Fossil and Artifact Collecting Report

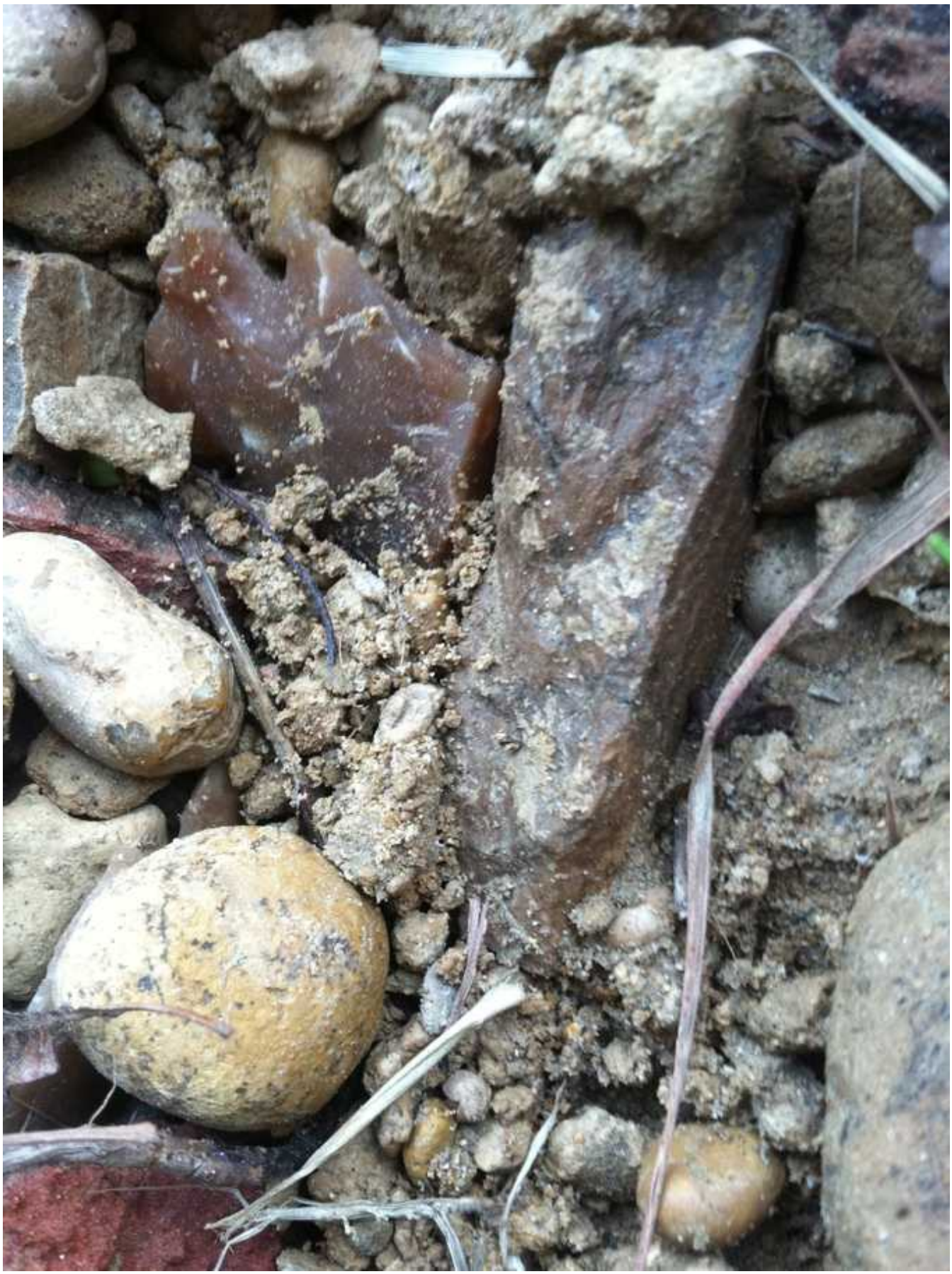
October 2012

Daniel A. Woehr and Family

October 2, 2012: Swineguard Bluff Revisited

The revisiting of the bluff was done by me alone this time, without the resident swine in attendance. At any rate, I made some time to plant feet on the Archaic Indian campsite (perhaps 3000 years old) that had been kind to me intermittently over the last few trips, and this quick trip ultimately ranked as one of the better visits.

