

# Research & Collections Newsletter



March 2011

**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.

## Collection News

### Ichthyology

Two new paratypes of dragonfishes, of the genus *Photonectes*, were given to Museum Fish Collection by Cynthia Klepadlo from the Marine Vertebrates Collection, Scripps Institution of Oceanography. The types will be featured in an upcoming issue of *Copeia*.

Another oarfish, about 14 feet long, was found off California on February 11, 2011. It was beached about 130 miles northwest of Santa Monica at Surf Beach, off of Lompoc, California. This is the second oarfish sighting in California since November. The specimen was not preserved but pictures and data were saved for the Section of Ichthyology files.

*Oarfish photo by John Downs*



### Invertebrate Paleontology

#### *Flying Ammonite Soars to Third Floor*

The “Flying Ammonite” was moved from exhibit on the first floor to the third floor in order to clear the entryway to the present Insect Zoo. This specimen of the Late Cretaceous age (about 70 million years ago) species *Pachydiscus catarinae* Anderson and Hanna, 1935, was found in 1975 on the beach below sea cliffs at Point Loma. The fossil was encased in a concretion weighing more than 500 pounds, requiring a helicopter to hoist it from the beach, thus becoming the “flying ammonite.”

This time, the ammonite was removed from its case and both were “flown” to the third floor by Tim Bovard, Kristina Lockaby and Dan Hoffman and his staff. The ammonite and case were reassembled next to the freight elevator. For more information on the “flying ammonite,” visit the Invertebrate Paleontology website at <http://www.nhm.org/site/research-collections/invertebrate-paleontology>.

*Mary Stecheson, Curatorial Assistant in Invertebrate Paleontology, and the “flying ammonite” on the third floor (photo by L. T. Groves).*



## Mineral Sciences

### Los Angeles Area Gems



Cascade Canyon lies north of the city of Upland on the slopes of Ontario Peak (next to Mt. Baldy). For over a century it has produced lapis lazuli for rockhounds willing to make the steep climb to the deposit! Most of the lapis is of rather poor quality but the finest material is among the best in North America. After meeting an L.A. collector at the Tucson Show, we purchased some beautiful deep blue pieces for the Mineral Sciences collection. A nearby area in Cascade Canyon has produced some reddish corundum (ruby) crystals and more rarely, blue corundum (sapphire). Just last year we acquired a wonderful specimen of ruby crystals in gneiss.

## Conservation

Conservation recently completed the documentation and treatment of a group of artifacts selected for loan to LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes. Liz Homberger and Tania Collas also continued their work preparing artifacts for the NHM’s *Los Angeles* exhibit (formerly known as *Under the Sun*). For the past few weeks, Liz has been cleaning and stabilizing the Oil Pump in Lando Hall, shown at right.

She is also treating a mantel clock owned by Pio Pico and a trunk belonging to Reverend Takeshi Ban, which may have been constructed from salvaged materials during his “incarceration in one of the American concentration camps during WWII.”



## Marine Invertebrates and Marine Biodiversity Center

Staff members from the Division of Invertebrate Studies, including Kathy Omura and Emma Freeman of the Marine Biodiversity Center, Regina Wetzer and Adam Wall of Crustacea, and Mary Stecheson of Invertebrate Paleontology moved over 60 crates of recent corals from the North Grand warehouse to the South Grand warehouse for better long-term storage. Individuals as well as institutions collected these corals over many years from a variety of locations, including Samoa, the Philippines, and the Farnsworth Bank off Catalina Island. The corals represent a wide variety of taxa, though many are unidentified. Within some of the coral heads are preserved specimens of commensal



animals such as shrimp, crabs, and brittle stars. The corals required careful cleaning and rehousing before they were stored at South Grand.



## Rancho La Brea

As always it has been a busy two months in the collections at Rancho La Brea. Occidental College, Loyola Marymount and UC Irvine undergraduate students are continuing their work on dire wolf and Smilodon post cranial measurements and presented their finding at the Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontologists meeting held at the Natural History Museum in February (see below). Other visiting researchers include H. Todd Wheeler who is looking at our large cats, *Panthera atrox* and *Smilodon fatalis* skeleton proportions and Dr. Joshua Samuels from John Day Fossil Beds National Monument in Oregon who was measuring the extinct coyote, *Canis latrans*.



