

Research & Collections Newsletter



Spring 2015

re•search (ri-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

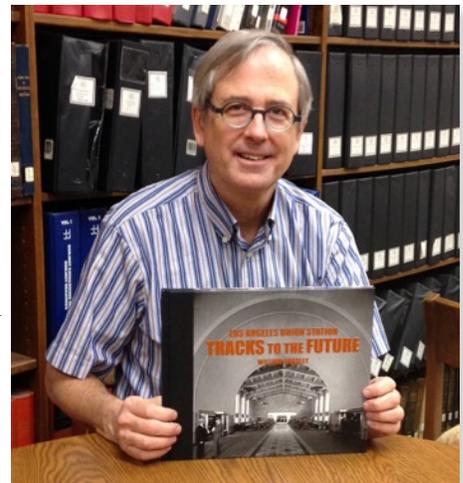
History

Author William Bradley visited the Seaver Center to present a copy of his new book, *Los Angeles Union Station: Tracks to the Future* (Santa Monica: Angel City Press, 2014). The book celebrating the 75th anniversary of Union Station contains several Seaver Center photographs of Old Chinatown, which was torn down in the late 1930s to build Union Station.

Class Visit to the Seaver Center



Trudi Sandmeier, Director of the USC Historic Preservation Program in the School of Architecture, visited the Seaver Center with a group of her graduate students to learn about the research resources available at the Center. Shown are the USC students studying the details of a rare fire insurance atlas.



A New Acquisition

The History Department recently received the last of a large donation of artworks from the former Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA/L.A.). This last donation consists of 64 oil-on-canvas paintings of Bunker Hill's Victorian architecture — including the original Angels Flight funicular railway — painted in the 1950s by artist Kay Martin. Bunker Hill (1869–1963), now occupied by rows of Downtown skyscrapers from The

Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels to Pershing Square, is one of Los Angeles's lost neighborhoods that has for decades attracted the attention of historians, preservationists, novelists, and filmmakers. The entire CRA/L.A. donation to NHM began in 2011 and consists of several art forms: paintings and drawings; photography; sculpture and models; works on glass; metal; and quilts depicting several historic neighborhoods, districts and sites in the Los Angeles area.

Registrar's Office and Conservation

In the months of January and February, the Registrar's Office and Conservation completed the deinstallation of over 350 objects and artifacts from the Lando California History Hall. Susan Oshima oversaw the deinstallation and contracts, ensuring that all work stayed on schedule, while Molly Sjöberg, Katie Kramer, Tania Collas, and Elizabeth Drolet deinstalled objects from cases, photographed and documented their condition, and monitored their packing, rigging, load-out, and transport to History's Carson Collection Facility, where History staff oversaw their off-loading by Dunkel Bros. and General Services (see entry under *History* for details). Seaver and Anthropology collections remained on-site, where they were received and processed by their respective collections staff. In addition, Tania and Elizabeth completed an extensive stabilization treatment on the Concord Stagecoach to prepare it for long-term storage. Throughout this process, the team was assisted by ELY Inc. for packing and palletizing objects, Dunkel Bros. for rigging and transporting large vehicles and heavy objects, and of course, our own tireless Operations and General Services staff, who cheerfully facilitated rigging, removed heavy cases and troublesome dividing walls, and generally moved things where they needed to be!



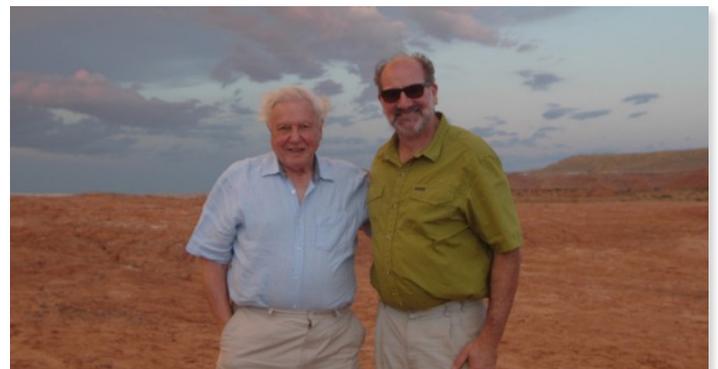
The dump wagon getting rigged onto a truck for transport to History's Carson Collection Facility.

