



European Association of Vertebrate Palaeontologists

Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde, Geologische Abteilung,
Erbprinzenstrasse 13, D-76133 Karlsruhe, Germany.
<http://www.eavp.alettra.de>

EAVP Newsletter - No 2, September 2005

The words of the Vice-President

Dear colleagues and friends of the EAVP

We are rocking and rolling, and slowly growing. Our meeting in Darmstadt has shown a growing number of attendees (about 90 heads were counted !). And a very satisfying fact is, that many young researchers come to our meetings.

It was again a pleasant and fruitful meeting perfectly organized by Norbert Micklich, Gabriele Gruber, Oliver Sandrock and Torsten Wappler. On behalf of all the members I would like to thank them for their excellent job. We had a large variety of topics from Palaeozoic fishes to palaeoecology of hominid sites. Moreover, we had a successful Tombola in aid of the Raymonde Rivoallan Fund. This means, that we can continue supporting the attendance of two to three students at our next meeting in Budapest, so please encourage your students to apply.

Another very promising activity, again through the initiative of EAVP members, are special topic meetings such as the upcoming international event on the Sauropterygians 2006 in Karlsruhe. Keynote speakers will include Zulma de Gasparini (Argentina), Nathalie Bardet (France) and Olivier Rieppel (USA). In this context, I would like to announce the next EAVP themed meeting. The topic will be "Vertebrate trace fossils and paleoenvironments" 2007 in Basel, conveners are Basil Thüring and myself. Apart from presentations and posters, we will be organizing field trips to new localities in the Swiss Jura mountains as well as in the High Alps (Triassic sites); that is the reason for doing this in the late fall when the snow has melted (probably in September). We will provide you with more details in Budapest.

EAVP members work almost everywhere on our planet in almost every time slice from the Devonian up to the Quarternary and

from Thailand to Mexico. We are a very diverse flock, and have members from twelve different nations. However it seems that some come only when the meetings are in their home country - like Italy - and vertebrate palaeontologists from other countries should join us. So you Southerners from Greece and Portugal become members now ! There is even a nice incentive as, for the benefit of all who want to join us, we have lowered the membership fees. And from next year onwards, you can also get PDFs of *Oryctos*.

So please encourage your colleagues, friends and students to join the EAVP, and see you in Budapest!

Christian



10th anniversary of the Messel Pit as an UNESCO World Heritage Site: Norbert Micklich leading the 3rd WEAVP field trip.



Welcome to the new EAVP members !

Association Dinosauria, Musée des dinosaures, Espéraza, France, contact@dinosauria.org - **Hans-Volker Karl**, Erfurt, Germany, hvkarl@web.de - **László Makádi**, Eötvös University, Budapest, Hungary, megalania@freemail.hu - **Norbert Micklich**, Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany, micklich@hlmd.de - **Inken Juliane Mueller-Töwe**, Johannes-Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany, muellert@uni-mainz.de - **Carlos Martinez-Pérez**, University of Valencia, Burjassot (Valencia), Spain, carlos.martinez-perez@uv.es - **Márton Rabi**, Eötvös University, Budapest, Hungary, iszkenderun@freemail.hu - **Oliver Wings**, Universität Tübingen, Germany, oliver.wings@web.de



Various forthcoming meetings: **Symposium on Mesozoic Terrestrial Ecosystems and Biota**, Manchester, UK, June 2006 - **Fumanya International Symposium on Dinosaurs and other Vertebrates Palaeoichnology**, Fumanya, Spain, 4-8 October 2005 - **5th National Symposium of Paleontology**, Bucharest, Romania, 15-17 September 2005 - **Early/Lower Vertebrates meeting**, Uppsala, Sweden, week of Aug. 13, 2007 - **150 years Neanderthal Discovery. Early Europeans - Continuity and Discontinuity**, Bonn, Germany, 21-26 July 2006 - **Biominalisation in Fish Bones and Teeth: from Microscopy to Design of Material** - held during the **7th International Congress on the Biology of Fish**, St Johns, Newfoundland, Canada, 18-22 July 2006 (see also the contribution of Gilles Cuny in this issue). All links are posted on our blackboard: <http://www.eavp.alettra.de>

Field expedition to the Río Negro (Patagonia, Argentina)

José Ignacio Canudo, Universidad de Zaragoza - El Anfiteatro is a broad area covering 3,200 hectares, situated 53 km to the south-west of the town of Cipoletti (Río Negro, Argentina). The area has outcrops mainly of continental sediments from the Upper Cretaceous, which belong to the Huincul Formation (probably Cenomanian in age), to the Cerro Lisandro Formation (Late Cenomanian/Early Turonian), the Portezuelo Formation (Coniacian), the Plottier Formation (Late Coniacian), and the Bajo de la Carpa Formation (Santonian). These serve as the basis for a joint scientific project between the Universities of Comahue and Zaragoza. During the month of April 2005, the members J. I. Canudo, J. I. Ruiz-Omeñaca and J. L. Barco from the Aragosaurus research group (<http://www.aragosaurus.com>) of the University of Zaragoza (Spain) carried out an expedition of prospecting and excavation in the area of El Anfiteatro. This expedition was carried out in collaboration with Leonardo Salgado and his team from the University of Comahue (Neuquén) and was financed by Repsol-YPF. The main objective was to prospect the magnificent outcrops of the Plottier Formation. This formation is especially interesting because - in spite of the scarce and fragmentary record of vertebrate fossils that it presents elsewhere in the Neuquén Basin - in the area of El Anfiteatro the remains are abundant, and prospecting them is easy on account of the spectacular nature of the outcrops. The fact that the interval of time represented in the area encompasses the Plottier is of great interest, since it makes it



