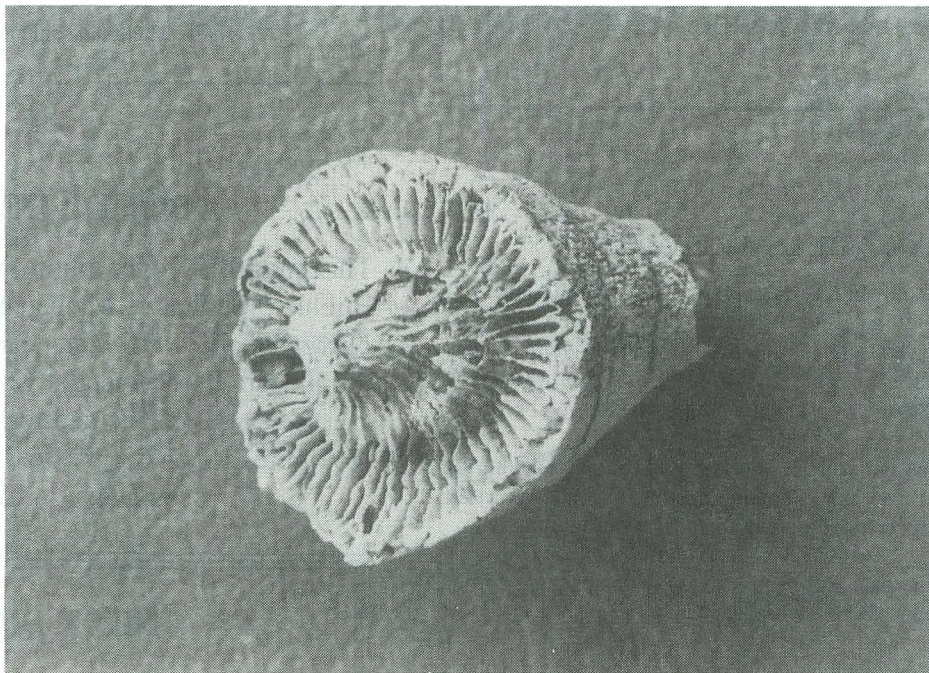


M.A.P.S. *Digest*

Official Publication of
Mid-America Paleontology Society

Volume 21, Number 2
February 1998



MARK YOUR CALENDARS**Apr 17, 18, & 19 MAPS NATIONAL FOSSIL EXPOSITION XX-CORALS**

Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL

Fri., Apr. 17: 8 am - 5 pm

Sat., Apr. 18: 8 am - 5 pm

Sun., Apr. 19: 8 am - 3 pm

Full information in December Digest. Request copies from Dale Stout (Address on back page.)

Apr 17-19 DINOFEEST, Philadelphia

Contact: Donald Wolberg

1900 Ben Franklin Pkwy.

Philadelphia, PA 19103-1195

Ph. 215-299-1009

Fx. 215-299-1028

Email: <wolberg@say.acnatsci.org>

Web Site: <http://www.acnatsci.org>

**May 9 FOSSILS OF PORTLAND POINT, LANSING, NY
(FOSSIL HUNT WITH PRI)**

Hunt for 380 million-year-old fossils, including trilobites, brachs, and cephalopods. Call PRI (above) for information and to register. Deadline May 7.

Cost: Members \$2 Non-members \$3/(\$2 children)

**Nov 18-20 SECOND CONFERENCE ON PARTNERSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEDERALLY-ASSOCIATED
COLLECTIONS**

Contact: Sally Shelton, Director, Collections Care

San Diego Natural History Museum

P.O. Box 1390

San Diego, CA 92112

619-232-3821, x226; fx 619-232-0248

email: sshelton@sdnhm.org

98/02 DUES ARE DUE

Are your dues due? You can tell by checking your mailing label. It reflects dues received by the 10th of March. The top line gives the expiration date in the form of year followed by month—98/02 means 1998/Feb. Dues cover the issue of the Digest for the month in which they expire. (The Digest is currently 1 month behind schedule.)

We do not sent notices but will let you know if you are overdue by highlighting your mailing label and stamping your Digest. We carry overdues for two months before dropping them from our mailing list.

Please include your due date and name exactly as it appears on your mailing label—or include a label.