Field Work

Dinosaur Institute

Filming in the Badlands of Patagonia

Dr. Luis Chiappe was honored to be invited to assist and support Sir David Attenborough while filming for the BBC in the badlands of Patagonia in late February 2015. For Luis, returning to the site where he led a team that together discovered thousands of sauropod nesting sites filled with eggs scattered across the landscape some 20 years ago was more than memorable. This trip is part of a new series on great fossil discoveries around the world which at the time propelled our VP of RC into the limelight and launched a successful but still young career in paleontology. Luis was so impressed with the man, and felt the very personal impact of a life lived to its fullest as obviously Sir David has. At 88 years young, he is still going strong and traveling the world to the remotest of locations bringing science to generations of people across the globe.



Dr. Luis Chiappe returning to the famous site of Auca Mahuevo with Sir David Attenborough and the BBC.

Vertebrate Paleontology

In middle February, curator Xiaoming Wang participated in a field trip to the Turlock Lake near Modesto, California, led by the organizers of the Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontology. Turlock Lake, and the nearby Modesto Reservoir, are rich in late Miocene to Pliocene vertebrate fossils and the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology has one of the best collections of fossil mammals from there. Julia Sankey, professor of California State University Stanislaus, led this trip and will collaborate with Xiaoming, plus UCLA graduate student Mairin Balisi, on a couple of projects on the carnivores of Mehrten Formation.

Many of the Turlock Lake fossil sites consist of small, seasonally exposed islands or inaccessible shores, and kayaking is an excellent way to reach these sites. Here vertebrate paleontologist Howard Hutchison (formerly of UC Berkeley) is paddling toward LACM locality 3924 (background).



Vertebrate Paleontology field work continues throughout the winter and into the spring at the Sharktooth Hill Bonebed, Kern County, California, where our Museum is partnering with private land owners, Sean and Lisa Tohill, to excavate a 35 square meter quarry. Museum staff and select volunteers are steadily working in the Round Mountain Silt (of middle Miocene age) to expose the fossil remains of sharks, skates, rays, fish, sea turtles, and marine mammals such as baleen whales, dolphins, and sea lions. While the weather in southern California is relatively dry and cool, we are taking advantage of the excellent working conditions to expose bones (numbering as many as 100+ elements within a single square meter), draw maps, and take photographs. We very much appreciate the assistance of Vertebrate Paleontology volunteers over the course of four trips in the last few months: Karen Kent, Mairin Balisi (UCLA graduate student), and Izchel Moreno. Curator of Marine Mammals, Dr. Jorge Velez-Juarbe, joined the Vertebrate Paleontology staff at the quarry for the first time in January.



Vanessa R. Rhue (above) and Dr. Samuel A. McLeod (bottom right) apply Paraloid B-72 (a stable acrylic polymer) to exposed bones.



At right, Dr. Jorge Velez-Juarbe at work in the Sharktooth Hill Bonebed.

Meetings, Workshops, and Presentations

Malacology & Invertebrate Paleontology

NHMLAC was well represented at the 19th meeting of the Southern California Unified Malacologists (SCUM) which met at the Laguna Hills Community Center, Laguna Hills, CA on Saturday, January 24th. Staff members Lindsey Groves, Jan Vendetti (Malacology) and Austin Hendy (IP) and associates Ángel Valdés, Phil Liff-Grieff, Shawn Wiedrick, Pat LaFollette, George Kennedy, and Carol Stadum attended the one day meeting to discuss recent research and catch up on malacological news in southern California.

