

TEXAS FOSSIL COLLECTING REPORT

SEPTEMBER, 2007

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September 2, 2007: Glen Rose Pit Stop

After a day of fun but unsuccessful wild hog hunting on a relative's property in Kendall Co. I made a quick stop at a small exposure of Upper Glen Rose formation (108 MYA) limestone and marl. I targeted the recessive, undercut layer of soft gray marl between the harder layers and plucked out a handful of decent regular echinoids *Loriolia rosana* in about 45 minutes. On the way back at the foot of the exposure was a nickel sized *Coenholectypus* echinoid, slightly compressed but intact. These specimens were recently exposed by Tropical Storm Erin. Content with my finds I headed home for some family time.





FIGS 1-3: Glen Rose fm echinoids *Loriolia rosana* followed by *Coenholectypus planatus* (Site 170)

September 8, 2007: South TX Mixed Bag

As detailed in a separate report I rounded up my wife and boy and headed down to the coast for some fun and productive bay fishing, but when we got low on bait and temperatures rose we opted to head back to San Antonio early. I seized the opportunity to take Weston with me for a quick look at the Corsicana formation (68 MYA).

Our first stop turned out to already be occupied by a party of dove hunters, so outgunned I opted for plan B, a nearby exposure of the same strata. Here Weston and I crawled around some fringe areas and picked up a couple dozen echinoids *Hemiaster bexari* and one *Proraster dalli*, and various gastropods before moving on to explore another area. The other area is new construction that has had enough time to weather properly. The only problem is that it is too high in section. Deep in a ravine I was able to find a small finger of "the zone", a marly tan layer of abundant fossils sandwiched between harder orange limestone above and a dense bed of oysters *Pycnodonte mutabilis* below. I grabbed a few *H. bexari* echinoids, a decent *Neithea bexarensis* scallop and saw a couple "Explod-i-cancer" crabs that had sat out too long, but otherwise we drew a blank.



FIG 4: Corsicana fm echinoids *Proraster dalli* top right, remainder *Hemiaster bexari* (Site 348)



FIG 5: Corsicana fm bivalves and gastropods (Site 348)

I took Weston to a nearby playground and some older kids recognized my tool apron and knee pads and pegged me for a fossil hunter. I talked with them for a while and gave them some echinoids and rough crab. They went nuts picking up the big oysters lying around that I showed them and as we were leaving they had more than they could carry. Maybe their garage will soon look like mine.



FIG 6: Corsicana fm scallop *Neithea bexarensis* and echinoid *H. bexari* (Site 408)

September 29, 2007: I've Met the Competition

I took a few weekends to hunt wild hogs and saltwater fish in September, opting to boat one of my favorite and most remote stretches of Pleistocene river collecting late in the month. I selected a new stretch of river and began exploring at daylight, with several miles producing no artifacts, bones or teeth. I did see a cool petrified log jutting out of the bank. This was certainly worth a snapshot but it looked like that log was there to stay. I quickly made up my mind to relocate to another more productive stretch of river an hour or so away.





FIGS 7-8: Petrified and partially carbonized log, perhaps burned?, possibly Yegua formation (Eocene)

After deploying my trusty little jon boat I ran several miles upstream and then began canvassing gravel bars and cut banks on the way back downstream. I was shocked to see fresh footprints in the sand systematically crisscrossing the first bar. My finds were considerably less than expected, so I assumed somebody had figured out the same gig as I had and beaten me to the punch. Still I picked up a good horse molar at the first bar and then looked in a low spot where the other guy hadn't bothered and pulled out half of a mammoth atlas (first cervical) vertebra. Too bad it wasn't whole.



FIG 9: (L-R) Large wrist bone, pelvic acetabulum, soft shell turtle fragment *Apalone*, horse medial phalanx, half atlas vertebra, possibly deer (Site 379)





FIGS 10-13: Half mammoth atlas (first cervical) vertebra with fossil gastropod in gravel wedged in fossa above, horse molar and turtle carapace fragment below (Site 382)









FIGS 14-18: Miscellaneous bone fragments above (Site 381), horse tooth, mammoth enamel fragment, turtle shell fragments, vertebrae, wrist bone, and ribs below (Site 380)

This pattern of preemptive footprints continued as I headed downstream. Finally I found a couple bars printed only by cows and began finding some decent vertebrae, ribs, chunks of turtle shell, etc. I was curious who my worthy competitor was. The footprints were fresh enough that I figured I could run downstream and meet him. High tailing it to my favorite gravel bar I coincidentally bumped into the guy as he was heading back upstream in his canoe and landing on the same bar. Apparently he had done a 2 day canoe trip, camping on the river. He had hit all the bars for the next 6 miles downstream, blowing a hole in my planned itinerary and grabbing a half a mammoth tooth in the process. He seemed like a nice enough guy so we talked a little as we worked the bar. We picked up lots of verts, a few horse teeth, some chunks of land tortoise shell and miscellaneous bones but he got 2 more half mammoth teeth, my Holy Grail, while I found none. I lucked into my second ever ground sloth claw core which left him slobbering as well.







FIGS 19-23: Rare ground sloth claw core *Nothrotheriops texanus* (Site 308)







FIGS 24-26: Unidentified vertebra in sandstone matrix (Site 308)









FIGS 27-31: Land tortoise *Geochelone* shell fragments, note fragment in matrix before and after partial prep (Site 308)





FIGS 32-34: Mammoth carpal bone above, unidentified phalanx and partial vertebra below (Site 308)







FIGS 35-37: Miscellaneous bone fragments (Site 308)

Parting company I ran back upstream and worked another bar that I had run past earlier, grabbing a few bones, a big piece of mammoth enamel, and a horse tooth before heading back upstream and yanking my boat back up the bank before dark. I couldn't believe how good a canoeist this guy was. I thought I left him miles behind and when I was leaving one bar I looked back and saw him rounding the corner steaming upstream...now I've met formidable competition in a very remote area. The Texas outback just got a lot smaller. There were certainly enough good finds in my bucket to justify my drive, but if I had only gotten there first....







FIGS 38-40: Unidentified vertebra (Site 383)



FIG 41: Miscellaneous bone fragments (Site 308)



FIGS 42-43: Horse tooth and one plate of mammoth tooth (Site 383)





FIGS 44-45: Miscellaneous bone and turtle/tortoise shell fragments (Site 383)