

Fossil Collecting Report  
February, 2009  
Daniel A. Woehr and Friends and Family

February 8, 2009: 4 Man Creek Stomp

To make a long story short, 4 of us guys got together to walk 4 miles of Pleistocene exposures along an undisclosed creek on a Sunday afternoon. The ongoing drought continues to hex us. I picked up a piece of Pleistocene turtle plastron, but there were not any major finds in terms of bones or Indian artifacts. However friendships were cemented and the exercise and fresh air benefited us all.



**FIG 1:** Fragment of a Pleistocene turtle plastron (Site 492)

February 14, 2009: Valentine's Day with Boy Weston

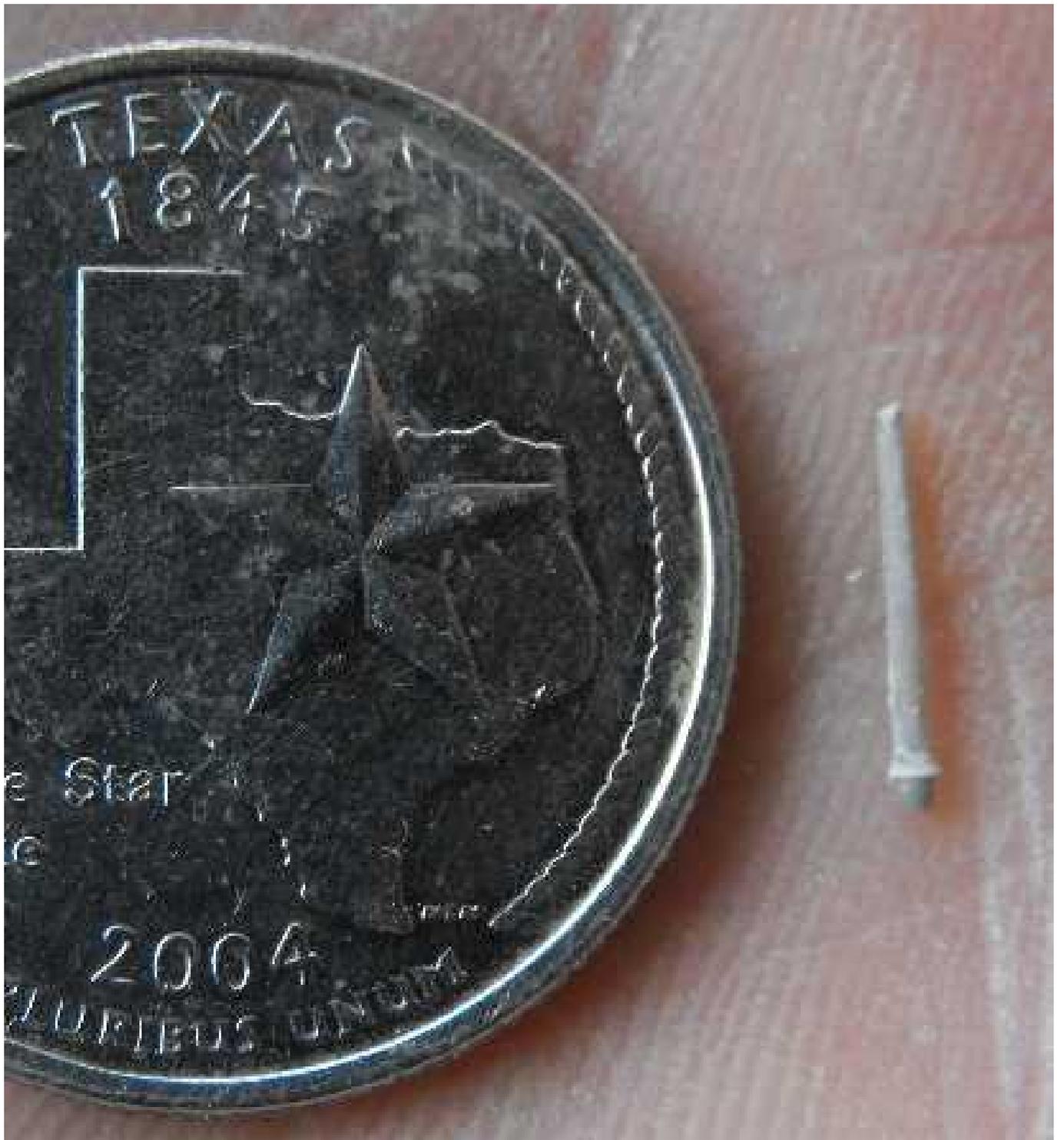
The boy and I kicked off our weekend by spending the night outside in his fort, cooking dinner outside on a propane burner and then whipping up a chuckwagon breakfast in the morning. Our

bellies full, we jumped in the car and headed north of San Antonio for a little poking around in Glen Rose formation for 108 million year old marine fossils. ¼ inch of rain the previous week wasn't substantial, but just enough to make me want to have a look around some familiar exposures.