H. Todd Wheeler measuring *Panthera atrox* skull at the Page.



UC Riverside students are examining the microbial life both in the asphalt and in the soils adjacent to asphalt seeps. They are working on a number of projects including one by a visiting Chinese student who is growing cowpea plants in this soil and looking at the bacteria in and around the root nodules to determine which ones are best at degrading petroleum hydrocarbons.

U.C. Riverside students collecting soil samples near asphalt seeps in Hancock Park.

The final large jacket of our Columbian mammoth “Zed” was moved into the lab in February with the help of about 7 visiting researchers from Yuma, AZ, volunteers and Operations staff. The skull was the first part of “Zed” to be discovered by the tractor during construction and thus sustained major head injuries i.e. the top half of the skull is in many pieces in a bag. The skull is lying upside down in its current orientation. Lab supervisor Shelley Cox has already begun work on it and has exposed the occipital condyles and two beautifully preserved molars.



Left: Mammoth skull jacket on the move from storage to the lab.



Right: Mammoth skull jacket open in the lab. This view is the ventral side looking at the partially exposed teeth in the foreground and occipital condyles in the background, behind a small container of freshwater shells found in the matrix surrounding the skull.

## Anthropology

This “capote” or hooded coat (right) from the Anthropology collection is currently on loan to an exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum entitled *Tipi: Heritage of the Great Plains* which runs until May 15, 2011. The exhibit focuses on the tipi; its use as a domestic and ritual space and as an expression of Plains cultural identity. The exhibit also includes objects from contemporary artists like this capote made by Maynard Lavadour, which was made in 1983 but is based on the style of earlier French fur traders’ winter coats. This coat was originally purchased for, and travelled with, the



*Lost and Found Traditions: Native American Art 1965–1985* exhibit

before finding its permanent home here at NHM in 1993.



Anna Campomanes working with Chris Coleman to catalog material excavated from NHM’s north campus.

Anthropology is now in the process of identifying, cataloging and accessioning over 900 items of historic archaeology material collected by the contract archaeology firm hired as a result of the north campus construction. Anthropology volunteers Anna Campomanes and Lisa Manirath have been assisting with artifact measuring and photography, and Anna has also been entering the information into the KE Emu database.

So far, most of the archaeological artifacts date from the 1880’s to the early 1900’s. Within the first box of objects, we have already cataloged several notable items including a drugstore bottle embossed *Nina C. Edmonston/ Druggist/ Vermont & Jefferson Sts.* According to the local druggist directories of that time, this early female pharmacist was at that location from about 1905–1910. In his research of another druggist bottle embossed

*Wolf & Chilson/Prescription/Druggist/Cor. 2nd & Broadway/Los Angeles, Cal.*, Chris Coleman found a picture of the interior of that drugstore in a pharmacy bulletin published in 1901. Further research does not locate this drugstore in Los Angeles after 1902. Still another discovery was a matching broken cup and saucer of the same china pattern; probably the remains of a meal or tea time mishap. If this first box is any indication of what the rest of the material is like, this will be a very interesting collection to process.

# Field Work

## Ornithology

Ornithology Research Associate Kathy Molina and Ornithology Collections Manager Kimball Garrett coordinated a survey of two shorebird species of conservation concern, the Mountain Plover and the Long-billed Curlew, in agricultural habitats in California's Imperial Valley on 21–23 January 2011. Wintering populations of both of these species in California rely heavily on agricultural fields; surveying the vast Imperial Valley required coordinating 39 volunteers in 23 search areas. Survey techniques and coverage were similar to those of past surveys in 2007 and 2008. This year's survey was part of a statewide effort overseen by Audubon California.



*A Mountain Plover (Charadrius montanus), outstanding in its field. The 21–23 January 2011 Imperial Valley survey yielded a total of 827 of these declining birds.*

The total numbers of target birds detected were 827 Mountain Plovers and 11,048 Long-billed Curlews. The plovers were detected in about 20% of the 23 search areas in 2011. In contrast, curlews were widespread and found in all search areas except three widely separated survey sectors. Over 60% of Mountain Plovers were detected in bare, plowed or furrowed fields. A smaller but still substantial proportion was in cut or previously grazed fields. None were found in actively grazed or burned fields, a surprising result in light of habitat data from the previous surveys.