Dues are \$20 per U.S./Canadian household per year. Overseas members may choose the \$20 fee to receive the Digest by surface mail or a \$30 fee to receive it by air mail. (Please send a check drawn on a United States bank in US funds; US currency, a money order; or a check drawn on an International bank in your currency.) Library/Institution fee is \$25.

Make checks payable to MAPS and mail to:
Sharon Sonnleitner, Treas.
4800 Sunset Dr. SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

ABOUT THE COVER

This month's cover photo was sent by Arline D. Buehler, Saginaw, Michigan. It is the horn coral *Dinophyllum ? umbonata* (Rominger) x3. This coral from the Niagara Escarpment at Cordell, Michigan, is one of many specimens of silicified fossils found in the Cordell Dolomite, a member of the Manistique Group.

See pages 3-4 for the story.

NEXT DIGEST

The next issue of the *Digest* that you will receive is the EXPO edition, which will be mailed from the show. However, if you attend the show, please pick yours up before noon on Saturday. It saves MAPS postage and you won't have to worry about damage from the mailing.

The next regular *Digest* will come out in May. Due to various circumstances, the issues are about a month behind schedule.

EXPO XX—CORALS

EXPO will be here before we know it. Since we've such a mild winter, we hope the weather will continue to cooperate for the weekend of the show, and we're looking forward to seeing everyone again.

Doug DeRosear reports that all the tables have been sold and there is a waiting list. If for some reason you are not able to make EXPO and have a table reserved, please let Doug know so he can release it to someone on the list.

We hope everyone has been able to find housing. We still have no additional information about the possible opening of the Holiday Inn in Macomb.

As always, there is no admission charge to view the show. A word of caution on planning your visit for Sunday, however: many people leave by noon on Sunday—earlier if the weather is bad.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD

The MAPS Board met March 14 at the University of Iowa with President Gil Norris presiding.

Dale Stout announced that he had assembled the documentation for Glenn Crossman's nomination for the Strimple Award and submitted it to the Paleontological Society. Bob Guenther's name is in nomination from a previous year.

Final show details were announced and details worked out.

Dates for the 1999 show are April 16-18. The two themes suggested at last year's EXPO were discussed, and Microfossils was chosen over Classifications and Collections as the theme for 1999.

Following the meeting, Gene Hinman gave a vivid and humorous presentation of his trip to collect dinosaurs in Mongolia. He was fortunate to find a skeleton but could take nothing out with him because all fossils become the property of the Mongolian museum. The museum has a fantastic collection; however, it lacks the funds to curate, study and display the specimens. Phil Curie from the Royal Tyrell Museum in Canada led the expedition.

POSTAL CANCEL AT EXPO

Tony Verdi has once again designed a postal cancel for MAPS EXPO. This year's cancel and cover envelope depict corals. The Post Office will set up at the show Friday afternoon and part of Saturday. All *Digests* mailed from the show will carry the EXPO cancel.

NEW FOSSIL BOOK

Discovering Fossils by Frank A. Garcia and Donald S. Miller is a newly released complete beginner's guide to fossil collecting. It includes lesser-studied vertebrate fossils and over 160 detailed illustrations for identification and comparison. Its easy-to-read format also includes personal stories, profiles of great amateurs, detailed information on 12 collecting sites, and a guide to fossil exhibits nationwide.

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A DAY'S COLLECTING IN THE BADLANDS OF ALBERTA, CANADA

by Joseph LeBlanc, Alberta Palaeontological Society

Many MAPS members have contacted me with inquiries about collecting dinosaur fossils in Alberta. I have put together the following account of an actual day's collecting in the Late Cretaceous Badlands of the Red Deer River valley. Collecting varies enormously from location to location. These variations are based on the age of the sediments, depositional environment, topography, erosion and a myriad of other factors. What always stays the same, however, is the anticipation of the "big find."

The sun rises over the hoodoos. Warblers, thrushes and other songbirds sing their territorial anthems. Emerging from my sleeping bag, I meet the steely stare of a big, male coyote. He keeps a riveted eye on me as he sniffs the ashes of last night's campfire. Suddenly a prairie falcon flies by on some mission and is gone just as quickly. The coyote trots off defiantly as if reminding me that humans have no place in the Badlands.