Mineral Sciences

Mineral Sciences Staff made their annual trip to Tucson, Arizona for the world's largest gem and mineral show. From February 6th–15th Alyssa Morgan and Tony Kampf scoured numerous hotels and tents looking for specimens to add to the collection. New finds included plumbogummite pseudomorphs from China and tarbuttite from Namibia. Museums and collectors from around the world brought exhibits to the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society Show (a.k.a. *The Main Show*). The theme this year was *Minerals of Western Europe*. NHM's spectacular epidote from Knappenwand, Austria was chosen to be featured on the show's poster. Tony and Alyssa also put together a display of classic carbonate specimens from famous European localities. They also attended the annual meeting of the Society of Mineral Museum Professionals. Tony gave a public lecture called *CSI Mineralogy: Fakes, Frauds and Fantasies*. For more information and pictures from Tucson, please see our blog: <http://nhminsci.blogspot.com>



NHM's epidote from Knappenwand, Austria was featured on the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society Show posters.

Vertebrate Paleontology

Curator Emeritus Dr. Lawrence G. Barnes, and Vertebrate Paleontology volunteers Sean and Lisa Tohill, presented



In the Vertebrate Paleontology lab, Lisa Tohill prepares the cranium she collected of the world's earliest known pontoporiid dolphin.

a talk at the Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontology (WAVP) meetings held 14 February 2015 at California State University Stanislaus, Turlock. Their presentation announced a new discovery of fossil dolphin from the Sharktooth Hill Bonebed that appears to be the oldest known member of the family Pontoporiidae. This new fossil, of middle Miocene age (approximately 14.5 to 16.1 million years old), extends the global record of its family about 7 to 10 million years earlier than previously known. The only surviving pontoporiid dolphin is the *franciscana* (*Pontoporia blainvillei*), which lives along the east coast of South America and is in danger of extinction. This work with Sean and Lisa Tohill is part of the Museum's on-going collaborative research project in the Sharktooth Hill Bonebed on their property in central California. The specimen was the award-winning entry in National Geographic's America's Lost Treasures television series a couple of years ago.

Public Outreach

Dinosaur Institute

Collections

Alyssa Bell, Postdoc and Nathan Carroll, Ph.D. Student-in-Residence, represented the Dinosaur Institute at the Page Museum for the Curators Cupboard on Feb 28, 2015. The team brought together casts of the largest flying reptile — *Quetzalcoatlus*, with a wingspan of up to 52 feet. This specimen was discovered in the Late Cretaceous sediments of the Javelina Formation in Big Bend National Park, Texas in 1971. Three 10 foot tables were used to display this behemoth.

Smaller casts of extinct birds from China that sported teeth for eating insects and crushing seeds were also on display to highlight the adaptations of flying creatures. Although extinct, they represent the evolutionary pathway of the famous non-avian feathered dinosaurs the Troodontids (small to medium theropods) of the Late Jurassic to the birds found in your backyard each and every day.



History

In recognition of Black History Month (February), Dr. William Estrada was the special guest on the *Midday Sunday* show — KTTV Fox 11 (hosted by Tony Valdez) — on Sunday, February 15, to discuss the African presence in Mexican history and the Afro-Mexican contributions to the founding of Los Angeles in 1781. In addition to the in-studio interview, *Midday Sunday* also featured a video walk-through of the *Becoming Los Angeles* exhibit and encouraged viewers to visit NHM to learn more about Los Angeles history. The interview, titled *L.A.'s African Settlers* can be seen in two parts on the YouTube channel for Fox 11 Los Angeles:

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sd0MbOAsO2k>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdKclv0J-As>

Malacology



Participant in the Nature Garden Mollusk and Fungi collecting and observation event with a specimen of the slug *Lehmannia valentiana*.

Lindsey Groves presented Beachfront property in *Hancock Park? An unusually preserved suite of marine invertebrate fossils from the San Pedro Formation* to the Southern California Paleontological Society, which meets at the Page Museum. He focused on the specimens from a test bore for a future station site for extension of the MetroRail Purple Line project, which are saturated with asphalt, and how this preservation occurred. Local tectonics and stratigraphy were also discussed.