*Long-billed Curlews (Numenius americanus) forage in a cut Bermuda grass field near Brawley, California. (Photos by Kimball L. Garrett)*

quantify the amount of burned acreage among surveys, most surveyors in 2011 still reported burned fields in their areas; however, no plovers were found in these burned fields in contrast to our previous surveys.

It is too early to know if the lower Mountain Plover total in 2011 is best explained by an increase in birds wintering elsewhere, an overall decrease in the species' population, or factors operating within the Imperial Valley.

Our Long-billed Curlew total was similar to totals from our 2007 and 2008 surveys, but this year's Mountain Plover total was markedly below those from the previous two surveys (2955 birds in 2008, and 4687 in 2007). Mountain Plovers during our previous two surveys were not only more numerous but also more widely dispersed, being detected in 86% and 74% of the search areas, respectively. Although we are unable to



*Sabrina West of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (left) and Ornithology Research Associate Kathy Molina survey typical Mountain Plover habitat – a bare agricultural field (this field near Brawley held some 200 individual plovers).*

## Crustacea

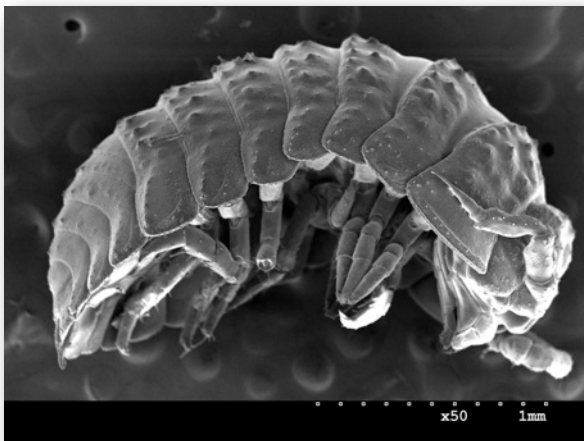
### Great L.A. Basin Isopod Hunt!

The NHM collections had virtually no roly-poly specimens from the Los Angeles Basin. Some species were known only from the initial descriptions. We had no material for molecular work. We did not even have a reasonably complete species list for the region. We knew little about which species are native and lurking amongst widespread and ubiquitous introduced species. So we proposed to survey terrestrial oniscid isopods in the Los Angeles Basin from coastal areas above the high tide line, throughout the basin, to montane areas below 5,000 ft.

With support from the R&C Expedition Fund we were able to invite the world's sole expert oniscid specialist, Dr. Stefano Taiti (pictured here at left, sieving leaf litter, with Dean Pentcheff), to help collect and identify terrestrial isopods in our region. In mid-January we collected in the San Gabriel and Santa Monica Mountains, from Pt. Dume, Malaga Cove, to San Juan Capistrano, including the Coachella Valley. Sixteen species were collected. Ninety lots were added to the NHM collections.



A very special find was *Venezillo arizonicus* from near Mecca — not exactly the Los Angeles Basin, but novel because this is a desert dwelling species. Yes desert! This is important as on the



Scanning electron micrograph of the terrestrial isopod *Armadilloniscus lindahli*, from Los Angeles County, Huntington Beach, at edge of marsh, under wood.

last day of collecting in the Santa Monica Mountains we collected two specimens of a new species of the genus *Venezillo*. This new species is hypogean (lives under big boulders), is light cream colored, and is blind. *Venezillo arizonicus* is a much larger species and has eyes. Adam Wall, Dean Pentcheff, and Regina Wetzer have subsequently collected three more specimens of the new species.

We also confirmed that in human-impacted areas in the Los Angeles Basin only the 3–4 introduced species of *Armadillidium* and *Porcellio* are found.

These are the favorites most 4 year olds know so well!