This is why I come to the hoodoos and coulees of the Red Deer River. Nature reigns. The anticipation of finding the remains of past dinosaurs and other vertebrates is only a bonus. Perhaps today will be a fruitful day of collecting. Perhaps not. Think of the saying, "A bad day of fishing is better than a good day at work." Substitute the words "fossil collecting" for fishing.

The "hoodoos" are now full of morning light. These bizarre, deformed shapes are exposed hills of Late Cretaceous clays, muds and ironstones that have been cut by the Red Deer River and scoured by numerous glaciers. The sediments along this stretch of the Red Deer River make up the Oldman Formation and were deposited 75 million years ago. Luckily, dinosaurs were deposited with them. These are today's richest dinosaur graveyards. The Oldman Formation has produced over 30 taxa of dinosaurs!

I hop on my mountain bike and cycle about 3 kilometers to what should be some promising exposures. It's a bumpy ride and full attention is needed to avoid tire-puncturing prickly pear cacti and basking prairie rattlesnakes. The snakes don't deserve to have their tranquility (or bones) shattered by human intrusion. I don't see any snakes, but as I lay down my bike, a jackrabbit effortlessly bounds up the slope of a hill. Maybe it's an omen. I'll follow the rabbit's trail.

Day pack, rock hammer, collecting bags, food and three liters of water don't feel so heavy until I climb the hill for five minutes; it took the jackrabbit all of 15 seconds!

A promising exposure! The upper slopes are full of dino bone fragment. The proximal end of a *Hadrosaur* femur emerges from some gray bentonite clay. Too fractured to salvage. Bone is common in these badlands. It's "complete" identifiable bones that are rare. Another good sign. Smaller diameter fragments mean that other dinosaurs were also deposited at this site. Perhaps they met their demise in an ancient flood. Some "fibrous" material could be skull bits. A ten minute search proves fruitless until the brown sheen of enamel catches my eye. A raptor tooth! Probably *Dromaeosaur*. Fine serrations flank the half-inch specimen. With my nose to the ground, the next half hour's search is rewarded by a minute *Scapherpeton* (salamander) jaw, a one-inch *Champsosaur* vertebra, a couple of enameled *Lepisosteus* (garpike) scales, a *Myledaphus* (skate) tooth and a pair of "star-worn" *Hadrosaur* teeth.

Back on my feet, I assume the bent-over posture familiar to all fossil collectors. Wandering up and down the slopes, I find a fractured ceratopsian vertebra: too many pieces to salvage. I find another vertebra, a *Hadrosaur* caudal (tail). It's only three-quarters complete. I pick it up and put it down, pick it up...put it down. The collector's dilemma: not quite good enough to take home, but too good to leave. I remind myself that *Hadrosaur* caudals are the most common dinosaur bone find. This tips the scales and I decide to leave it.

Oh no! Drats. Another incomplete fossil: a *Tyrannosaur* tooth without the tip. If complete it would be about 1.5 inches in length. It's a clean fracture, and I spend ten minutes looking for the missing tip. No luck, but I find a double-rooted, leaf-shaped ceratopsian (the Guys with horns) tooth in the same sediments. Good condition, unworn ceratopsian teeth are rarer finds than tyrannosaurid teeth.

Time for a break. As the sun (and the temperature) rises higher, a stillness has settled in. A soaring swainson's hawk is the only sign of animal life. I think back to 75 million years ago. The dominant *Hadrosaurs* in the Oldman Formation were the crested

type also known as *Lambeosaurs*. Various species of ceratopsians roamed. *Triceratops*, however, had not yet evolved, nor had its nemesis, *T-Rex*. The dominant tyrannosaurid (the big guys) was *Albertosaurus*. Other theropods were the raptors (the mean guys), *Troodon* (the smart guy) and *Ornithomimus* (the toothless guy). A host of other dinosaurs are also present in the Oldman, including *Ankylosaurs* and *Hypsilophodonts*. *T-Rex* and his contemporaries are found in the Scollard Formation, a hundred miles north of here on the banks of the same river.