On Saturday, February 28th, Lindsey Groves teamed up with Master Gardner Florence Nishida to present programs for Citizen Science in the Nature Garden to collect and observe mollusks and fungi. Lindsey's program noted that there have been eight species of mollusks collected thus far in the NG, only one of which is native, and that most are introduced, but do little harm to ornamental and agricultural vegetation. The group, under the supervision of Citizen Science staffers Lila Higgins and Miguel Ordeñana, collected three species of mollusks (the snail *Oxychilus draparnaudi* and the slugs *Lemannia valentia* and *Deroceras reticulata*) from all over the NG area. This exercise was a pilot program for a more extensive snail survey to be conducted for the Los Angeles Basin in the future.

Vertebrate Paleontology

On Sunday, 25 January, the Cabrillo Marine Museum in San Pedro celebrated its 45th annual Whale Fiesta. For the second year, Senior Paleontological Preparator Howell Thomas from the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology was a guest lecturer. Howell spoke about fossil whales, and invited visitors to get up close and personal with an endocast from the inside of a whale skull, part of the skull of another whale, and a portion of fossilized baleen, the last item being one of only a very few such specimens known in the world.



On 31 January, Senior Preparator Howell Thomas hosted students and faculty members of Chadwick School in Rolling Hills Estates as they toured the Age of Mammals hall and the Vertebrate Paleontology Department. While in VP's Preparation Lab, the visitors observed progress Howell has made on preparation of the fossil sperm whale skull that the Chadwick School had donated to the Museum.

Student Mentoring and Research

Vertebrate Paleontology



Fernando Salinas-Márquez, a graduate student at the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Ensenada, Mexico, continues his doctoral research on fossil kentriodontid dolphins under the supervision of his Thesis Director, Curator Emeritus Dr. Lawrence G. Barnes, and Curator of Marine Mammals, Dr. Jorge Velez-Juarbe. In January Fernando passed his proficiency exam, and now he is proceeding with writing descriptions of new species of dolphins in the Museum's collections from California and Oregon. Kentriodontids are an extinct group that appear to have given rise to most of the world's modern oceanic dolphins.

Fernando Salinas-Márquez, Ph.D. candidate of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, studies fossil kentriodontid dolphins in the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology.

Volunteers and Research Associates

History

With reluctance, the Seaver Center bids farewell to Peter Bomba as he embarks on more time for leisure as a retiree. Peter began volunteering in the summer of 2009, working on various collection projects, which included translating Spanish language documents; doing research in the Edward Curtis *North American Indian* manuscript collection; entering data for photo images; organizing the *Long Beach Earthquake* collection; and most recently inventorying the extensive *Film Frame* collection. Pictured on the far right is Peter with Seaver Center Collections Managers.



Rancho La Brea



Research Associate Chris Shaw visited the University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) collections on the campus of the University of California Berkeley earlier this month to examine some Rancho La Brea specimens housed in the Campanile (Sather Tower), the bell and clock-tower located on campus. Chris is currently working on a study of facial asymmetry in *Smilodon fatalis* and *Canis dirus* and how these different maladies relate to the inferred hunting behavior of these animals. Chris presented some of his work on this topic at the Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontology conference in February in Turlock, CA with Preparator Carrie Howard.

Chris Shaw working in the collections from Rancho La Brea at UC Berkeley.

Vertebrate Paleontology

The Vertebrate Paleontology staff welcomes three new faces to our weekly volunteer program. The following skilled individuals were selected from a pool of applicants to serve on a weekly basis for a minimum of six months. Dr. David Vaughn comes to us with a background in archaeology, where he worked as a project manager for a couple of environmental firms in New Mexico. Tyler Lancaster is an L.A. native who has pursued graduate work and teaching in the field of History. Tyler is no new face to the Museum, where he volunteers his time (almost daily) on the floor and at the Page Museum doing interpretation of exhibits for the public. Both David and Tyler are currently assisting us with our digital image library to make our collections more accessible via the web. In addition, they are making some collections-based research contributions relevant to their expertise. Maddie Ramos comes to us from Cal State Dominguez Hills, where she is currently an undergraduate student pursuing a degree in Anthropology with an archaeological focus.



