

MORE JANUARY 2005 FOSSIL COLLECTING RESULTS

January 13, 2005

While on the way home from work one Friday I spied a creekbed exposure of Pecan Gap chalk which I had never before noticed. With backpack always on the ready, I donned my boots and dropped into a very stinky creek. This horizon of the Pecan Gap was a bit different than others I have examined in my area. In place of ammonites, *Baculites*, and large *Echinocoryse* echinoids were bivalves, ornate, tiny gastropods, and small, fragile *Hemiaster* echinoids. A fun little site, but not one I need to visit again anytime soon.



FIG 1: Misc Pecan Gap bivalves, gastropod, worm tube

January 15, 2005

I took a day to run out near Brackettville with brothers Mike and Marc Walkden to participate in an artifact screen dig run by a nice guy named Nacho. Like other screen digs, the operator dug up the soil with a skid steer and dumped it onto 4 x 8 foot screen tables using a front end loader. In about 20 minutes, 4 guys can push all the dirt through the screen and pick out any artifacts they are fortunate enough to have in front of them.

The Walkden boys were more fortunate than I. Each of them ended up with 6-8 good points by day's end compared to my 2 perfect and 4 broken pieces. Each of the guys got a couple good Pandale points. They saw an *Angostura* or two show up as well. I got an Early Triangular and a Lajita which will go into my "top shelf" box.

Marc and I enjoyed a little friendly rivalry throughout the day. For hours he used his hand rake to scoop dirt off my corner of the table. At \$100 per day, I was quick to ask him to stay in his area. After several of my requests, he told me to "get over it." I did, once I snatched his hand rake away, snapped the handle in two on the edge of the table, and threw both pieces back at him. With only 6 inches of handle left on the rake, we were all suddenly working where we belonged. Even with compromised equipment, Marc managed to eclipse my finds by at least 3 to 1. Perhaps I was throwing arrowheads off the screen and not knowing it. Oh well, my eyes are better attuned to fossils, and so is my wallet.



FIG 2: Misc spear points, tools, and scrapers from the Brackettville area

January 21, 2005

Getting out of work at 4 each Friday has really been a boon to my fossil collecting. I seized the opportunity to run north to a construction site in the Lower Glen Rose which has produced a number of good echinoids for me in the past. This day was no different. By dusk I was loaded down by 9 *Salenia texana* regular echinoids, a pocket full of *Palhemiaster texanus* and *Heteraster obliquatus* irregular echinoids, and a double handful of nice *Porocystis globularis* "algal fruiting bodies". I also got a couple nice oysters I've never encountered in this formation. "Keep the best and give away the rest" I always say.



FIGS 3-4: Lower Glen Rose echinoids *Salenia texana*, *Heteraster obliquatus*, and *Palhemiaster texanus* left, gastropod *Tylostoma*, algal fruiting bodies *Porocystis globularis*, oyster and bivalves right

January 22, 2005

I convinced my wife Saturday morning that I needed to run off and photograph the little Del Rio/Georgetown exposure I found recently "in the interest of science". I've never played that card

before, and probably won't be able to again. Anyway, I was only gone an hour, and got my pictures, but knew to take a backpack just in case. I was humbled as always by how much good material I had overlooked on my initial visit. I was quite pleased to land several more nice *Coenholectypus transpecosensis?* echinoids plus some partials in addition to 1 1/2 very nice *Paracymatoceras* nautiloids and a 5 gallon bucket full of *Mariella (Plesioturrillites) brazoensis* ammonites. Interestingly, I found that the nodular limestone in the base of the exposure can be split and lifted in layers using a chisel and hand sledge, revealing even more ammonites than seen peeking out at the surface. I look forward to sharing this site with 1 or 2 buddies who have been generous and helpful to me in the past.



FIGS 5-8: Georgetown ammonites *Mariella brazoensis*



FIGS 9-12: Georgetown ammonites *Mariella brazoensis*. See specimen hiding in situ lower right?