As I sit munching an apple, my eyes keep wandering over the fanned-out sediments. The noon sun highlights the smooth cone of a *Leidyosuchus* (crocodile) tooth. I like croc teeth. They are not rare but are usually, as is this one, in excellent condition. A search of the site reveals a rugose croc scute, some *Aspideretes* (turtle) shell "pieces," and a half-inch jaw section of an unknown reptile. I eat the rest of my lunch while wandering up and down more hoodoos. Lots and lots of sun-faded fractured bones. I find an "okay" *Hadrosaur* caudal vertebra that is a keeper. More wandering. Now there's a nice sight. A shattered but complete scapula. Worthy of a photograph (if I had a camera). Plaster casts, excavations, etc., are not for me. In our Paleo Society we chuckle that anyone doing the "hard work" is an eager tourist paying for the privilege of doing so. If we find something worth excavating, we call the Tyrell Museum in Drumheller.

On the subject of "work": Thankfully, most Late Cretaceous dino and other vertebrate material is of manageable size. Specimens can usually be squeezed into a daypack. Thank goodness we don't have sauropods. Most vertebrae and foot phalanges are no more than couple of inches across and a handfull of dino teeth is no bigger than a handfull of jelly beans.

More wandering. I pick up a minuscule, spade-shaped *Ankylosaur* (armored dino) tooth. Then a theropod metatarsal end. What's that? About 100 feet below me is a light colored chunk of bone. I scramble down, clinging to sagebrush and junipers. I pick up the "chunk" like I have dozens of pieces this day. The enigmatic bone takes shape as I turn it in my hand. Yes! Maybe it is. I find 2 more pieces that snugly fit into the first. The final product is about 5 inches in

diameter. Eureka! The cranial dome of a *Stegoceras* (not *Stegosaurus*), a head-butting dinosaur. This is a new find for me.

The rest of the afternoon is more up and down coverage of the hoodoos. Somehow the 90 degree temperature doesn't seem so hot, and my legs feel more energetic knowing I have a good specimen in my pack. A false alarm. What at first looks like a good find from a distance proves to be a jumble of buffalo bones. A young snake shakes his rattle to remind me that the bones are his territory. More wandering. More finds. A smashed but apparently complete vertebra of an *Ornithomimus* may prove glueable. A recurved *Albertosaurus* tooth, a *Hadrosaur* phalanx *toe bone(and an "I'm not sure what it is so I better keep it" finish off my finds.

A long walk to my bike and a leisurely ride back to camp leave this day's collecting behind. Wild flowers, butterflies and a blue Alberta sky add some welcome color to a day searching for vertebrate treasures in drab Cretaceous clays. Back at camp I trade my rock hammer for binoculars and do some bird watching along the Red Deer River. A mule deer clatters through the wolfwillows and, on the opposite bank, three female pronghorns have come wearily to the river's edge for water. I see catbirds, a hairy woodpecker, a curlew and a kestrel. A family of gophers tumble in play. My mind returns to dinosaurs as I look across the Red Deer and think of the early bone hunters, such as Barnum Brown and Charles Sternberg, who floated past this very spot on early expeditions.

Cottonwood branches crackle as I add them to my evening campfire. Although I don't see him, I know the big coyote is keeping a watchful eye on me. He and his canine friends will serenade me throughout the night with their yelps and howls. The coyote won't be satisfied until I leave his territory in the morning. I won't be leaving the Badlands, however. I'll be driving a hundred miles north and going back in time to the younger, 65-million-year-old Scollard Formation. The Scollard spans the K-T extinction line and holds the remains of the most famous dinosaur, *Tyrannosaurus Rex*. Something to dream about as I stare into the flames.

LIFE OF THE NIAGARA ESCARPMENT

by Arline D. Buehler, Saginaw, Michigan

The Niagara Escarpment is a famous North American upland, formed from reefs in warm Silurian Seas. It is probably best known as the erosion-resistant rock mass over which the Niagara River thunders on its way to the Atlantic Ocean, forming the Niagara Falls. This long, curving escarpment extends all the way from