Dr. David Vaughn takes a break from piecing fragments together that belong to our fossil blue whale specimen.

Maddie hopes to pursue graduate work in museum studies or conservation. Maddie and Tyler are joined by the rest of the Vertebrate Paleontology volunteer team in the preparation of a rare fossil blue whale skull and skeleton. Thank you all for your interest in the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology — we very much appreciate your delightful personalities and weekly dedication to the care of our collections!

Long-time Museum Volunteer Michael (“Mick”) Persion has been dedicating his time to helping with preparation of specimens collected from the Sharktooth Hill Bonebed, near Bakersfield. In the accompanying photo, he and Lawrence Barnes confer about a skull that Mick collected of an allodesmine pinniped, a relative of the sea lions.



Above right, Tyler Lancaster poses with a Xiphactinus skull (a large bony fish from the Niobrara Chalk of Kansas), that at one time was on display in our Museum's main foyer.



At left, Mick Persion and Lawrence Barnes.



At right, Maddie Ramos opens a new plaster jacked containing three large vertebrae of a fossil blue whale specimen from the Capistrano Formation (Hemphillian in age) of Orange County.

Distinguished Visitors

Anthropology

The Anthropology Department hosted Native American basketry experts John Kania and Judith Finger for three days in February to look at baskets from the Victorville area of San Bernardino.

They looked at nearly 50 baskets, a good portion of which were collected between 1880 and 1915 by Henrietta Waters Cole who lived on Verde Ranch in Victorville. The Victorville area had been known as an important source of water to multiple Native American tribes and early white explorers but after a number of skirmishes with white settlers that culminated in a massacre of Indians in 1867, the tribes seemed to disappear from historic accounts. Former Assistant Curator in Anthropology, Nancy Blomberg used a variety of sources including court records, newspaper accounts, prison records and interviews with knowledgeable Victorville residents to account for the existence of an Indian community that included several exceptional basket makers.



John and Judith continued this research, helping us to better understand who was making the baskets when they were collected in the late 1800's. They closely examined the baskets and used their extensive knowledge of the techniques and materials used by the different tribes that would have been in the Victorville area when the baskets were collected. They provided more accurate cultural attributions and, in some cases, were able to provide the name of the basket maker. The picture on the right is Mary Chapula, the weaver of several baskets in the collection, including the one pictured above.



Dinosaur Institute

Dino Lab

Doug Goodreau and Robert Cripps represented the Dino Lab during an extravaganza of monsters and movies that has garnered a cult following of monster movies broadcast on US TV during the 1960s, 70s and 80s. The *Creature Feature* event in Burbank on March 14, 2015 celebrated the horror and science-fiction films of the 1930s, 40s and 50s and the famous Japanese monster movies of the 60s and 70s such as *Godzilla*.

They enjoyed displaying fossils of meat-eating dinosaurs and teaching the hundreds of visitors about these real but extinct monsters.



Collections

The collections of the Dinosaur Institute enjoyed a visit by Dr. David Hone of Queen Mary University of London, UK. His research focuses on the behaviour and ecology of the dinosaurs and their flying relatives, the pterosaurs. In addition, he writes extensively online about paleontology and science outreach, blogs for the science pages of *The Guardian* newspaper, and regularly contributes for other media outlets as well as acting as a scientific consultant. Dr. Hone was here during the Curators Cupboard at the Page and was especially surprised to finally see the largest *Quetzalcoatlus* ever discovered.