At the first site Weston and I crawled around shoulder to shoulder until he got cold, then he'd take sporadic warm up breaks in the car. I kept doing the belly flop and in the end accumulated an impressive take that filled half of a 35 mm film canister. I was quite happy to take home 14 micro echinoids including 2 *Globator hancockensis* and the remainder various forms of *Salenia*. I also grabbed a couple nice crab claws, mostly isolated hermit crab fingers *Paleopagurus banderensis* but also a cool claw with both fingers intact comprising a genus I've never collected before. I took many crinoid column segments *Isocrinus annulatus* as did Weston, but perhaps my most significant find was a small, partial tooth similar in form to *Polyacrodus* – a very welcome find that still has the shark and fish tooth experts out there in a quandary.



**FIGS 2-3:** Two *Globator hancockensis* and the remainder *Salenia* sp. echinoids this page, echinoid spine following page, probably also *Salenia* (Site 161)





**FIGS 4-7:** Unidentified fish or shark tooth similar in form to *Polyacrodus* (Site 161)





**FIGS 8-10:** *Isocrinus annulatus* crinoid columnals this page, isolated crab claw fingers *Paleopagurus banderensis* and unidentified intact claw next page, unidentified bivalve next page (Site 161)





With my knees pretty well shot it was time for a car ride and a look at yet another site. Recent construction disturbance followed by the light rain were all it took to spell success at this small site in the *Salenia texana* horizon. Weston enjoyed picking up huge gastropods and bivalves while I crawled a small ditch and laid hands on a spectacular *Tetragramma texanaum* echinoid which anchored my visit to the site. The next 15 minutes produced several *S. texana* echinoids, and we decided to quit while we were way ahead and head back to the house. Good times were had by us both and we enjoyed the leisurely approach to the day.



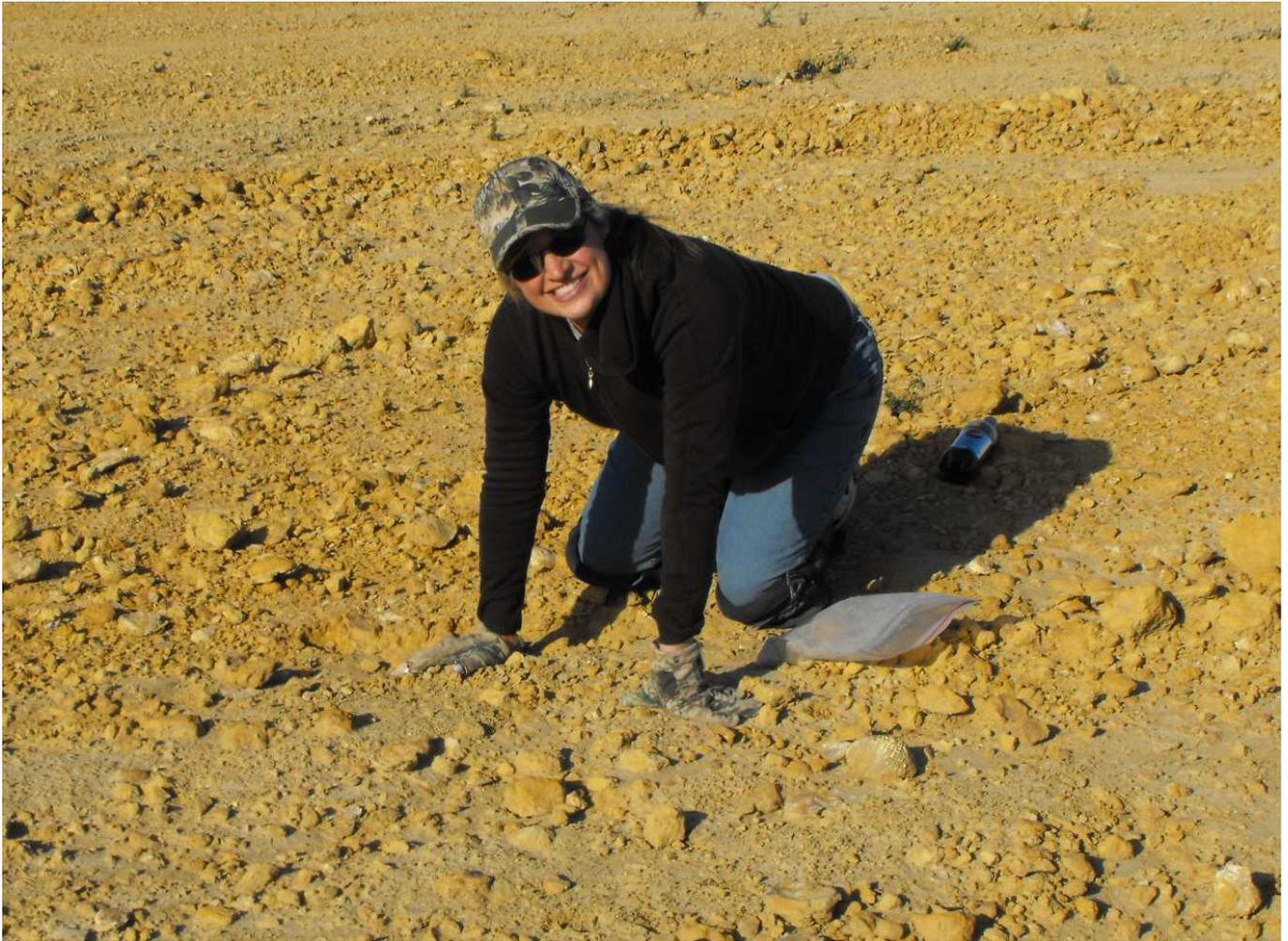
**FIGS 11-12:** Glen Rose echinoids, clockwise from left, *Heteraster obliquatus*, *Tetragramma texanum*, *Salenia texana* (Site 445)