Titanosaurus bones from the Parrita gisement



Chelonia from the Huincul Formation

possible to attempt to provide information for interpreting the change in fauna that occurred at the beginning of the Upper Cretaceous in Patagonia, when primitive faunas such as the rebbachisaurid sauropods, present during the Lower Cretaceous were replaced by more modern faunas such as the derived titanosaurid sauropods.

The results can be considered promising, for remains were recovered from sauropods, theropods, ornithopods, chelonians and crocodiles. The most outstanding finds belonged to Titanosaurus, and include cervical vertebrae, caudal vertebrae, ribs, coracoids, the pubis, femur and part of the sacrum and the ilium. Also worthy of special note were several complete examples of chelonians in a magnificent state of preservation. The material is in preparation and will be the subject of scientific studies in the coming years.

The scientific project also has a social dimension, for another of the organizations that has collaborated on it is Endemas, a body that seeks to promote geological and palaeontological tourism in the area of El Anfiteatro. The first foundation for developing this proposal is scientific research into the land in order to be able to propose sites "in situ." There are magnificent examples of tree trunks up to ten metres in length preserved as far as their roots. Another proposal is that visitors should only be able to see dinosaur sites once they have been excavated.

Contact: Grupo Aragosaurus. <http://www.aragosaurus.com>. Paleontología. Facultad de Ciencias. Universidad de Zaragoza, Pedro Cerbuna s/n. 50009 Zaragoza. Spain.



Raymonde Rivoallan Fund: Two grants were offered for the 3rd WEAVP in the Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt. The first one was awarded to **Jeremy Emiland Martin** (*An overview of the Late Cretaceous crocodylian assemblage from Cruzy, southern France - with E. Buffetaut*); **László Makádi** (*A new aquatic varanoid lizard from the Upper Cretaceous of Hungary*) and **Márton Rabi** (*Alligatoroidea indet. from the Upper Cretaceous of Hungary - Csehbánya Formation*) shared the second grant. Their abstracts as well as those of the other participants are published in Kaupia, vol. 14.

Thanks to the efforts of the organisers of the 3rd WEAVP and their surprising idea of a tombola, as well as to generous donors, at least two grants will be offered for the next WEAVP in Budapest. Details will be posted as soon as they are finalised: <http://www.eavp.alettra.de>



Undoubtedly the nicest prize of the tombola, won by Inken Mueller-Töwe



Biom mineralisation in Fish Bones and Teeth: from Microscopy to Design of Materials - A symposium organised by Anne Kemp, University of Queensland and Gilles Cuny, Geological Museum, University of Copenhagen, held during the 7th International Congress on the Biology of Fish. The Congress will take place in St Johns, Newfoundland, Canada, from July 18th to July 22nd, 2006.

This symposium will discuss all aspects of biom mineralisation of the hard tissues of fish, including bone, enamel, enameloid, dentine, calcified cartilage, otoliths and scale tissues. The processes involved in biom mineralisation are known in part in some mammals, but little understood in fish. Studies on

immunodetection of the proteins involved in the mineralization processes of hard tissues in fish are not very widely used, and the genes coding for these proteins are not always identified. That the fine structure of fish teeth shows an enormous diversity has been known since the early studies of Owen in the nineteenth century, but little of this diversity has been studied with modern techniques of microscopy. Specific adaptations of the ultrastructure of fish dentitions, in relation to stress induced during use of the teeth, have implications for biomaterials research and for the design of more effective machinery for industrial processes. Equally, analysis of the fine structure of bone has implications for biomechanics. Improved understanding of all of these aspects of fish hard tissues has also phylogenetic implications, especially for the relationships among problematic groups of fishes, or between fish and other vertebrates. This symposium will bring ideas from different fields (in biochemistry, genetics, developmental biology, biomaterials and microscopy) together and assist in the development of productive new ideas.

Contact: Dr. Gilles Cuny, Geological Museum, Øster Voldgade 5-7, 1350 Copenhagen K, Denmark; have a look at <http://www.mun.ca/biology/icbf7/index.html>



Monasteries, fishes and discussions - a meeting in Armenia

Martin Rücklin, Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde Karlsruhe - The small country of Armenia, lying between the Caucasus and Arrarat Mountains, appears perhaps a little exotic for a meeting on "early vertebrates".

