving the 23 large tree boxes that hold 16 Pleistocene fossil deposits, and the plaster jackets protecting a near complete mammoth skeleton, to a fenced compound adjacent to Pit 91 in Hancock Park.

Fossils already identified in the deposits during the discovery include, trunks of trees and other plant material, mollusks, birds, ground sloths, dire wolves, sabertoothed cats, horses and bison. The deposits were discovered at an average depth of 27 feet but have not yet been accurately dated. Excavation of the first box began in August. Similar to Pit 91, the positional data of all visible specimens will be taken however, for this project we will use metric measurements rather than imperial.

Excavation of nearly complete semi-articulated mammoth skeleton.



Each box will be divided into 1 meter square grids and specimens will be removed using small hand tools such as hammers, chisels and dental picks. Preparation of the mammoth skeleton has begun in the fishbowl lab under the guidance of lab supervisor Shelley Cox.

Above, site of the new project north of the Pit 91 compound.

At right, lab supervisor Shelley Cox and Curatorial Assistant Aisling Farrell working on the mammoth.

Vertebrate Paleontology

The blog for the Vertebrate Paleontology field expeditions in the Tibetan Plateau has just gone "live." For those who are not familiar with our works, this is an NSF-funded field project to use vertebrate fossils to assess the Cenozoic evolution of mammals in relation

to the uplift of the Tibetan Plateau, as well as the resulting climatic and environmental changes. Xiaoming Wang's graduate student, Jack Tseng, will host the blog and will attempt to post journals, photos, and videos (if bandwidth allows) whenever he has access to the web. See the link at:

http://lacmvp.blogspot.com/

Dinosaur Institute

The Dinosaur Institute's 2008 field season began in April with a weeklong trip to the Mojave Desert in southeastern California to collect diverse 170-million-year-old trackways contained in the Jurassic Aztec Sandstone (at left). The crew included staff, students, and volunteers of the Dinosaur Institute as well staff from the San Bernardino County Museum. This expedition was very successful, resulting in the collection of trackways from theropod dinosaurs as well as other animals that lived with them.

The next excursion revisited the area of San Juan County, Utah, that was prospected in the summer of 2007. From mid May to mid June an international team including Dinosaur Institute personnel, members of the NHM's education department, and a colleague from the University of Copenhagen in Denmark surveyed the Late Jurassic exposures (150 million year old) of the Morrison Formation. Most of the work focused on collecting the large bones of a sauropod, but the team also discovered and collected a large quantity of dinosaur footprints contained in the approximately 100 million-year-old Cedar Mountain Formation. These fossils included the prints of sauropods, theropods, ornithopods, and stegosaurs. The team also collected a humerus of a brachiosaur that was larger than several members of the excavation team!

The summer season closed with an expedition to the late Cretaceous of Carter County, southwestern Montana. The team surveyed 75-million-year-old rocks deposited in a shallow sea that flooded this portion of the world at that time, and collected fossils of ancient seabirds such as *Hesperornis* and another marine animals. The team also collected fossils of small vertebrates from the somewhat younger Hell Creek Formation, also within Carter County. On their way back to Los Angeles the

expedition members collected footprints of pterosaurs from Late Jurassic rock exposures of the Sundance Formation near Casper, central Wyoming.

Overall this field season was a huge success! The fossils discovered are great additions to our growing collection, and some of them may go on display in our upcoming new dinosaur galleries. We are very excited to continue these field projects next year!

Entomology again

In late July, Entomology Curator Brian Brown traveled to Slovakia (in central Europe) to collect fresh specimens of European species of phorid flies for his NSF-funded Basal Lineages of the Phoridae project. In this project, Brown & co-PI Dr. Paul Smith of CSU Bakersfield will sequence DNA from 6 genes to analyzed the phylogeny of the relatively primitive phorids. Many important and useful species are found in Europe, some of which are crucial to the project, and Brown was successful in getting all that he hoped for, thanks in large part to his gracious host, Dr. Milan Kozanek of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Together, Brown and Kozanek drove to a number of forested sites where they operated Malaise traps and did hand collecting (with nets). Luckily, collecting was good as large forested areas remain in Slovakia, where some oak trees 600 years old are still found!

Above left: Brian Brown standing beside a 600 year old oak tree.

Above right: Brown with Slovakian entomologists Drs. Milan Kozanek (left) and Lubomir Vidlicka (right).

Left: Wet alder forest near Bratislava.

Meetings, Workshops, and Presentations

Ornithology

Dr. Ken Campbell traveled to Sydney, Australia, in late August to attend the 7th international meeting of the Society of Avian Paleontology and Evolution. In addition to chairing the first morning session and the business meeting, he presented two papers

during the conference, which was hosted by the Australian National Museum. One paper, co-authored with Dr. Zbigniew Bochénski of the Polish Academy of Sciences, was devoted to a review of the fossil owls from Rancho La Brea. This paper reviewed the various species of owls found at La Brea, including three extinct species, described some of the distinctive features of the largest extinct owl, and discussed why there are so many fossil owls present in the collection. The second paper, which was delivered as the President's Lecture, was a detailed look at how birds maintain their balance when walking, i.e., why birds waddle. This paper, co-authored with Dr. Fritz Hertel of CSUN, examined the anatomy of a bird's knee and ankle joints to explain how and why waddling occurs in birds. Dr. Campbell retired as President of the Society at the end of the meeting, turning the gavel over to Dr. Per Ericson of the Swedish Museum of Natural History.

Rancho La Brea

In May, Collections Manager Chris Shaw presented at the 'Sabertoothed Carnivore Symposium and Workshop' at the Idaho Museum of Natural History/Idaho State University in Pocatello. His paper focused on the ontogeny and social behavior of dire wolves and sabertoothed cats from Rancho La Brea.