February 21, 2009: Dan's "Take a Hottie Collecting" Initiative

I'm known to be a bit miserly with my better site information, and for good reason. When I want to take special people out into the field, I hope to show them slam dunk success. My son Weston enjoys this experience quite often. So have several of my collecting buddies. Then every now and then somebody who you'd really like to impress asks for a day in the field. So

when my “high school reunion sweetheart” came to town last weekend curious about this thrill of discovery I so enjoy, it was my job to indulge her with the best sites I had to offer.

Fortunately we got a little rain the week before, perhaps ¼ inch. Again, not the deluge of Biblical proportions I had hoped would scour the site, but enough to stir the surface a bit. Rene’ and I arrived at my favorite site in the Corsicana formation (68 MYA) a couple hours before dusk, slapped on some knee pads, and got to work.



**FIGS 13-14:** A lovely Ms. Rene’ getting down and dirty in the Corsicana formation this page, distracting her guide next page (Site 349)





**FIGS 15-16:** A fresh break from the author's grubby fingernails: Ms. Rene' points out an in situ a *Hemiaster bexari* echinoid this page and a *Dakoticancer australis* crab next page (Site 349)





**FIG 17:** Ms. Rene' posing with a few of her echinoid finds, namely *Hemiaster bexari* and a rare *Linthia variabilis* (Site 349)

I seized the opportunity to crawl around shoulder to shoulder with her, spotting partially hidden echinoids and helping her to see them for herself. She bagged several nice *Hemiaster bexari* specimens and then made me proud by landing a scarce *Linthia variabilis* echinoid “all by herself”, a species that many serious Texas echinoid collectors do not have in their collections.

Rene’ soon found the thrill of discovery addictive. Between echinoid finds she grabbed many nice gastropods, bivalves, and oysters. I made sure that I took her to a site so filthy with fossils that they were underfoot with each step. At one point I saw a crab claw poking above the ground and called her over for a look. Digging around with my screwdriver we revealed a nice crab carapace *Dakoticancer australis*. This fine specimen will end up in her little collection. Minutes later I landed yet another crab.



**FIGS 18-20:** *Hemiaster bexari* echinoids this and next frame followed by *Plesiaster americanus* and *Linthia variabilis* (Site 349)



*Pisaster americanus*

*Linthia variabilis*



**FIGS 21-23:** Crab carapace *Dakoticancer australis* this and next two frames (Site 349)







**FIGS 24-25:** Crab carapace *Dakoticancer australis* followed by *Pachydiscus* sp. ammonite, *Baculites* sp. fragments, and a branching bryozoan (Site 349)



**FIG 26:** Bivalves *Lima acutilineata*, *Trigonia castrovillensis*, *Plicatula mullicaensis*, *Neithea bexarensis* (Site 349)



**FIG 27:** Gastropods *Turritella vertebroides*, *Anchura* sp., *Gyrodes* sp., and others (Site 349)



**FIG 28:** Oysters *Exogyra cancellata* (Site 349)

She admitted to being disappointed that it got dark on us before she had had enough. Perhaps I can talk her into coming back out again for another look? After dropping her off at the airport I returned to the site and mopped up what we had missed. How could I have found so much more material working the exact same area that we had worked together????.....clearly I must have been distracted!

February 28, 2009: A West Texas Wintertime Desert Paleo ManVenture

I had a few excursions in mind late in the week, but the windy cold front that blew in Friday night taking temperatures from 90F down to 34F forced me to revamp my weekend last minute. I talked my friend Bill Morgan into joining forces with Weston and me around 6 a.m. for a 300 mile drive west of San Antonio to scour a particular mountain for fossils. It wasn't a tough sell. Weston whined and moaned about the long car ride the whole way out, but once he was free to stretch his little legs, throw rocks, and look at the various cacti he was thanking me for bringing him along.