## Vertebrate Paleontology

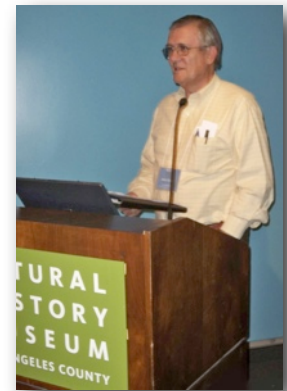
On 15 February, John Long, John Harris, Lawrence Barnes, Samuel McLeod, Howell Thomas, Gary Takeuchi, and Vanessa Rhue made a trip to the classic Tertiary deposits in the Kern River District east of Bakersfield. The important sequence of Miocene formations was observed, Museum fossil localities were checked, and the Sharktooth Hill National Natural Landmark was observed. In this image, Lawrence Barnes shows Sam McLeod where he collected the fore part of a large fossil basking shark from the base of the Round Mountain Silt, directly above the contact with the underlying Olcese Sand. This site has also yielded important land mammal fossils that aid in correlations between the marine and terrestrial sequence in California.

# Meetings, Workshops, and Presentations

## Vertebrate Paleontology

From 19 through 21 February, our Museum hosted the annual meeting of the Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontologists. More than 100 people from the western U.S. attended the talks on Saturday, 19 February. Staff and Associates made 20 of the 27 presentations; including Vanessa Rhue on the Age of Mammals hall, Gary Tekeuchi about field work in Tibet, Howell Thomas on a fossil sperm whale brain, and Lawrence Barnes about the paleoparadoxiid skeleton in the Age of Mammals hall. John Long provided a tour of the under-construction dinosaur hall. More than 40 of the attendees participated in field trips organized by Vertebrate Paleontology Research Associate Dr. Bruce Lander on the following two days to see important fossil sites and geologic deposits in the Santa Monica Mountains.

*John Harris welcomes attendees to the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontologists, 19 February 2011.*



During February Vertebrate Paleontology staff (John Harris, Lawrence Barnes, Xiaoming Wang, Samuel McLeod, and Vanessa Rhue) attended three lectures at California State University Fullerton's Geology Department by candidates for the paleontology curator for the Cooper Center. The Cooper Center is named in memory of the late Professor John Cooper, and is Orange County's facility for storage of fossils and artifacts that have been obtained from construction sites via the environmental review process.

## Rancho La Brea

The Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontologists (WAVP) 2011 annual meeting held on Saturday February 19th at the Natural History Museum was attended by our R&C staff Shelley Cox, Aisling Farrell, Carrie Howard, Christina Lutz, Karin Rice, Michelle Tabencki, Laura Tewksbury and Trevor Valle. Research Associate Chris Shaw and lab volunteer Herb Schiff also attended. Laura and Carrie presented an update on Project 23. On Sunday an alternative fieldtrip to the Page Museum and Project 23 excavations for WAVP participants was lead by Dr. John Harris.



*Laura Tewksbury presented new findings from Project 23 at the WAVP annual meeting.*

## Research Library

Richard Hulser attended the Special Libraries Association (SLA) Leadership Summit held in January in Washington, D.C. as chair-elect of the SLA Museum, Arts & Humanities Division. As part of his responsibilities, he is leading the Division's program planning for the SLA annual conference to be held in Chicago in July 2012.

Richard Hulser also was the guest lecturer in February to a class of library school graduate students at the University of South Florida using the Blackboard/Elluminate Web conferencing tool from his desk at NHM. His talk focused on how special librarians can provide key contributions to the mission and goals of cultural and corporate institutions.

## Crustacea

Division Chief and Curator Jody Martin was the featured speaker at the University of Georgia's Darwin Day celebrations on February 10–13, where he delivered two talks: *Global Marine Biodiversity and the Census of Marine Life: What's Left to Discover?* (February 10, Ecology Auditorium of the Odum School of Ecology) and *The Prism and the Rainbow: U.S. Christian Denominations and Their Acceptance of Evolution* (February 11, Tate Student Union). Jody was also invited to deliver the second address to faculty and students of California Lutheran University on February 23.