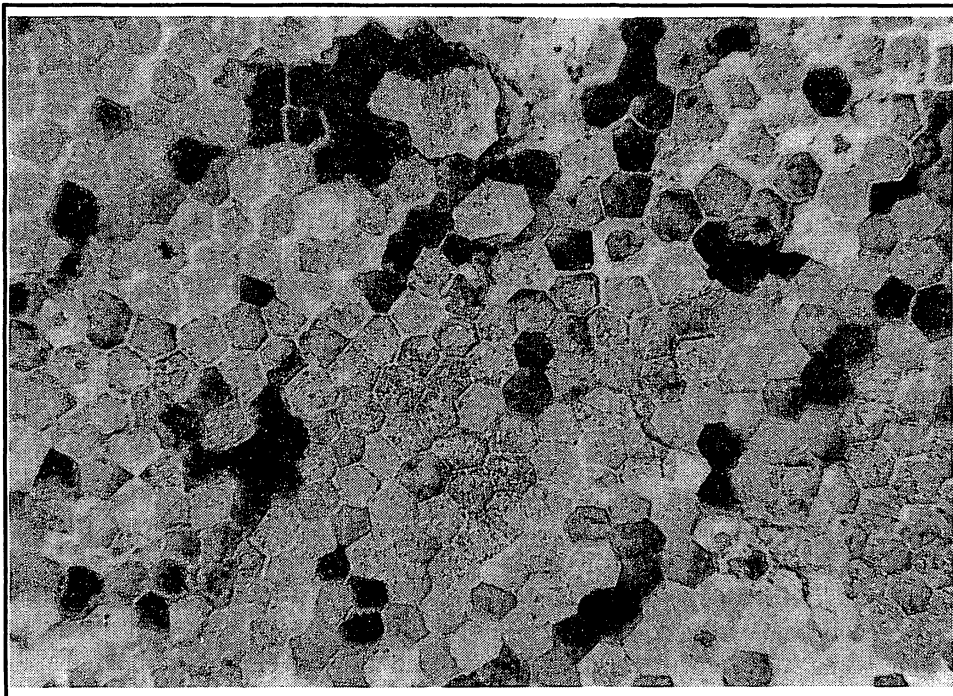
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, through Michigan's Upper Peninsula, across Ontario, and nearly to Rochester, New York.

It is the lovely silicified fossils of the Cordell Dolomite, a member of the Manistique Group, that will be treated here. The type locality is a small quarry at Cordell, Michigan, abandoned for many years. The majority of the specimens here, however, were collected from ledges outcropping on the outer slopes of the escarpment. Some of the finest individuals are found just lying around, having been moved by many years of rain, snow, and frost.

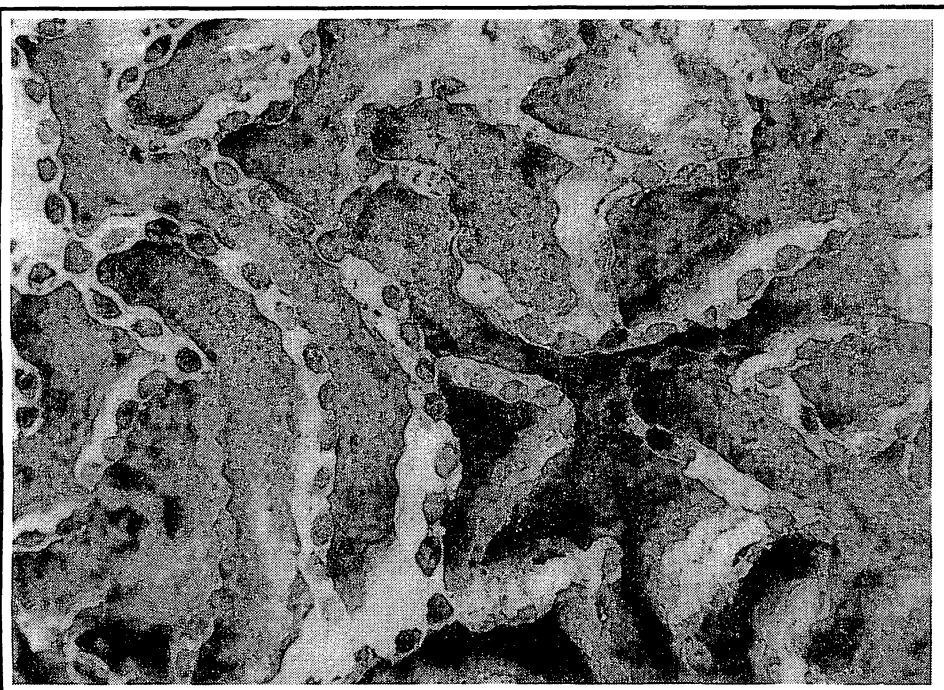
The corals, silicified at some point, and later etched out of the matrix,

are most sought. The several species of *Halysites*, including the *catenularis*, the *Parva*, and the *Labyrinthicus* (Goldfuss), plus the closely related *Catenipoa huronensis* (Teichert) are treasured.