FIGS 13-17: *Paracymatoceras* nautiloid upper left, echinoids *Coenholectypus transpecosensis*? Next three photos, various oysters, gastropods, bivalves *Neithea* and *Protocardia*, oysters *Ilymatogyra arietina*, brachiopods *Kingena wacoensis*

January 23, 2005

With most of my week nights and Saturday spent on honeydos, I had earned a full day of collecting time. Not one to squander time afield, I found myself crawling around at the Reklaw/Carrizo contact zone in Bastrop County at 5 a.m., flashlight in hand, steadily finding shark teeth and ray pavement teeth in the howling wind and cold. Enamel actually shows up pretty well

in the flashlight's beam, and I was happy to run off with about 20 teeth to 18 mm. The Reklaw is an Eocene exposure about 40 MYA.



FIG 18: Reklaw shark teeth *Carcharias taurus*, kidney bean shaped pycnodont tooth right, ray pavement tooth *Myliobatis* just below pycnodont tooth, gastropod just below quarter

Moving on, I met up with fellow Dallas Paleo Society member Keith McLeroy at 8, met his family, and enjoyed an extended look at his collection which included very nice dinosaur and mosasaur bones, ammonites, echinoids, etc. I handed over some fossils from my side of the fence and drooled over some of his centerpieces. Before long, we were on a recently eroded roadside exposure that was choked with petrified wood. Most of the pieces were small (less than 6 inches) but had enough color and character to pick up. My best find was about a 15 pound chunk with cool looking cracks and bands of white and tan in it. We filled a 5 gallon bucket in short order and decided that a change of venue was in order.



FIGS 19-20: Petrified wood from the Yegua fm

Within 15 minutes we were at the famous Stone City site on the banks of the Brazos River. This is an Eocene exposure in the Claiborne Group about 45 MYA. Anyway, fossils there are mainly ornate bivalves and gastropods, but occasionally there are some surprises thrown in. I was searching for a microtooth zone that fellow DPS member Robert Bowen had tipped me off to a year or so ago, and never found it per se. Actually, I was distracted by a large *Conus* shell jutting out low in the exposure. I began to work it out and found 2 more just like it underneath. As I worked them out gingerly with my chisel, a perfect 37 mm shark tooth popped out right into my hand! Keith was astonished. In 10 years of studying this site until it became rather boring for him, he has found one small tooth at the site. I hope that he can successfully expand his search in the horizon where I found my big tooth.



FIGS 21-22: Left photo, by column left to right: gastropods *Turritella*, *Distorsio septemdentata*, *Pseudoliva vestusta*, *Conus sauridens*, *Protosurcula gabbii*, bivalves *Venericardia planicostata*. Shark tooth *Carcharias taurus* right

Keith and I had to finish things up by around noon, but that worked well for me since I had other sites to explore. I gave him locality info for another fossil wood site in his area which he's never hunted, so I hope I made it worth his while to show me around. I look forward to hunting again with him in the future.

Before long I arrived at a Pleistocene exposure I had been looking to visit for some time. I was so excited when I got there, I ran down the hill, failed to see a low strand of barbed wire, and ended up doing a spread eagle face plant in the mud. So much for youthful exuberance! I wiped myself off and proceeded to WALK. And walk I did, about 2 miles each way, but it was a worthwhile trek. I landed a large leg bone cemented in gravel matrix, numerous broken bones, and one vertebra. In addition I found a couple fossil horse teeth and one conical tooth with a hollow root, possibly alligator. With backpack loaded I somehow got the attention of two large and vociferous dogs that chased me through the woods. A butt slide down a mud embankment finally put me out of their reach, but I could hear them all the way back to the truck.



FIGS 23-24: Large Pleistocene mammalian leg bone before and after cleaning off cemented gravel



FIGS 25-27: Horse and alligator? teeth upper left, misc bones upper right, turtle shell fragments lower left

It had been a long day, but one filled with a variety of fossils and sites. I met another helpful collector and my boy was happy to see me when I got home, rounding out another great day.