Malacology

Kelvin Barwick (Orange Co. Sanitation Dist.) made two visits to the Malacology collection (12/19 & 1/16) to examine holdings of the bivalve genus *Nuculana* to research for potentially new species. Ángel Valdés and student Sabrina Medrano (Cal. Poly. Pomona) visited to use the SEM and examine nudibranch holdings. John Berriman (Cal. St. LA) visited the collection on two occasions (12/17 & 12/31) to deposit type material and voucher specimens for a new species of the sea slug genus *Oxynoe*. Pacific Conchological Club President and Malacology Associate Shawn Wiedrick spent time in Malacology examining micro-specimens of the family Turridae for research purposes. Museum Associate Corinne Heyning-Laverty met with Lindsey Groves to discuss land snail materials collected during the Channel Island Biological Surveys and Pleistocene marine terrace materials more recently collected on the Channel Islands. Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Malacology curator Paul Valentich-Scott visited the section to give a talk to the Pacific Conchological Club (1/11) and then spent two days in the collection examining holdings of bivalves from southern Peru and Chile. Chuck Powell II (USGS, Menlo Park) visited to examine Recent specimens to compare with fossil specimens for several papers he is writing. David Woodward (Grand Terrace, CA) examined type material of several helminthoglyptid land snails for research purposes. Stephanie Sang (Cornell Univ.) examined specimens of the gastropod genus *Turritella*, particularly those with the protoconch (embryonic whorls) preserved, and borrowed numerous lots. Eddie Hardy (Birmingham, England) spent five days photographing gastropod type specimens for

inclusion in his web site. Calif. St. LA professor Lisa Torres brought her biology class to the museum for tours of Malacology by Lindsey Groves and the Crustacea collections by Jody Martin. Amy Aldas and Anna Cunningham (Glendale, CA) and Scott Westerson (Santa Clarita, CA) participated in a test of an upcoming program to collect mollusks in the Nature Garden.

History

The Bixbys of Long Beach

Descendants of an early pioneer Southern California family, the Bixbys continue working in the cattle ranching industry. Michael Dennis, his mother Judith Friend and his sister Katie Wheeler, owners of the Carrizo Ranch in San Luis Obispo County, along with historian Dawn Dunlap, were invited guests of Dr. William Estrada in December, 2014. They also met with Assistant Curator of Herpetology, Greg Pauly; Collections Managers of Mammalogy and Ornithology, Jim Dines and Kimball Garrett respectively; and Museum Taxidermist Tim Bovard. Another stop on the tour was the History Department to see two- and three-dimensional collections relating to California ranching history and the Bixby's former *ranchos*, *Los Alamitos* and *Los Cerritos*. Pictured, with the Bixby group, are Dr. Estrada and Collections Managers Betty Uyeda and Brent Riggs.

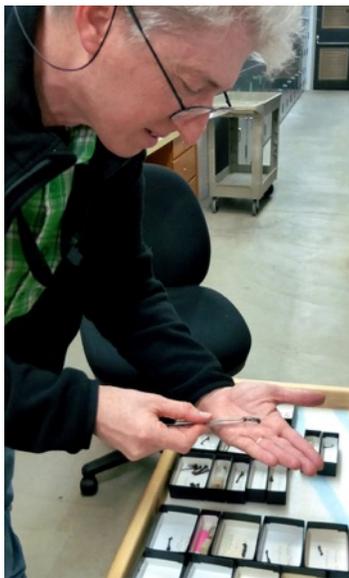


Supervisor Hilda L. Solis Visits NHM



On January 28th the History Department was the honored host to the newly elected Los Angeles County Supervisor of the First District, Hilda L. Solis. Her tour of the museum with Dr. Jane Pisano and Dr. William Estrada included the *Becoming Los Angeles* exhibit and the Seaver Center. Supervisor Solis viewed several items in the Center, including the very first agenda book of the Board of Supervisors, dated July, 1852. The image shows Dr. Estrada and Supervisor Solis pausing at one of the dioramas in the exhibit.

Rancho La Brea



Dr. Zbigniew Bochenski examines a woodpecker fossil at The Page Museum.

In late January, Brazilian researchers Dr. Leonardo Avilla from the Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro and Dimila Mothé from the National Museum of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro State visited the Rancho La Brea collections. Dr. Avilla is part of a larger study group looking at the evolution and biogeography of the New World tribe Equini that includes both modern and extinct horses. Ms. Mothé is a Ph.D. student studying the taxonomy, phylogeny and biogeography of Proboscideans in the Americas. Both paleontologists are based out of the FLMNH while in the US but are traveling to many museums around the country.