Favosites favosus (Goldfuss) is but one of this genus



Favosites favosus (Goldfuss) x3



Halysites labyrinthicus (Goldfuss) x3

that includes *Favosites obliquus* Rominger, *Favosites helderbergiae*, and *Favosites winchelli*. Still other examples have not been identified, as is true of all fossils of this area.

Syringapora verticillata Goldfuss is the most common of this genus. Also included is *Syringapora hisinger*, collected near Trout Lake.

Other Tabulate corals include the *Cladopora ? lalquaeta* Rominger, *Romingerella major* (Rominger), *Coenites crassus* Rominger, *Thecia major*, and *Thecia minor*.

The Subclass Tetracoralla is represented by *Arachnophyllum*

striatum (D'Orbigay) and *Arachnophyllum pentagonum* (Goldfuss). Another species with extremely large corallites has not been identified.

½ inch in length, it is usually found weathered free of matrix.



Arachnophyllum striatum (D'Orbigay) x3

The several species of the brachiopod *Pentamerus sp.* Are found in all formations. They are sometimes found in huge boulders.

The most widely sought and studied are the nautiloid cephalopods. This unique *Huronia*, with the siphuncle resembling the backbone of an animal is names *Huronia vertebrales* Stokes. Others of the genus are *Huronia annulata* Hall and *Huronia bigsbyi* Stokes. Another is *Armenoceros gouldense* Foerste. The *Huronia vertebrales* was collected at Scott Quarry.

Why is this area so seldom collected? These areas are remote, wild, and populated only by bear and other wildlife. Small wonder it is often referred to as "Michigan Bad Lands."

Several horn corals include the *Dinophyllum ? umbonata* (Rominger), *Chonophyllum magnificus*, *Cystiphyllum miagarensis*. The delicate little *Streptelasma comulus* Rominger is a real gem. About

Dr. Carl Rominger made his extensive study of these fossils back in 1876. Thank you, Dr. Rominger.

References

Dorr & Eschman, *Geology of Michigan*. Pp. 312, 313.

Michigan Geological Society, *Silurian Rocks of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan*. Plates 8, 9, 10, & 11, with explanations.

Shimer and Shrock, *Index Fossils of North America*. Pp. 83, 85, 101, 105, 107, 553.

SCREENWASHING TECHNIQUES

a Letter to Phil Scoggins by Jim Wyatt
from *The Fossil Record*, Cliff Barnes, ed. 1/98

I have been screenwashing for Permian microvertebrates for over six years now. This is the technique I developed for washing:

1. Thoroughly dry all sediments prior to starting. This will facilitate the absorption of water by the clay particles, causing them to swell quickly and separate from bone or other matter with a low absorption rate.

2. Place sediments in a container and add enough water to just cover the top of the material you are going to wash. "Wet" the water; a drop or two of common dishwashing soap per gallon is more than enough to break the hydrostatic tension and allow the water to seek its lowest level. Pre-soak the matrix for several hours prior to washing.

ADVERTISING SECTION

Ads are \$5.00 per inch. Send information and checks payable to MAPS to : Mrs. Gerry Norris, 2623 34th Avenue Ct., Rock Island, IL 61201. Phone: (309) 786-6505
This space is a \$5.00 size.

To extend currently running ads, please send request and remittance to Editor by the 15th of the month. We do not bill. Ads do not run in the EXPO issue (April). Ads can be printed in different sizes of type to fit a 1" space.