## History

On the evening of Wednesday, February 9th, Beth Werling of the History Department along with Daryl Maxwell, former Universal Studios archivist, presented a talk on Parallel Language films at the Hollywood Heritage Museum. During the early sound era in the 1930s before dubbing was technologically possible, studios made foreign language versions of their films at night. In the daytime, English-speaking actors such as Clark Gable and Norma Shearer shot their scenes, and after they finished for the day, another pair of Spanish, French, German, or Italian-speaking actors, frequently using the same sets and costumes, re-shot the same scenes. These parallel language movies were then shipped overseas for European markets. Because the lecture was apparently the first ever delivered on the topic, it raised press interest with National Public Radio, the Los Angeles Times, and Turner Classic Movies all covering the event, which included screening clips from some of these rare films.

Both images seen here are from the collection of the Seaver Center for Western History Research. Above is from the English language version of "Min and Bill" starring Marie Dressler, while the shot at right shows the same scene in the Spanish language version.





# External Funding

## History

The History Department received a \$20,000 Archival Grant from the John Randolph Haynes and Dora Haynes Foundation for the creation of an online finding aid for the *Al Greene Photograph Collection*. This print collection is available to researchers in the Seaver Center Reading Room in photo binders arranged by geographic region or subject matter. Created over many years in the pre-internet era, this collection is composed of significant images culled from Los Angeles-based photographer Al Greene's own photographic work, as well as photographs from earlier eras taken from photo-morgues that Greene purchased. The collection is searchable in-house via the Seaver card catalog or by browsing through the binders by region. The finding aids created with this funding will allow researchers to search the collection on the Internet and will also act as a collection management tool by linking the photographs to their original accessioned collections. The encoded finding aids that are created will also be placed on the Online Archive of California.

# Public Outreach

## Vertebrate Paleontology

On 15 February, John Long and members of the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology visited the California Living Museum (CALM) in Bakersfield, California. Pictured here, left to right, are Vanessa Rhue, Tom Anspach (Director of the California Living Museum), John Harris, Lawrence Barnes, Samuel McLeod, Howell Thomas, John Long, and Gary Takeuchi. CALM is operated by the Kern County Department of Education, and our Museum has lent them Kern County fossils for their public exhibits.



## Invertebrate Paleontology

Mary Stecheson, Invertebrate Paleontology Curatorial Assistant, and Margaret Hardin, Anthropology Curator, conducted three "tours" for the February First Friday event, presenting information on Invertebrate Paleontology's case in the *What On Earth?* exhibit. Displayed on the "question" side of the case is a Pliocene age (about 5 million years old) fossil log coated with barnacles and bored or burrowed by unknown organisms. The "answer" side shows

how barnacles grow and several possibilities for organisms that might have created the borings, such as shipworm clams (*Bankia* sp.), polychaete worms, or tree roots. In addition, Mary also discussed the paleoenvironment of the Salinas area, where the log was found in the Pancho Rico Formation. During the Pliocene, this area was on the west, oceanward, side of a peninsula, with the flooded San Joaquin basin to the east.

Left: Mary and the “question” side of the case.



Right: Mary at the “answer” side (photos by L. T. Groves).



## Mineral Sciences

In February, Alyssa Morgan taught a children’s gemology class (right) for Gem and Mineral Council members. With the help of Mary Stambaugh and council volunteers, children learned some basic principles of optics and color (refraction, dispersion, absorption and polarization), gem cutting, and gem identification techniques. They also enjoyed the challenge of holding gemstones with tweezers!



## Herpetology

On Sunday, January 23rd, Neftali Camacho (at left) took part in *Sustainable Sunday, Urban Biodiversity*, showcasing local reptiles and amphibians from alligator lizards and gopher snakes to western toads and California slender salamanders.

## Malacology

Lindsey Groves (Malacology) presented *New Species of Fossil Cypraeoidea (Cowries & Kin) From the Western Hemisphere: The List Grows Longer* at the January meeting of the Pacific Conchological Club, which meets in the museum. Later in the month he also presented *Abalone and the Fossil Record: No Baloney* to the San Diego Shell Club.

## History

On January 15, 2011, the History Department participated in a Curator's Cupboard event called *In Step with L.A. History: Through Hooves, Paws, and Claws*. The day-long exhibit revealed how the relationship of Angelenos to animals has contributed to the region's landscape, culture, and economy.