Dr. Leonardo Avilla doing research using our Equus collection at The Page Museum.

Dr. Zbigniew Bochenski, Director of the Institute of Systematics and Evolution of Animals of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow, Poland, and a Research As-

sociate in Ornithology is visiting the Rancho La Brea collections for six weeks this spring for collaborative research with Dr. Ken Campbell to study fossil woodpeckers from the tar pits. Seven or eight species in five genera of the Family Picidae were reported in the last compilation that occurred decades ago, and these numbers will be in need of revision at the end of the current study. Approximately 200 new records of woodpeckers have been cataloged so far, tripling the number of fossil woodpecker specimens, and new specimens are still being identified from the various collections of fossil birds.

Vertebrate Paleontology

The Vertebrate Paleontology collections are widely used by local and international researchers and students. Dr. Raul Esperante, Assistant Professor of Earth and Biological Sciences at Loma Linda University Medical Center, visited the collections with a group of graduate students 9 December 2014. Dr. Esperante chooses to bring his students to our collections so that they can observe on-going curation projects, gain familiarity with the breadth of the Vertebrate Paleontology collections, and see behind the scenes fossil preparation in action. Dr. Leonardo Avilla



Dr. Leonardo Avilla uses calipers to take measurements of a horse metapodial from Rincon, Chihuahua, Mexico.



Dimilia Mothé counts the cusps on the molars of a complete Rhynchotherium dentary from Santa Maria Amajac (Blancan in age), Hidalgo, Mexico.

and Dimilia Mothé from the Laboratório de Mastozoologia UNIRIO, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, visited our collections 2–12 February 2015. Our Museum was one of their first stops in a series of collections visits throughout North America. They are currently based out of the Florida Museum of Natural History's Visiting Research Scholar program, where they are continuing to explore the great biotic interchange of species between North and South America. During their two week stay in our research collections, Dr. Avilla devoted his attention to our fossil horses of Hemphillian age from the Rincon Fauna of Chihuahua, Mexico. Dimilia Mothé works on an extinct proboscidean group known as gomphotheres and devoted much of her time to the study of our skulls and teeth from various North American localities. During her time here, she also gave a lecture in our Research & Collections seminar series titled, "Gomphotheres in the New World: 15 Million Years of Evolution," where

she described the diversification of the group, her recent publication work, and future graduate projects. Dr. J.D. Stewart visited our collections 5 February to make some taxonomic comparisons for his research. Dr. Jeb Bevers, professor in the Biology Department at Yavapai College, Prescott, Arizona, visited our collections 10–11 March to study our Barstow Formation materials. Dr. Bevers is currently on sabbatical for the spring of 2015 and used the taxa from our Barstow Formation to work out a comprehensive listing of materials from the Milk Creek Formation in central Arizona.



Dr. Jeb Bevers holds up an articulated hind limb from a three toed horse, Merychippus, that was collected from the Barstow Formation of San Bernardino County.

In addition, several graduate students have made use of the Vertebrate Paleontology collections these past few months. Among those present were Peter Kloess of Cal State Fullerton (16 December 2014 and 6 January 2015) working on Miocene birds, Brian Kussman of Cal State Fullerton (14 January 2015 and 5 March 2015) working on the fauna from the La Habra Formation with comparisons to specimens from McKittrick, Michelle Barboza of Cal State Fullerton (14 January 2015) working on microvertebrate fossils from the Oso Sand Member of the Capistrano Formation, and Fernando Salinas-Márquez (24–28 November and 9–13 March) working on kentriodontid dolphins.