Echinoderms

Gordon Hendler, Curator of Echinoderms, lectured on one of California's most interesting and least known animals at a meeting that attracted an international crowd of scientists who study echinoderms (starfish, sea urchins, and relatives) (the 5th North American Echinoderm Symposium). Gordon, who discovered the creature in Santa Monica Bay, showed that it parasitizes a brittle star species that is reportedly "the most abundant and widespread animal in any phylum" on the coast of southern California. The brittle star lives buried in sand and mud, and the three-eyed parasite, lives inside the star's stomach. Gordon proved that the parasite is the larval stage of a tiny crustacean (a.k.a., copepod). In the process of studying its dramatic transformation from a parasitic mud-bound larva to a free-swimming adult, Gordon himself metamorphosed from an echinoderm biologist into a copepodologist. The image shown here is a fancifully altered scanning electron micrograph of the parasite. Additional information on its natural history will appear in a Newsletter next year, after results of the research are published in the journal *Invertebrate Biology.*

Vertebrate Paleontology

May 18 to 21, Lawrence Barnes attended the Reunión Internacional sobre el Estudio de los Mamíferos Marinos, which this year was held in Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico. Barnes gave a presentation, co-authored with several Museum Staff and Associates, about the relationships of ancestral dolphins of the family Kentriodontidae, fossils of which are

becoming more frequently recognized world-wide. At the same conference, Research Associate Dr. Francisco J. Aranda-Manteca presented a talk (co-authored with Barnes and our graduate student, Gabriel Aguirre-Fernández below, pictured with Barnes) about environmental parameters affecting the Pliocene evolution of dolphins in the Gulf of California, and Gabriel talked about Pliocene fossil dolphins (co-authored with Barnes and Aranda) that we have found on Isla San Jose in the Gulf of California.

Gabriel also attended the Annual Meeting of the European Cetacean Society, which was held this year in Holland during April, where he presented a summary of his thesis work, and announced the discovery of the new fossil dolphins from Isla San Jose that we have been studying.

History

In May 2008, Seaver Center collections manager John Cahoon was a panelist in a session, "Rising to New Heights: Developing Your Leadership Skills with SCA," at the annual meeting of the Society of California Archivists (SCA) in Monterey, California.

In July 2008, history curator Sojin Kim moderated a panel, "Preserving a Historic Place: *Nihonmachi* in California and the Interior West," at the conference "Whose America? Who's American? Diversity, Civil Liberties, and Social Justice" organized by the Japanese American National Museum in Denver, Colorado. In August 2008, she participated in a meeting convened by the Heritage Philadelphia Program in Pennsylvania to plan for an upcoming publication that will explore history interpretation practices.

In August 2008, history collections managers John Cahoon and Betty Uyeda and history project database manager Brent Riggs attended the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in San Francisco, California.

Fishes

Rick Feeney went to Montreal in July for the annual meeting of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists and presented a poster entitled "Description of a *Liopropoma* larva from the Gulf of California (Actinopterygii: Serranidae)," co-authored by Bob Lavenberg and Bob Pitman.

Malacology

Emeritus Curator of Mollusks Jim McLean attended the annual meetings of both the Western Society of Malacologists, which met in June at the U. S. Geological Survey, Menlo Park, California, and the American Malacological Society, which met in July at the University of Southern Illinois, at Carbondale. At both meetings he presented updates on the progress of his two books on the northeastern Pacific gastropods.

Crustacea / MBPC

Jody Martin, Regina Wetzer, and Dean Pentcheff were invited participants at a meeting in Keelung (northern Taipei), Taiwan, in June, hosted and funded by the BioSynthesis Center at the Field Museum in Chicago, a component of the larger Encyclopedia of Life initiative. The Taiwan meeting focused on making results of the current decapod crustacean Tree of Life grant available to the public via the web and on using existing databases to display, for the first time, complete lists of every species of crab, lobster, shrimp and related crustaceans in the world. The trip included "collecting" by way of sorting through the by-catch of a deep-sea fishing port.

Dinosaur Institute

At the end of April, Luis Chiappe and Aisling Farrell took our 3 OEDG students (Opportunities for Enhancing Diversity in the Geosciences) to attend CalPaleo at the CSU Stanislaus campus. Jingmai O'Connor and Alyssa Bell also participated and presented papers on enantiornithine evolution and hesperornithiform locomotion.

In the last week of July, Luis Chiappe traveled to Cuenca, Spain, to deliver a lecture on Late Cretaceous birds at a summer paleontological course organized by the Autonomía de Castilla-La Mancha. While there, he took the opportunity to visit Late Jurassic Portuguese localities that have provided a dinosaur fauna shared with that of the American Late Jurassic. Plans are in place for a future expedition to Portugal to explore some of these localities..

From August 18-22 Luis Chiappe and graduate students-in-residence Alyssa Bell and Jingmai O'Connor attended the 7th meeting of the Society of Avian Paleontology and Evolution (SAPE) in Sydney, Australia, in which they presented their most recent collaborative research. Alyssa gave a talk on a new Ornithuromorph from the Barun Goyot Formation, Southern Mongolia, and Jingmai provided a review of the skull morphology of the Enantiornithes, an extinct clade of Mesozoic birds. The student talks were the highlights of the meeting, which was a success! The next meeting will be held in 2012 in Vienna, Austria.

External Funding

Mammalogy

Mammalogy was awarded a contract for $5,000 from the National Marine Fisheries Service to process and archive marine mammal specimens.

Malacology

Starting in July, Jim McLean has to date raised $7,000 in private donations in order to continue the part time support for his imaging assistant Brian Koehler, who is now completing the illustrations for his books. The books will be published by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, which has an active program in malacology and has

previously published major works on mollusks. His former student Dan Geiger, now of the SBMNH, will assist with editing tasks.