Curatorial Assistant Kristen Hayashi (at right) assembled a sneak peak of the new L.A. History exhibition opening in Fall, 2012. On display were tools relating to Southern California's cattle industry.



Material Culture's "beauty and the beast" theme showcased a gorilla costume (shown at left) used in numerous TV shows and movies, along with the bat from *Dracula* and a poster from the 1929 film *The Canary Murder Case* (not shown). Collections Manager Beth Werling was on hand to answer questions.

The Seaver Center for Western History Research exhibited original photographs, posters, and documents of L.A. history from a four-legged perspective.

Collections Manager John Cahoon (at right) and Betty Uyeda created displays demonstrating animals at work, for entertainment, and for sporting events.



Museum Archivist Cathy McNassor (left) shared some special examples of the museum's historic horse tack collection. The most exciting piece displayed was the wonderful 19th century silver parade headstall that once belonged to Don Antonio Coronel.

## Taste of History



On February 5th the Advancement Department presented its yearly *Taste of History* for NHM Fellows and Members at the old Pico House. The evening featured a keynote address by Dr. William Estrada, Curator and Chair of the History Department, who spoke about the rich architectural and social history of the Pico House hotel, built in 1870 and the first three-story building in Los Angeles. In addition to the lecture and display of original Pico

House artifacts by members of the History staff, the 200 guests were treated to a sumptuous combination of California cuisine ("L.A. style") to make the evening at this historic site truly a memorable taste of history.

History staff (at right) worked swiftly in the afternoon to set up a small exhibit of Pico House-related artifacts before the guests arrived.





Guests viewed the exhibit in the original lobby of the hotel (left).

### Chaplin Fest

The William S. Hart Museum, in partnership with NHM’s History Department, the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society, and the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, hosted a *Chaplin Festival* at Hart Park on February 4–5. The event was held to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the release of Chaplin’s *Modern Times*, whose closing scene was shot just a few miles from the Hart property. Screenings of early Chaplin films, vendors, and a plaque ceremony were held on Saturday and the History Department displayed its collection of props and costume from *Modern Times* which Chaplin himself donated in the 1930s.

A special screening of the feature film *Chaplin* starring Robert Downey, Jr. kicked off the festival with a display of props from that film and a discussion with Jim and Pam Elyea from the prop house *History for Hire* about the making of the film. The highlight of the weekend, however, was the Saturday night screening of *Modern Times* in Hart Hall. Before the film, Leonard Maltin interviewed actress Tippi (*The Birds*) Hedren about working with Chaplin on his final film, *A Countess from Hong Kong*.

The weekend was such a success that the public and community have asked to make it an annual event! A big part of the success can be credited to NHM’s Marketing and Communications Department who got the word out, including mention in the Los Angeles Times.



The poster is in the Seaver Center for Western History Research collection.

One year ago webcast began on NHMLA’s YouTube site of *The Street Names of Los Angeles: a History*, a series of videos presented by the Seaver Center for Western History Research, featuring historic photographs and documents. Since then, the six-part series has been viewed nearly 24,000 times.

### Rancho La Brea

Assistant Lab Supervisor Trevor Valle was a guest lecturer at the San Bernardino County Museum on Wednesday, February 23rd, presenting the topic of *Rancho La Brea: Past, Present, and Future*. Covering the prehistory, history, current excavation and future desires... and referencing a variety of events such as Project 23 and the number of comic books RLB has been mentioned in, the lecture was just shy of an hour. Nearly 200 people were in attendance, including present Collections Manager Aisling Farrell and former Collections Manager Chris Shaw. At one point, more chairs had to be brought in for the standing-room only crowd. The presentation was very well received, and

helped generate an additional understanding of RLB outside of our immediate surroundings.



Kathleen Springer (Senior Curator of Geological Sciences SBCM) said: “Thank you so much for journeying to the Inland Empire to delight the awaiting throngs! You did an absolutely great job... Looking forward to other interactions with you, no matter your hair color...”