The meeting on "Devonian vertebrates of the continental margins" was organized by Vachik Hairapetian (Iran), Michal Ginter (Poland) and Airaik Grigoryan (Armenia). It was held at the Institute of Geological Sciences, National Academy of Sciences, Yerevan from May 22th to 27th 2005. Vertebrate palaeontologists from China, France, Germany, Iran, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden, United Kingdom and of course Armenia, discussed the topics of the IGCP 491 "Middle Palaeozoic Vertebrate Biogeography, Palaeogeography and Climate".

Interesting lectures on the palaeobiogeography of Devonian placoderms and sarcopterygians, the ontogenetic stages of acanthodians, chondrichthyans from Uzbekistan, sarcopterygians from China, etc. produced a good mix of different groups, themes and geographical positions of "early vertebrates". An evening spent in the hotel room of Oleg Lebedev, where we enjoyed beer with crayfish, led to the decision to work on a database for Devonian vertebrates, in order to provide a matrix for future studies on palaeobiogeography, phylogeny, etc.



*Noravank monastery
from the 13th century.*

We enjoyed the field trips to the wonderful landscape and monasteries of Armenia - and found vertebrate remains at the Khor Virap, Sevakavan, Noravank and Ertych sections from the Upper Devonian and Lower Carboniferous.

All this, together with the very friendly hospitality of the Armenians and the rich culture of this country made this meeting a very successful one. More at: http://paleoworld.net/IGCP491_Meetings.htm



Upper Devonian rocks of the Sevakavan section.

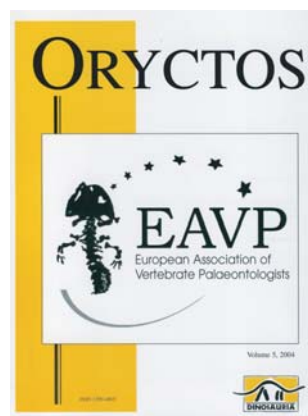
Call for papers!

We invite you to submit articles to *Oryctos*: *Oryctos* is the official peer-reviewed journal of the EAVP published in collaboration with the Espérazza Dinosaur Museum.

Original contributions on vertebrate palaeontology and anatomy are welcome, as well as papers dealing with the history of these scientific disciplines. There is no limit on the length of papers submitted to *Oryctos*, and monographs are acceptable.

Electronic submission is preferred. The first submitted manuscript is ideally in .pdf format, with text, figures, figure captions, tables, and table captions integrated in one document. Manuscripts should be sent by e-mail. Should you wish to submit a manuscript non-electronically, please get in touch with the editor. Fifty reprints will be supplied free of charge to the senior author, as well as a .pdf version of the paper.

Oryctos website: www.dinosauria.org; Oryctos@dinosauria.org



3rd WEAVP in Darmstadt, Germany, 18-23 July 2005



Attila Osi, Laszlo Makadi & Marlon Rabi, Budapest - The third meeting of the EAVP was organised by the Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt. The fact that Darmstadt was celebrating the 675th anniversary of its status as a city gave added significance to the event. The presentations were given in the main conference hall of the Museum. The lectures of the first day were dominated by fishes. The presentations of the second day included topics on turtle eggs, crocodiles, dinosaurs (and their footprints) and pterosaurs. After the scientific lectures, Prof. Dr. von Königswald held a remarkable public lecture about the Messel pit and gave a worthy end to the day. The third day of talks was about mammals and some discussions were made on problems of fossil trading and the role of palaeontology in education. At lunchtime, the mayor of Darmstadt held an official reception in the City Hall. During the days of lectures,

there were enjoyable coffee breaks every three hours (congratulations for the fully equipped buffet-desk) which provided the opportunity not only for further discussions, but also for making contact with the newcomers. One of these breaks gave time for a serious discussion on the coloured and detailed posters on widely differing topics. Because Darmstadt is a small city and because most of the participants reserved their accomodation close to the Museum meetings of vertebrate palaeontologists frequently happened by chance in the intimate pubs during the evenings. Perhaps the tasty and popular Dunkler beer also contributed to the good mood of these evenings. On the afternoon of the conference's last day, the group attended a well organised field trip to the world heritage site of Messel pit. For lots of the participants visiting this historic locality might well have been one of the most exciting part of the week. With respect to the strict rules relating to fossil hunting no valuable specimens were collected - but frankly, neither were they found. After the satisfactory excursion the conference dinner finished this year's meeting in a familial mood.



The participants of the 3rd WEAVP, including the next generation.



A call for contributions!

We are longing to receive your exhibition and meeting announcements and/or reviews, book and article reviews, news from your last field campaign, calls for help, job offers, and whatever else you wish to read in here. Our aim is to make this Newsletter quarterly. The next issue is therefore scheduled for this autumn.

Contributions may be up to about 500 words (as a Word file), with or without illustration (as a .jpg file). Please send them electronically to our Newsletter Team: Daniela Schwarz (Daniela.Schwarz@bs.ch), Jeff Liston (jliston@museum.gla.ac.uk), Martin Rücklin (martin_ruecklin@web.de) and/or Marie-Céline Buchy (buchy@smnk.de). Contributions will be subject to informal (and friendly) review by ourselves.