Public Outreach

Curator's Cupboards feature Marine and Terrestrial Biodiversity

There were two Curator's Cupboard events this summer, one on Marine Biodiversity on July 12 (with contributions from Kathy Omura, George Davis, Regina Wetzer, and Kirk Fitzhugh) and one on Terrestrial Biodiversity (with contributions from Brian Brown, Weiping Xie, Jim Dines, and Kimball Garrett) on August 16. Both events were opportunities for the public to get one-on-one time with our scientific experts, something they always deeply appreciate, but these Curatorial Cupboards also featured interaction with Education's Junior Scientist program (run by Dan Keefe). The July event featured the Marine Biodiversity Processing Center, the Dinosaur Institute, and Ichthyology, while August headlined Entomology, Mammalogy, and Ornithology. Our audience was grateful to all who participated, and we appreciated the organizational help from Briana Burrows of Public Programs.

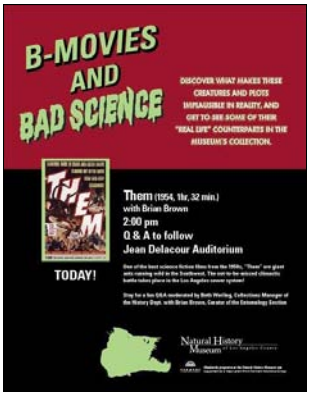
Mammalogy

Junior Scientists and museum guests who stopped by the mammal table learned why the fur of certain mammals changes color when the season changes; the difference between a mountain beaver (which isn't a beaver and isn't restricted to mountains!) and the North American beaver (you know, the one with the flat tail); and why certain bats are crucial to the tequila industry (hint: they pollinate flowers on the blue agave, the plant from which tequila is made).

History

On June 15, collections manager Beth Werling delivered a talk on the history department's citrus crate label collection at the Fellows' "Taste of History" dinner at the San Gabriel Mission. On August 2, she gave a presentation, "Hollywood at Hart: William S. Hart and the Western," about early Hollywood and the impact of Hart on Western films at the William S. Hart Ranch and Museum.

B Movies and Bad Science



Research & Collections staff collaborated on a very successful summer public program series, "B-Movies and Bad Science," which paired NHM experts with Hollywood creature features. History collections manager Beth Werling served as moderator for the series and shared some of the material culture collections related to the titles. Other staff lending their expertise are listed in the newspaper article quoted below:

"A professor becomes a crazed hominid after exposure to the blood of a prehistoric fish in *Monster on the Campus*." So writes Julie Riggott of the LA Downtown News. She continues, "Now that's entertainment. But is it education?"

Of course it is when you can get reputable scientists from the museum to comment on the films and answer questions from the audience. "*B Movies and Bad Science*" just concluded its initial highly successful inaugural run. Involved in its conception were Sue Oh (Public Programs), Beth Werling and William Estrada (History), and George Davis (Crustacea). Scientists providing answers and comments were Dr. Luis Chiappe, George Davis, Brent Karner, and Dr. Brian Brown. After the Q & A sessions, audiences (from an initial audience of 40 to the final audience of 300) were introduced to some of the museums special inhabitants from coelacanths to tarantulas. As part of the process of getting the message out to our LA audience, both George Davis and Brent Karner were

interviewed about the program by reporters from the Downtown News, and la.com. If you wish to read the interview writeups, you will find the articles online at the following URL's:

http://downtownnews.com/articles/2008/06/30/entertainment/entertainment02.txt
http://www.la.com/recreation/B-Movies_and_Bad_Science.html

History

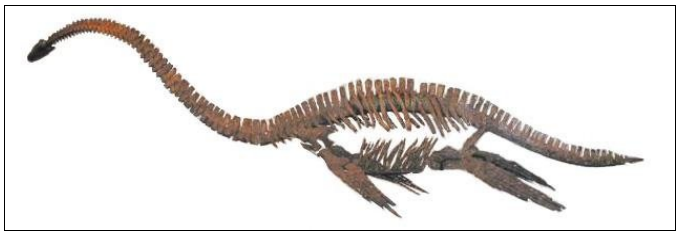
On September 16, history curator William Estrada delivered a presentation, "Images of Mexican Los Angeles: 1781-1940," for the NHM Docent Roundtable Picnic held at the Griffith Park ranger station.

Echinoderms

Gordon Hendler Elected to SCAS Board of Directors

On July 15th it was announced that Gordon Hendler, Curator of Echinoderms, had been elected to the governing body of the Southern California Academy of Sciences (SCAS.) The Academy was one of the original founders, together with the County of Los Angeles, of the Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science, and Art in 1910. It donated the museum's first Rancho La Brea fossils, and the Museum still houses the office of the Academy. Scientific journals that SCAS receives in exchange for its Bulletin are an important asset to the Museum's Research Library. In addition to publishing the *Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Sciences*, SCAS holds an annual meeting where academic and applied scientists and students from southern California can participate in symposia. It also awards research grants to undergraduate and graduate students, and supports a Junior Academy program that gives high school students the opportunity to carry out original research in scientific laboratories. These activities fulfill the Academy's mission "... to promote fellowship among scientists and those interested in science; to contribute to scientific literature through publication of pertinent manuscripts; to encourage and promote scholarship among young scientists; and to provide information to the membership, to the public, and to the public agencies on such matters as may be of joint interest to the sciences and to society."

Dinosaur Institute



The Dinosaur Institute participated in the Curator's Cupboard in July following the theme of Marine Biodiversity. The DI addressed the question of why so few dinosaurs are found in California, and explained that during the Cretaceous period the majority of what is now California was ocean. Therefore, many of

the Cretaceous fossils found in California are those of marine reptiles, such as plesiosaurs and mosasaurs. Luis Chiappe also participated in the B-movies and Bad-science program, discussing the accuracy or lack thereof of the movie *Dinosaurus*.

In addition, the Dinosaur Institute participated in the First Fridays program by keeping the Thomas Lab exhibit staffed for the event. Dr. Chiappe also provided public tours of the lab during the First Friday in April.