Left to right: Kathleen Springer (Senior Curator of Geological Sciences at San Bernardino County Museum), Aisling Farrell (Collections Manager), Trevor Valle (Assistant Lab Supervisor) and Christopher Shaw (former Collections Manager now Research Associate) at The George C. Page Museum.

# Volunteers and Research Associates



*Lisa Manirath making a site plan during her fieldwork at the Yanggouzhai Neolithic site in Xi'an, China.*

## Anthropology

The Anthropology Department is grateful to receive the help of volunteer Lisa Manirath. Lisa graduated September 2010 from UCLA with a major in Anthropology and minor in Asian Languages and Cultures. She will be attending graduate school this fall for Anthropology with a concentration in Chinese/Southeast Asian Archaeology, and her research will focus on ceramic trade in maritime Asia, culture contact and colonialism in Southeast Asia during the early modern period (16th–19th centuries). Somehow in the midst of her busy schedule, Lisa will still manage to donate several hours a week to assist our department with a few ongoing projects. Specifically, her fieldwork experience will be an asset as we work on cataloging a collection of items excavated from the construction of NHM's north campus.

## History

Jessica Roussel Chambers (right) has joined the History Division as an intern working with Cathy McNassor in the Museum Archives. Jessica is working on a Master's Degree in History at California State University, Northridge. Her current project is an inventory of the museum's collection of cylinder phonograph recording dating from the early part of the 20th Century.



# Distinguished Visitors

## Ichthyology

Dr. Stuart Poss (left), former curator at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, visited in February. Dr. Poss is interested in the taxonomy and evolution of the genus *Pontinus* and other scorpaeniform fishes.

## Malacology

Research Associate Ángel Valdés visited Malacology with California State University of Los Angeles postdoc Jan Vendetti to use the SEM facility and examination of the nudibranch collection. Kim Scott (Cogstone Resource Management) visited to compare Pleistocene mollusks to Recent specimens for identification confirmation. California State University at Fullerton grad student Candice Aguirre examined the Malacology holdings of local fissurellids (keyhole limpets) for part of her thesis research. Page Museum Docent Nancy Gettleman visited to discuss plans for a San Andreas field excursion for the Docents, which will be led on Saturday, May 21st.

## Vertebrate Paleontology

On 7 February, Ashley Leger (right), a graduate student at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, visited to study our Columbian mammoth material. Ashley is working on fossils from The Mammoth Site of Hot Springs, South Dakota, National Natural Landmark.



## Rancho La Brea

Dr. Yoshiki Koda (at left in photo at left), the head of collections at our sister institution, The Ibaraki Nature Museum in Japan, and his wife visited the Page Museum in February. Dr. Harris and Shelley Cox gave them an extended tour of the lab and Project 23 excavations. The Ibaraki Nature Museum has a long term loan of one of our mounted *Smilodon* skeletons on exhibit.

# Recent Publications

Cook, T. D., M. G. Newbrey, A. M. Murray, M. V. H. Wilson, K. Shimada, **G. T. Takeuchi**, and J. D. Stewart. 2011. A partial skeleton of the Late Cretaceous lamniform shark, *Archaeolamna kopingensis*, from the Pierre Shale of western Kansas, U.S.A. *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology* 31(1):8–21.

**Kampf, A. R.**, Mills, S. J., and Pinch, W. W. 2011. Plumboselite,  $Pb_3O_2(SeO_3)$ , a new secondary mineral from the oxidised zone at Tsumeb, Namibia. *Mineralogy and Petrology* 101, 75–80.

**Kampf, A. R.**, Yang, H., Downs, R. T., and Pinch, W. W. 2011. The crystal structures and Raman spectra of aravaipaite and calcoaravaipaite. *American Mineralogist* 96, 402–407.

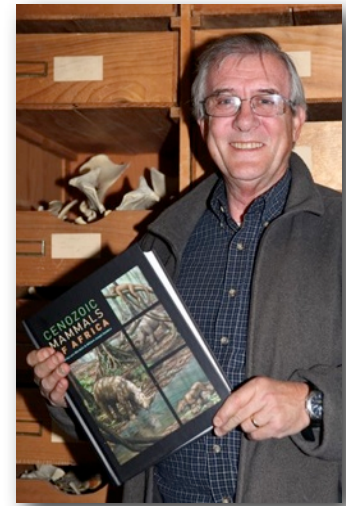
**Kampf, A. R.**, and Housley, R. M. 2011. Fluorophosphohedyphane, the fluorine analogue of phosphohedyphane from the Blue Bell claims near Baker, San Bernardino County, California. *American Mineralogist* 96, 423–429.