**FIGS 29-30:** A West Texas mountain ranging from Walnut formation at the bottom, overlain by the Levinson member of the Boracho formation which is in turn overlain by the San Martine member of the Boracho formation and then capped by a massive limestone possibly equivalent to the Mainstreet member of the Georgetown formation (Site 460)



**FIGS 31-35:** Weston kicking around in the Walnut formation while gracing iconic Texas panoramic vistas of oil wells, mesas, and cacti (Site 460)







We kicked things off on a low flat in the Walnut formation (105 MYA) and it was a game of hands and knees crawling. I uncovered an 8 inch *Oxytropidoceras* ammonite but it was so thin that it is shattered in the ground. Soon a couple round objects caught my eye...two small *Coenholectypus* echinoids then made it into my tool apron. Over the next couple of hours I had a total of 20, plus a couple very nice *Heteraster* echinoids, and even young Weston got into the act by scoring a superlative *Coenholectypus* specimen smaller than a dime. His focus however was on the abundance of hematite (iron ore) nodules scattered about, and his quest was to take all the biggest and the best specimens.



**FIGS 36-37:** The author rummaging around for *Coenholectypus* echinoids in the Walnut formation (Site 460)





**FIG 38:** Weston exploring a wash revealing an oyster bed in hard Walnut limestone (Site 460)



**FIGS 39-46:** Weston proudly displaying his first *Coenholectypus* echinoid this and next page followed by the Old Man's clutch of *Coenholectypus* next 6 frames (Site 460)











**FIG 47:** *Heteraster* echinoids from the Walnut formation (Site 460)

Working our way over to the mountain we ran into Bill again, and by this time he had several small *Macraster* echinoids to show from the Levinson member of the Boracho formation at the base of the mountain (Duck Creek formation equivalent, 103 MYA). Weston and I followed this trend around the other side of the mountain and produced several nice Macs of our own, with Weston again scoring a superb example of the genus. He also did a little random beating on cracked limestone nodules and took some nice *Lima*, *Protocardia*, *Cyprimeria*, *Neithea*, and *Trigonia* bivalves as well as some gastropods.



**FIGS 48-53:** *Macraster* echinoids from the Levinson member of the Boracho formation proudly displayed by Weston followed by Weston's *Trigonia* bivalve (Site 460)









**FIG 54:** Some sort of unidentified ichnofossil – left at the site as the author was too lazy to carry it back to the car (Site 460)

Broken ammonites were everywhere, and Weston called me back to show me what I had missed in the ditch we were walking down. Thinking it was just half of another broken ammonite I watched Weston wrest it from the ground....resistance suggested that there was more than met the eye....and when he popped it out, he had his first *Mortoniceras drakei*, and a nice one at that with beautiful and ornate sutures preserved. Then he noticed a big *Eopachydiscus marcianus* ammonite jutting out of the ground, and we bagged that thing too. The kid was on a roll.



**FIGS 55-56:** Young Weston reveling in the absolute freedom that only Man Time brings – scaling rocky slopes, pounding on rocks (Site 460)





**FIGS 57-59:** Weston posing with his first *Eopachydiscus marcianus* and *Mortoniceras drakei* ammonites this and next 2 pages (Site 460)





Mortoniceras drakei  
Boracho Formation Site 460



**FIGS 60-62:** The author's *Eopachydiscus marcianus* ammonite this and next 2 frames (Site 460)







**FIGS 63-64:** *Ammonites Mortoniaceras* sp. above, *Idiohamites fremonti* below (Site 460)



**FIGS 65-67:** *Tetragramma* sp. echinoid from the Levinson member of the Boracho formation this and next page (Site 460)



We realized we were in a hot spot and worked it hard. I grabbed a nice *Tetragramma* echinoid, also from the Levinson, and finally a nice *E. marcianus* free of matrix, and higher up the mountain, a *Mortoniceras* missing part of one whorl. *E. marcianus* is a state wide zonation marker which made it very easy to age the particular strata we were collecting.

Anything Weston wanted to keep, I made him carry up and down the mountain. This exercise was designed to teach him work ethic and also tire him out for the ride home! Well I think he learned something about work ethics at least...



**FIGS 68-69:** Bill Morgan's *Mortoniceras* ammonites (Site 460)

Bill took the other side of the mountain and landed 5 very nice *Mortoniceras* ammonites of his own, one a double in matrix. He also laid hands on some badly weathered yet still diagnostic echinoids *Goniopygus stocktonensis*. Good times. Nerdy times. Man times. We all had a blast, and Weston didn't squawk too much about the long ride home, his bag full of loot.....