Rancho La Brea

During August the Page Museum hosted the Museum's Adventures in Nature for three weeks. As part of the many classes held at the Page, lead excavator Kristen Brown gave behind-the-scenes tours of Pit 91, and collections manager Chris Shaw showed off some of the "cool" carnivores from our collection.

Vertebrate Paleontology

On 27 August, the History Channel aired an episode of its "Jurassic Fight Club" series that featured on-camera appearances by Lawrence Barnes. The episode dealt with hypothetical aggressive interactions between the extinct giant shark, *Carcharocles,* and a Miocene sperm whale, *Brygmophyseter shigensis,* a species of large-toothed sperm whale that Barnes and colleague, Kiyoharu Hirota, named from Honshu, Japan.

Malacology

On May 10th Lindsey Groves (Malacology) and LouElla Saul (IP Research Associate) co-lead *Fossil Hunting in Silverado Canyon* along with field assistance courtesy of George Davis (Crustacea), John Alderson (IP Research Associate), and Christyann Evans, Grace Cabrera, and Robin Savoian (Education). For the first time ever it was necessary to add a *second* May trip to accommodate high demand. Therefore, on May 31st Lindsey was assisted by George Davis (Crustacea), Cathy Groves (Echinoderms), Mary Stecheson (*ex* Invertebrate Paleontology), and Christyann Evans.and Grace Cabrera (Education).

L to R: Participants in the May 10th 2008 *Fossil Hunting in Silverado Canyon* excursion. Ellen Kosman (Spouse of GI Los Tenorio), Los Tenorio (Gallery Interpreter), Lindsey Groves (Malacology), Robin Savoian (Education), Christyann Evans (Education), Grace Cabrera (Education), LouElla Saul (IP Res. Assoc.), John Alderson (IP Res. Assoc.), and George Davis (Crustacea).

Additionally, on May 24th Lindsey Groves led three family groups through the Malacology collection for *He Knows Sea Shells*, part of the on going Scavengers Safari series. In August Lindsey & Cathy Groves once again assisted Melanie Rhalter with her Ocean Commotion portion of Adventures in Nature.

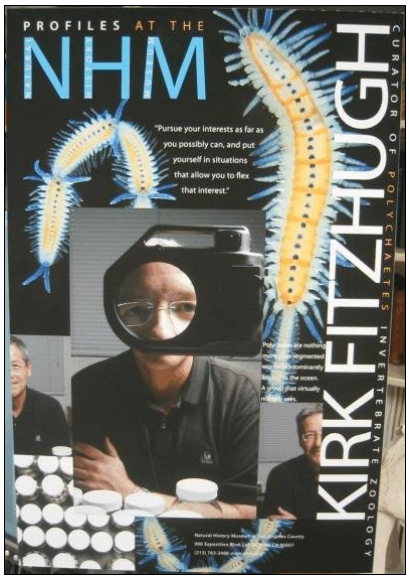
Mammalogy

In June, Jim Dines (Mammalogy Collections Manager) participated in the first annual Career Day at King Elementary School in Long Beach. There was stiff competition from firefighters with shiny fire trucks and attorneys sporting Armani suits, but the guy who "takes care of dead stuff" scored a big hit with the pickled bat specimens. Students were fascinated to learn about a career they previously didn't even know existed and at least a few seemed inspired to consider working in a natural history museum.

Polychaete Worms

Kirk Fitzhugh, Curator of Polychaetes, was invited to participate in the Wednesday night biology discussion group at the California State Polytechnic University, Department of Biological Sciences, on 14 May. The topic of discussion was Kirk's manuscript, "'Evidence' for evolution versus 'evidence' for intelligent design: parallel confusions," which outlines misinterpretations of fossils and other evidence as support for or against creationism / intelligent design or evolutionary theories.

Future worm workers of the world unite! New recruits at this year's *Bug Fair.*



Kirk Fitzhugh also represented the world of segmented worms at the 21st Annual NHM *Bug Fair*, on 17-18 May. All manner of preserved and live annelids were on display.

Kirk Fitzhugh was also a participant in July with a group of students from the Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, who were involved in a project to develop posters that represent different aspects of science at the NHM. Kirk was interviewed and photographed by Colten Corry, who produced a magnificent poster (at left). This was one of several posters produced by that collaboration between R & C and the Art Center College of Design.

R & C Active in AIN (Adventures in Nature)

As usual, this year's AIN activities included participation from a large range of R & C offices. Below are highlights of just a few of them.

Mammalogy

AIN day campers received classroom visits by Mammalogy Collections Manager Jim Dines. Students in the "Winged Things" classes were shown a diverse array of bat specimens and learned about echolocation, while kids in the "Flukes and Flippers" classes learned how baleen whales capture their prey and were able to get an up-close look at real dolphin and sea lion skulls.

Invertebrate Paleontology

Harry Filkorn, Department of Invertebrate Paleontology, also assisted with the Museum's Adventures in Nature (AIN) summer class program of the Education Department. Harry selected a wide array of fossils from the Museum's Invertebrate Paleontology collections and gave presentations to Patrick Tanaka's AIN classes called "Fantastic Fossils" on July 8. Everyone was amazed to see fossils of extinct invertebrate animals like trilobites along with many other unusual and remarkably preserved life forms, some of them more than 500 million years old!

Polychaete Worms

Kirk Fitzhugh, Curator of Polychaetes, presented the world of worms to participants at several classes at NHM on 18 July, and two classes at the Page Museum on 15 August. A gross time was had by all.

Right: Curator Kirk Fitzhugh with one of his AIN classes at NHM. Lunch anyone?

Student Mentoring and Research

Vertebrate Paleontology

Jack Tseng, Vertebrate Paleontology student-in-residence, has been awarded a Fulbright scholarship and will be spending 10 months in China undertaking research on fossil hyenas. Jack is a graduate student at USC and is featured on the "Welcome to USC" web page as one of the "People at USC". You can access the relevant page at:

http://www.usc.edu/about/people/tseng.html

Congratulations, Jack!!