Rose, N. A., **D. Janiger**, E. C. M. Parsons, and M. Stachowitsch. 2011. Shifting baselines in scientific publications: A case study using cetacean research. *Marine Policy* 35(4):477–482.

Tovar-Hernández, M. A., and **L. H. Harris**. 2010. *Parasabella* Bush, 1905, replacement name for the polychaete genus *Demonax* Kinberg, 1867 (Annelida, Polychaeta, Sabellidae). *ZooKeys* 60 : 13 –19 . doi: [10.3897/zookeys.60.547](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.60.547)  
*The genus Parasabella Bush, 1905 is reintroduced as a replacement name for Demonax Kinberg, 1867 (Annelida: Polychaeta: Sabellidae) which is a junior homonym of Demonax Thomson, 1860 (Insecta: Coleoptera: Cerambycidae).*

### Publication Award!

*Cenozoic Mammals of Africa*, edited by Lars Werdelin and William J. Sanders, University of California Press, and containing four chapters authored by John Harris (right), received the PROSE Award (for PROfessional and Scholarly Excellence) from the Association of American Publishers for Best Single Volume Science Reference Work of 2010.



# Staff Departures and New Staff

## Crustacea

We welcome Crustacea Curatorial Assistant Adam Wall who is joining our Marine Invertebrate Group. Adam has been at the Museum since Fall 2008 as a workstudy student. His crustacean work here at the Museum has included the AToL decapod literature digitization project. He was the student representative for an EOL-funded Peracarid Workshop held on Santa Catalina Island April 2009 where he had the opportunity to meet and interact with the pillars of the peracarid community. He has worked with Regina Wetzer on redescribing a species of sphaeromatid isopod that involves the description of four new species in the genus *Exosphaeroma*, previously thought to be a single species. In December he graduated from USC with a degree in Biology. It is a good thing he has already had significant lab and field experience here at the NHM — his prowess was tested during his first week as a terrestrial isopod collector and assistant to Dr. Stefano Taiti (see *Great LA Basin Isopod Hunt*).



## Vertebrate Paleontology

At the end of February, Gary T. Takeuchi ended many years of work at the Main Museum to transfer to the Page Museum. Gary has worked as a Curatorial Assistant for the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology, on the *Age of Mammals* exhibit, and with Xiaoming Wang on field work in China and Tibet. We thank Gary for all that he has done for the Department, and wish him well at Rancho La Brea.

## Rancho La Brea

Gary Takeuchi started as a high school volunteer at Rancho La Brea in 1983 working in the Fishbowl lab and later as a volunteer excavator in Pit 91. He went on to become Senior Excavator in Pit 91 from 1999 –2000 and served as Curatorial Assistant at Rancho La Brea from 2000–2003. Since that time he has been a Curatorial Assistant for the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology working on countless projects including the recently completed *Age of Mammals Hall*. Gary has also spent innumerable hours in the

field; traveling to Tibet five summers in a row collecting Cenozoic fossils with Dr. Xiaoming Wang, as well as co-running the Red Rock Family Expeditions for the Museum since 1996. Gary has now accepted a position as Curatorial Assistant for Project 23. Welcome aboard Gary, again!

## Mineral Sciences

The Mineral Sciences Department welcomes Dr. Stuart J. Mills (right) into the temporary position of Research Scientist (funded by the department's Trelawney Endowment). In 2007, Dr. Mills received his Ph.D. in crystallography, mineralogy and geochronology from the University of Melbourne (Australia) in cooperation with Museum Victoria, where he conducted much of his research. He has just completed a Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Mineralogy and Crystallography at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Mills has described more than thirty new minerals and is Secretary of the Commission on New Minerals, Nomenclature and Classification of the International Mineralogical Association.



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