Publications

Mills, S.J., **Kampf, A.R.**, Christy, A.G., Housley, R.M., Rossman, G.R., Reynolds, R.E. and Marty, J. (2014) Bluebelite and mojaveite, two new minerals from the central Mojave Desert, California, USA. *Mineralogical Magazine* 78, 1325-1340. DOI:[10.1180/minmag.2014.078.5.15](https://doi.org/10.1180/minmag.2014.078.5.15)

Christy, A.G., **Kampf, A.R.**, Mills, S.J., Housley, R.M. and Thorne, B. (2014) Crystal structure and revised chemical formula for burckhardtite, $\text{Pb}_2(\text{Fe}^{3+}\text{Te}^{6+})[\text{AlSi}_3\text{O}_8]\text{O}_6$: a double-sheet silicate with intercalated phyllotellurate layers. *Mineralogical Magazine* 78, 1763-1773. DOI:[10.1180/minmag.2014.078.7.18](https://doi.org/10.1180/minmag.2014.078.7.18)

Kampf, A.R. and Housley, R.M. (2015) Chiappinoite-(Y), $\text{Y}_2\text{Mn}(\text{Si}_3\text{O}_7)_4$, a new layer silicate found in peralkaline syenitic ejecta from Água de Pau volcano, Azores. *European Journal of Mineralogy* 27, 91-97. DOI:[10.1127/ejm/2014/0026-2416](https://doi.org/10.1127/ejm/2014/0026-2416)

Kampf, A.R., Kasatkin, A.V., Čejka, J. and Marty, J. (2015) Plášilite, $\text{Na}(\text{UO}_2)(\text{SO}_4)(\text{OH})\bullet 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$, a new uranyl sulfate mineral from the Blue Lizard mine, San Juan County, Utah, USA. *Journal of Geosciences* 60, 1-10. DOI:[10.3190/jgeosci.184](https://doi.org/10.3190/jgeosci.184)

Mills, S.J. **Kampf, A.R.**, Christy, A.G., Housley, R.M., Thorne, B., Chen, Y.-S. and Steele, I.M. (2014) Favreaute, a new selenite mineral from the El Dragón mine, Bolivia. *European Journal of Mineralogy* 26, 771-781. DOI:[10.1127/ejm/2014/0026-2405](https://doi.org/10.1127/ejm/2014/0026-2405)

Barnes, L.G., L. Tohill, and S. Tohill. 2015. A new pontoporiid dolphin from the Sharktooth Hill Bonebed, central California; the oldest known member of its family. *PaleoBios* (Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontology Annual Meeting Program with Abstracts) 32 (1 supplement): 4.

Miscellaneous

Rancho La Brea

When the weather was cool back in December, a team of staff and volunteers at the Page Museum took full advantage of it and spent a day planting young California native vegetation. Their work (and the continued work of regular volunteers) has certainly paid off, as our Pleistocene Garden is now in full spring bloom. Thanks to everyone who helped out with this big effort, as well as a special thanks to the Simun family whose generous donation keeps the garden blooming!

Pleistocene Garden Team: L-R Ken Hansen, Ellen Wilson, Carol Bornstein, Mike Wong, Mary Simun, Karin Rice and Robert Eckhart



Ice Age Monsters exhibit at The Ibaraki Nature Museum in Japan with a section on Rancho La Brea.

Over the past few years the Rancho La Brea department has been working closely with staff at our sister institution, The Ibaraki Nature Museum in Japan, on exhibit planning for their 20th anniversary. In mid-December, Collections Manager Aisling Farrell traveled to Japan for the opening of this special exhibit *Ice Age Monsters*. A large component of the exhibit features replicas and images from Rancho La Brea. Ms. Farrell gave remarks at the opening ceremony along with local dignitaries from Ibaraki Prefecture, as well as a public lecture.

Malacology

Congratulations to Jann Vendetti and husband Gene Kwon as Nadia Jin-Yung Vendetti-Kwon (love those hyphens) was born on Wednesday, February 18th and weighed in at 3.006 kg (6 pounds, 10 ounces) and is 49.3 cm (19.5 inches) long. Send more images, Jann!



The *Research & Collections Newsletter* is issued quarterly by the Research and Collections staff of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Editor: Dr. Joel W. Martin, Curator of Crustacea and Chief of the Division of Invertebrate Studies.

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All issues of the newsletter may be found at:
<http://research.nhm.org/newsletters>