Malacology

Malacology Research Associate Ángel Valdés (Cal Poly Pomona) has two new students, Jesse Ornelas and Elysse Gatdula, who have begun nudibranch research on, and have recently used, the LACM SEM facilities.

Vertebrate Paleontology

Nicholas D. Pyenson, who has been a Graduate Student in Residence for several years, has now received his Doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley. We are pleased to learn that Nick has received a post-doctoral appointment at the University of British Columbia, where he will further his research on the evolutionary biology of cetaceans, and that he will continue his research with Dr. Barnes and other members of our Museum staff.

Meredith Staley (right), who is a Museum employee working on Vertebrate Paleontology's new "Cenozoic/Age of Mammals Project," has begun her Master's curriculum in Geology at California State University Fullerton. Meredith plans a thesis topic dealing with the unexpectedly late fossil occurrences of archaic tooth-bearing mysticetes (baleen whales) that have been found in the Early Miocene Vaqueros Formation of Orange County. She hopes to integrate geographic, stratigraphic, and ecologic information to analyze the occurrences of these strange whales.

Volunteers and Research Associates

Rancho La Brea

We would like to acknowledge Elissa Wall once again for her contributions to the Page Museum lab. Elissa received 'Volunteer of the Year' at the Volunteer Recognition Night in June.

Other distinguished volunteers include Robin Turner and Harry Williams for their 20 year service in the lab.

At left: Elissa Wall prepared the sabertoothed cat nicknamed 'Max'.

Vertebrate Paleontology

Henry Moon (right) was recognized as Volunteer of the Year at the Museum's annual Volunteer Recognition Event. Henry has been a great asset during the past year to our preparation program to ready for exhibit the Late Pleistocene fossil skeleton of the "San Pedro Gray Whale."

Also of great help on the gray whale preparation has been John Kilburn (left), who returned recently as an active Vertebrate Paleontology volunteer in the Preparation Laboratory.

Distinguished Visitors

Rancho La Brea

Professor Fred Croxen and colleagues from Arizona Western College visited the Page Museum in June to continue their work on identifications and cataloging of the 6,000 early Pleistocene fossils collected from El Golfo, Sonora, Mexico. A large portion of the specimens are currently housed at the Page Museum where ongoing work is being carried out under the supervision of Chris Shaw. The multi-institutional team will head out again to collect more fossils in November.

Mammalogy

It was another busy summer with visiting researchers from near and abroad making use of the Mammalogy collections. Visiting scholars included: Dr. Janet Braun (Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, University of Oklahoma); Dr. Ron Pine (Natural History Museum and Biodiversity Research Center, University of Kansas); Dr. Rolf Mueller (Shandong University, Jinan, Shangdong Province, China); Michele Bleuze (University of Western Ontario, Ontario, Canada); Alan Mootnik (Gibbon Conservation Center, Santa Clarita, CA); Cassie Johnston (San Diego State University); Katie Brakora (University of California, Berkeley).

Malacology

Father Al Lopez (University of Central America) is back in Los Angeles for the summer to conduct research on Central American land snails while also performing priestly duties at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Mike Vendrasco (Calif. St. Univ. Fullerton) made two visits to malacology to examine the vast holdings of eastern Pacific chitons, Victoria Stofel & Melanie Saldaña (Calif. St. Univ. Los Angeles) used the collection for comparative purposes in their archaeologic research, Tom Walker (British Shell Collectors Club) made a quick visit to Malacology while passing through Los Angeles, Shawn Wiedrick (Pacific Conchological Club) made two visits to identify numerous lots of micro-turrid gastropods, as part of a research project, Christine Nakashiba and Patrick Judabong (Pasadena Art Center) visited Malacology to interview Lindsey Groves and photograph portions of the collection, consultant Matt Bell (Los Angeles) brought in several land snails from the Lake Isabella area for identification, consultants Scott Armstrong & Geraldine Aron (Paleosoultions, Costa Mesa) brought in several Pliocene-Pleistocene mollusks from the Puente Hills for identification, Dan Muhs & DeAnna Patterson (USGS Denver) visited Malacology to have some Pleistocene mollusks identified and left numerous samples for donation, and IP Research Associate John Alderson visited malacology to compare some Miocene gastropods to their Recent counterparts.

Recent Publications

(with names of staff and associates in bold)

Aguirre-Fernández, G., L. G. Barnes, F. J. Aranda-Manteca, and J. R. Fernández-Rivera. 2008. Afinidades filogenéticas de algunos Delphinidae (Cetacea:Odontoceti) del Golfo de California, México, durante el Plioceno. [Phylogenetic affinities of some Delphinidae (Cetacea: Odontoceti) from the Gulf of California, Mexico, during the Pliocene]. Programa y Resúmenes, XXXI Reunión Internacional sobre el Estudio de los Mamíferos Marinos, Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico, 18-21 May 2008.

Aranda-Manteca, F. J., L. G. Barnes, and **G. Aguirre-Fernández.** 2008. Condiciones ambientales y tectonica durante el Plioceno en el desarrollo de la familia Delphinidae en el Golfo de California, México. [Pliocene environmental and tectonic conditions during the development of the family Delphinidae in the Gulf of California, Mexico.] Programa y Resúmenes, XXXI Reunión Internacional sobre el Estudio de los Mamíferos Marinos, Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico, 18-21 May 2008

Barnes, L. G. 2008. Chapter 31. Otarioidea, p. 523-541. In: Janis, C., G. F. Gunnel and **M. D. Uhen** (eds), Tertiary Mammals of North America, Volume 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. i-viii, 1-795.