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Our screenwasher has three tiers of screens and a bottom catch-pan. It is constructed of treated lumber and sealed with Thompson's water sealer. Construct three frames 2 x 3' in size with 1 x 4" white pine. Nail a 2 x 3' section of 1/2" hardware cloth on one side of the frame. Put a cross-brace in the middle along the shortest width, i.e., the depth of the frame. Repeat this using 1/4" hardware cloth on the next frame. On the last frame affix a section of good window screen. Then back it with 1/2" hardware cloth for support. Do not use a cross brace on this last frame as it will impede the drainage of water from the fine sediments that will collect in the bottom. Use the last frame and add legs onto it that are 4.5' and extend 12" over the top of the frame. Add cross braces below to strengthen the structure. Add two cross members to the top of the legs along the greatest length. The two frames with the hardware cloth can now be placed on top of the bottom frame to start washing sediments. This way they can be lifted and removed for cleaning. Place a catch pan underneath to collect the finest sediments for later washing. A deep plastic tub will work well.

3. Place one or two five gallon containers of material in the top screen. If the clay content is high, it is

suggested that a low pressure sprinkler is placed over the top and allowed to run for 30 minutes. If clay content is low, wash by hand with a low pressure water hose. This will allow delicate or partially articulated specimens to be recovered intact.

4. When the top screen is completely free of sediment, pick out specimens that did not wash through and discard the balance in an empty 5 gallon bucket. Remove screen and wash it. Repeat the process with the next screen, making sure to wash by hand only from this point on.

5. Set the washed specimens aside to dry and for further cleaning and sorting.

The sediment in the bottom frame must be dried and sorted under a low power scope to recover specimens. The sediments in the catch-pan must be further washed in micro screens and sorted under a high power microscope. Sometimes the sediments must be washed and dried repeatedly to remove all the clay from the sample. Only trial and error will tell you how your particular sample will behave.

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Cornell College
Mt. Vernon IA 52314
wk 319-895-4307
fx 319-895-4492

Geology Professor, Cornell College. Major interest corals.

Dr. Larry D. Martin
Dept. of Vert. Paleontology
Museum of Natural History
University of Kansas
Lawrence KS 66044

Vertebrate Paleontologist, U. of Kansas. Specialties: mammals, esp. cats, and birds and their relationship to reptiles. No private collection.

Don Megahan
9039 Slay St.
Dallas TX 75217
214-398-5752

Plant propagator. Will trade. Major interest brachiopods, Texas fossils in general. Has for trade Texas fossils--brachs (Penn.) and echinoids (Cret.). Member of Dallas Paleo Soc. Wants to expand fossil trading base.

Peter Messer
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Mequon WI 53092-4856
414-242-1116

Self-employed. Major interest invertebrate fossils of Midwestern US.

Barbara Roder
1907 Cholo
Mt. Prospect IL 60056
847-297-6472

Engineering Associate. Will not trade. Major interest trilobites, horn coral, crinoids. Member of ESCONI, Downers Grove, IL. Interested in fossil hunting locations, field trips, and fossil info in general.

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Marc & Barbara Behrendt
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Somerset OH 43783
740-743-2818
Fossilprep@aol.com

Fossil Preparator, Medical Technologist/Teacher. Will trade. Major interests Paleozoic fossils, especially trilobites. Enjoy collecting, sharing information and stories, visiting old and meeting new friends.

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615-246-4182
FosImage@aol.com

Charlotte Fox
Don Ackerman
23230 Lahser
Southfield MI 48034

High School science teacher. Will trade. Major interest vertebrates and all other macrofossils. Have for trade some Montana Cret. clams; Arkana, Canada, Dev. corals and brachiopods and other misc. Member PRI and Fossil Study Group of Mid Michigan Lapidary Society of Dearborn (MMLSD). Want exchange of info, access to fossil/sites, meet other collectors, & increase knowledge.

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Kathleen Morner
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773-784-5321

Barry Sutton
1704 Christine Dr.
St. Charles MO 63303-4014

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Membership in MAPS is open to anyone, anywhere who is sincerely interested in fossils and the aims of the Society.

Membership fee: One year from month of payment is \$20.00 per household. Institution or Library fee is \$25.00. Overseas fee is \$20.00 with Surface Mailing of DIGESTS OR \$30.00 with Air Mailing of DIGESTS. (Payments other than those stated will be pro-rated.)

MAPS meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of October, November, January, and March and at EXPO in April. A picnic is held during the summer. October through March meetings are scheduled for 1 p.m. in Trowbridge Hall, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. One annual International Fossil Exposition is held in April.

MAPS official publication, MAPS DIGEST, is published 9 months of the year—October through April, May/June, July/August/September.

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