Barnes, L. G. 2008. Miocene and Pliocene Albireonidae (Cetacea, Odontoceti), unusual fossil dolphins from the Eastern North Pacific Ocean, pp. 99-152 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Barnes, L. G., H. W. Thomas, S. A. McLeod, D. J. Bohaska, **S. J. Godfrey, N. D. Pyenson, J. L. Goedert, F. J. Aranda-Manteca,** and **G. Aguirre-Fernandez.** 2008. Diversidad evolutivo y determinación de la polaridad de caracteres en los delfinoideo primitivos, los Kentriodontidae (Cetacea, Odontoceti, Kentriodontidae) del Mioceno. [Evolutionary diversity and determination of character polarity in primitive Miocene delphinoids, the Kentriodontidae (Cetacea, Odontoceti, Kentriodontidae). Programa y Resúmenes, XXXI Reunión Internacional sobre el Estudio de los Mamíferos Marinos, Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico, 18-21 May 2008.

Brown, B. V. 2008. New records and a new species of the *Dohrniphora longirostrata* group (Diptera: Phoridae). Journal of the Kansas Entomological Society. 81: 204-207.

Calvano, G, D. R. Prothero, J. Ludtke, and **E. B. Lander.** 2008. Magnetic stratigraphy of the Eocene to Miocene Sespe and Vaqueros formations, Los Angeles and Orange Counties, California, pp. 43-61 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Czaplewski, N. J., Gary S. Morgan, and **S. A. McLeod.** 2008. Chapter 12. Chiroptera, p. 174-197. In: Janis, C., G. F. Gunnel and **M. D. Uhen** (eds), Tertiary Mammals of North America, Volume 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. i-viii, 1-795.

Fierstine, H. L., 2008. A fossil skull of the extant blue marlin *(Makaira nigricans* Lacepède, 1802) from the late Miocene of Orange County, California. Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Sciences, 10(2):45-56.

Fierstine, H. L., A. F. Bannikov, and K. A. Monsch. 2008. A new species of the extinct billfish genus *Palaeorhynchus* (Perciformes, Xiphioidei, Palaeorhynchidae) from the late early Eocene of Bolca in northern Italy. Miscellanea Paleontologica, Studi e Recerche sui Giacimenti Terziari di Bolca, Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Verona, 12:7-27.

Filkorn, H. F. 2008. First report of Turonian rudists from the Pacific Coast of North America. Eighth International Congress on Rudists, Abstracts, Izmir, Turkey, June 23-25, 2008, p. 39.

Fitzhugh, K. 2008. Clarifying the role of character loss in phylogenetic inference. *Zoologica Scripta* 37: 561–569.

Fordyce, R. E., **M. D. Uhen,** and **L. G. Barnes.** 2008. Chapter 35. Mysticeti, p. 607-628. In: Janis, C., G. F. Gunnel and **M. D. Uhen** (eds), Tertiary Mammals of North America, Volume 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. i-viii, 1-795.

Gao, C., **Chiappe, L.**, Meng, Q., **O'Connor, J.**, Wang, X., Cheng, X., and Liu, J. 2008. A New Basal Lineage of Early Cretaceous Birds from China and its Implications of the Evolution of the Avian Tail. *Palaeontology*, 51(4): 775–791.

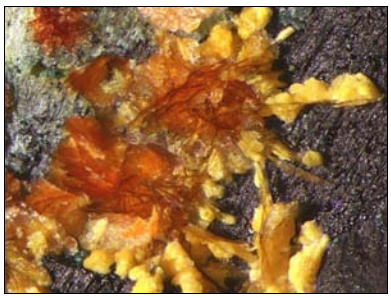
Godfrey, S. J., and **L. G. Barnes.** 2008. A new genus and species of Late Miocene pontoporiid dolphin (Cetacea: Odontoceti) from the St. Marys Formation in Maryland. Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology, 28(2):520-528.

Harris, J. M., and **L. G. Barnes.** 2008. Introduction, pp. 1-9 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County Science Series, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Harris, J. M., T. E. Cerling, M. G. Leakey, and B. H.Passey. 2008 Stable isotope ecology of fossil hippopotamids from the Lake Turkana Basin region of East Africa. *Journal of Zoology*: 275: 323-331.

Jackson, F., Varricchio, D.J., Jackson, R.A., Vila, B., and **L.M. Chiappe**. 2008. Comparison of water vapor conductance in a titanosaur egg from the Upper Cretaceous of Argentina and a *Megaloolithus siruguei* egg from Spain. *Paleobiology* 34(2): 229-246.

Kampf, A. R., and Steele, I. M. (2008) Magnesiopascoite, a new mineral related to pascoite: Description and crystal structure. *Canadian Mineralogist* **46**, 679-686.
At right: the new mineral magnesiopascoite described in the above article.



Kampf, A. R., and Steele, I. M. (2008) Martyite, a new mineral related to volborthite: Description and crystal structure. *Canadian Mineralogist* **46**, 687-692.
At left: the new mineral martyite described in the above article.

Koretsky, I., and **L. G. Barnes.** 2008. Chapter 32. Phocidae, p. 542-556. In: Janis, C., G. F. Gunnel and **M. D. Uhen** (eds), Tertiary Mammals of North America, Volume 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. i-viii, 1-795.

Kung, G. 2008. Two new species of the *Melaloncha ungulata* group of bee-killing flies (Diptera: Phoridae). *Sociobiology*. 51: 491-496.

Lander, E. B. 2008. Early Clarendonian (late middle Miocene) fossil land mammal assemblages from the Lake Matthews Formation, Riverside County, southern California, and a preliminary review of *Merychyus* (Mammalia, Artiodactyla, Oreodontiodae), pp. 181-212 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Lindsay, E. H., and **R. E. Reynolds.** 2008. Heteromyid rodents from Miocene faunas of the Mojave Desert, southern California, pp. 213-235 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

McDonald, H. G., and **G. T. Jefferson.** 2008. Distribution of Pleistocene *Nothrotheriops* (Xenarthra, Nothrotheridae) in North America, pp. 313-331 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

McLean, J.H. & Gofas, S. 2008. Notes on the genus *Anadema* H. and A. Adams (Gastropoda: Colloniidae). Iberus 26(1):53-63, figs. 1-23.

McLeod, S. A., and **L. G. Barnes.** 2008. A new genus and species of Eocene protocetid archaeocete whale (Mammalia, Cetacea) from the Atlantic Coastal Plain, pp. 73-98 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Miller, W. E., C. R. Delgado de Jesús, R. Gómez-Núñez, J. Ignacio-Vallejo González, and J. López-Espinosa. 2008. Preliminary report of Pleistocene mammals from the state of Coahuila, Mexico, pp. 333-357 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Paulina Carabajal, A, Coria, R. A., and **L. M. Chiappe**. 2008. An incomplete Late Cretaceous braincase (Sauropoda: Titanosauria): New insights about the dinosaurian inner ear and endocranium. *Cretaceous Research* 29: 643-648.

Powell, C.L., II & **Groves, L.T.** 2008. Notes on the association of vesicomyids and *Lucinoma* (Mollusca: Bivalvia) in southern California: Modern and fossil. The Festivus 40(5)61-68, figs. 1-6.

Prothero, D. R., J. M. Hoffman, and **J. L. Goedert.** 2008. Paleomagnetism of the Oligocene and Miocene Lincoln Creek and Astoria formations, Knappton, Washington, pp. 63-72 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Reynolds, R. E., R. L. Reynolds, and E. H. Lindsay. 2008. Biostratigraphy of the Miocene Crowder Formation, Cajon Pass, southwestern Mojave Desert, California, pp. 237-253 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Sander, M. P., Peitz, C., Jackson, F., and **L. M. Chiappe**. 2008. Upper Cretaceous titanosaur nesting sites and their implications for sauropod dinosaur reproductive biology. *Paleontographica* Abt. A 284: 69-107.

Scott, E., and **S. M. Cox.** 2008. Late Pleistocene distribution of *Bison* (Mammalia; Artiodactyla) in the Mojave Desert of southern California and Nevada, pp. 359-382 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Shaw, C. A., M. L. Romig, and **F. P. Heald.** 2008. Congenital scoliosis in *Smilodon fatalis* (Mammalia, Felidae) from Rancho La Brea, Los Angeles, California, pp. 383-388 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Smith, P. T. and **B. V. Brown**. 2008. Utility of DNA sequences for inferring phylogenetic relationships and associating morphologically dissimilar males and females of the bee-killing flies, genus *Melaloncha* (Diptera: Phoridae). Annals of the Entomological Society of America. 101: 713-721.

Takeuchi, G. T., and **R. W. Huddleston.** 2008. *Genyonemus whistleri* new species, a late Miocene sciaenid fish from California, pp. 273-291 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Takeuchi, G. T., and **R. W. Huddleston.** 2008. A new early Miocene species of *Pogonias* (Teleostei: Sciaenidae) based on otoliths from California. Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Sciences, 107(2):68-80.

Tedford, R. H. and **X. Wang.** 2008. *Metalopex,* a new genus of fox (Carnivora: Canidae: Vulpini) from the late Miocene of western North America, pp. 273-278 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Thomas, H. W., L.G. Barnes, J. E. Klein, and **S. A. McLeod.** 2008. Examples of paleopathologies in some fossil Cetacea from the North Pacific realm, pp. 153-179 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Uhen, M. D., R. E. Fordyce, and **L.G. Barnes.** 2008. Chapter 34. Odontoceti, p. 566-606. In: Janis, C., G. F. Gunnel and **M. D. Uhen** (eds), Tertiary Mammals of North America, Volume 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. i-viii, 1-795.

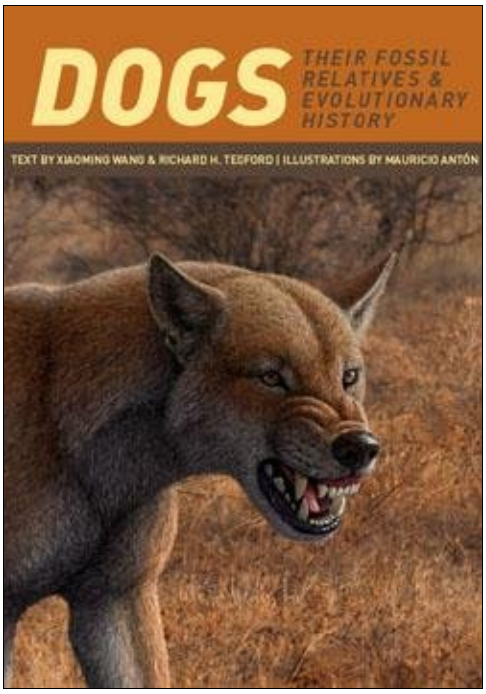
Wang, X., and **L. G. Barnes,** editors. 2008. Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County Science Series, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Wang, X., and **L. G. Barnes.** 2008. Preface, p. v In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County Science Series, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Wang, X., and **R. H. Tedford.** 2008. Fossil dogs (Carnivora, Canidae) from the Sespe and Vaqueros formations in southern California, with comments on relationships of *Phlaocyon taylori,* pp. 255-272 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Webb, S. D., R. C. Hulbert, Jr., G. S. Morgan, and H. F. Evans. 2008. Terrestrial mammals of the Palmetto Fauna (Early Pliocene, latest Hemphillian) from the central Florida Phosphate District, pp. 293-312 In: **X. Wang** and **L. G. Barnes** (eds.), Geology and Vertebrate Paleontology of Western and Southern North America. Contributions in Honor of David P. Whistler. Science Series, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 41:i-viii, 1-388.

Xiaoming Wang, along with co-author Richard H. Tedford (Curator Emeritus, American Museum of Natural History) and artist Mauricio Antón (Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, Madrid), published a semi-popular book on the evolution of the canids (dog family): "Dogs: their fossil relatives and evolutionary history" by Columbia University Press. This is Xiaoming's first attempt at explaining his scholarly works to the general public, and it is augmented by exquisite illustrations by Mauricio Antón. This book is a follow-up on a similar volume on the fossil history of cats by the same publisher. It covers the entire 40-million-year history of the dog family, tracing its ancestors to the late Eocene of North America. Despite the popularity of dogs as our best friend, no treatment of their fossil history was available until now.



Staff Departures and New Staff

History

The History Department grew by two new staff this summer. Sojin Kim, formerly a curator at the Japanese American National Museum, came on board in May. Cathy McNassor, the museum's archivist, joined the department in August.

Dinosaur Institute

The Dinosaur Institute was sad to say goodbye to curatorial assistant Aisling Farrell, who left us to pursue her passion of prehistoric mammals at the Page Museum. Aisling worked for the Dinosaur Institute for two years and made enormous contributions with her work. Much that the DI has accomplished in the last two years would not have been possible without her, and we already miss her very much! Good luck at your new job Aisling!

Her position for the DI will be filled by acting curatorial assistant Paige Johnson.

Rancho La Brea

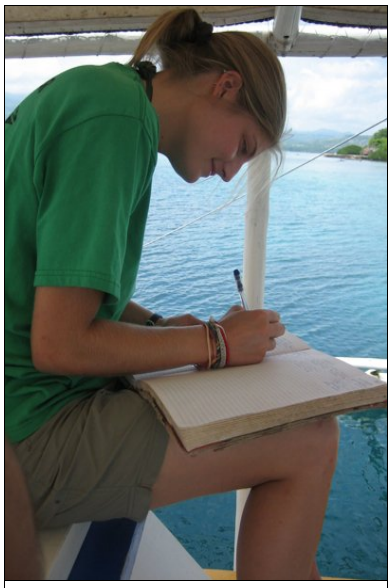
The Page Museum has hired seven new R&C staff members as part of the Museum's five year strategic plan to excavate, prepare and curate the

enormous salvage project. The new team consists of three full time Excavators, two part-time Excavators, Assistant Lab Supervisor and a Curatorial Assistant. Lead Excavator Kristen Brown received her BS in Geology from CSUN and has worked at the Page Museum for five years during the summer excavations in Pit 91.

Excavators Ryan Long, Kristen Brown and Michelle Tabencki excavating box 1.

Other full time Excavators include Andrea Thomer who received her BA from UCLA and Ryan Long who received his BS in Anthropology from Cal Poly. Both Andy and Ryan have worked in the lab and in Pit 91 for several years. Our part time Excavators are Michelle Tabencki, a graduate student of physical Anthropology from Cal State LA and Laura Tewksbury, a Biology major undergraduate student from Fullerton. Assistant Lab Supervisor Trevor Valle received his BS in Biology from Boston College and has worked both at the Page Museum and at the Natural History Museum as a Gallery Interpreter for the past year and a half. Curatorial Assistant Aisling Farrell received her MS from Imperial College London and has worked both at the Page Museum as a Gallery Interpreter and lab volunteer as well as at NHM as a Curatorial Assistant in the Dinosaur Institute for 2 years. Aisling is assisting Collections Manager Chris Shaw to coordinate and curate the specimens excavated from the project.

L-R: Excavators Laura Tewksbury and Andrea Thomer and Collections Manager Chris Shaw reinforcing box 1.



Kris Netchy, new Curatorial Assistant at MBPC.

MBPC

We are delighted to welcome Kris Netchy, Curatorial Assistant. She comes to us with experience working in Florida and Guam, and is looking forward to delving into our vast marine invertebrate collections.

Miscellaneous

Dinosaur Institute

The Dinosaur Institute wants to congratulate Senior Preparator Doug Goodreau on completing his master's degree in business management. Congratulations Doug!

History

Upcoming/Mark your calendars: The Third Annual Archives Bazaar will be held at the USC-Davidson Conference center on Saturday, October 25, 2008. History department staff William Estrada, John Cahoon, and Betty Uyeda have been participating in the planning of the event, and they will represent the Seaver Center among 70 other archival organizations devoted to preserving, documenting, and providing access to historical resources on the Los Angeles region. This event is hosted by L.A. as Subject Archives Forum, a USC Libraries-based alliance of research archives, libraries, and collections working to increase the visibility of local archives and improve access to them for students, researchers, K-12 educators.

Now available in the NHM store: History curator William Estrada's recent publication *The Los Angeles Plaza: Sacred and Contested Space* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008)

Service Recognition in R & C

At the June 20th all staff meeting the following R&C staff were recognized for 10 or more years of County and/or Foundation service to the museum: Terri Togiai (41); Larry Barnes (36); Tony Kampf (31); Chris Shaw (31); Cathy McNassor (30); John Harris (28); Kimball Garrett (26); Gordon Hendler (23); Sam McLeod (23); Lindsey Groves (20); Leslie Harris (20); Jody Martin (20); Cathy Groves (19); Chris Coleman (18); Kirk Fitzhugh (18); Dave Janiger (18); Beth Werling (18); Karen Wise (17); Maria Ponce (16); Brian Brown (15); Shelly Cox (33); John Cahoon (39); Ken Campbell (31); Rick Feeney (26); Margaret Hardin (24); Jeff Seigel (28); Vicky Brown (14); George Davis (13); Jean Brandt (11); Chris Thacker (10); and Gary Takeuchi (10). Congratulations to everyone!

The R & C Newsletter is issued 5 times per year, in January, March, May, September, and November, by the Research and Collections staff of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. Currently the Newsletter is compiled and edited by Dr. Joel W. Martin, Curator of Crustacea and Chief of the Division of Invertebrate Studies. All issues of the Newsletter can be found on the web at: http://collections.nhm.org/newsletters