Midden rock from ancient fires was once again strewn about, as were flint flakes, and while combing through downstream vegetation, my eye caught the form of the base of a notched chert blade amongst some chunks of midden rock. Content with that find, I nonchalantly grabbed another chunk of half buried midden rock and uprooted it, inadvertently flinging an otherwise hidden, complete red needle tip Frio point out in the open, the point making quite a dramatic and unexpected entrance!



FIGS 1-3: Base of a Williams point this and next 2 pages (Site 611)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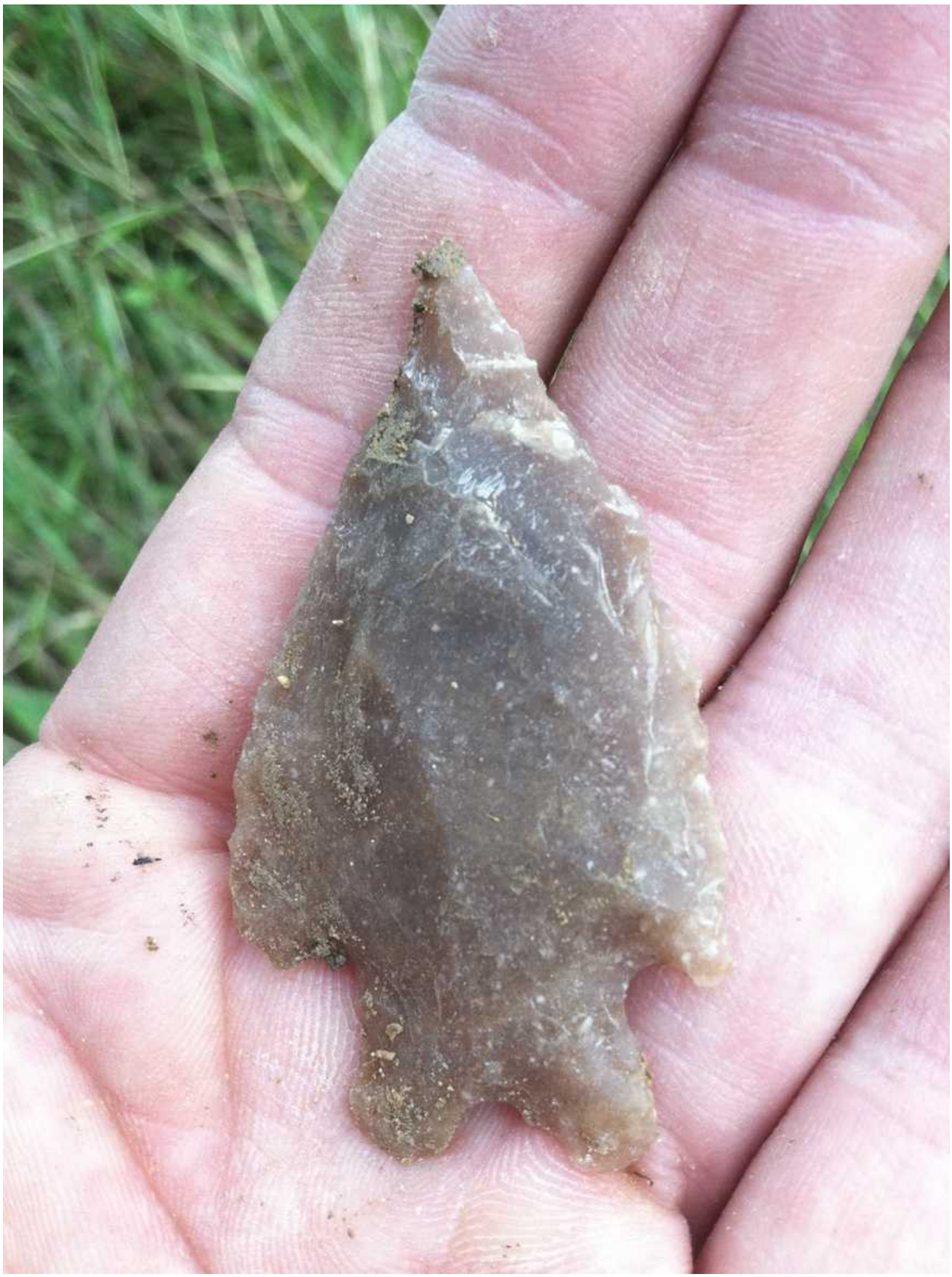

FIGS 4-6: Archaic aged Montell point this and next 2 pages (Site 611)


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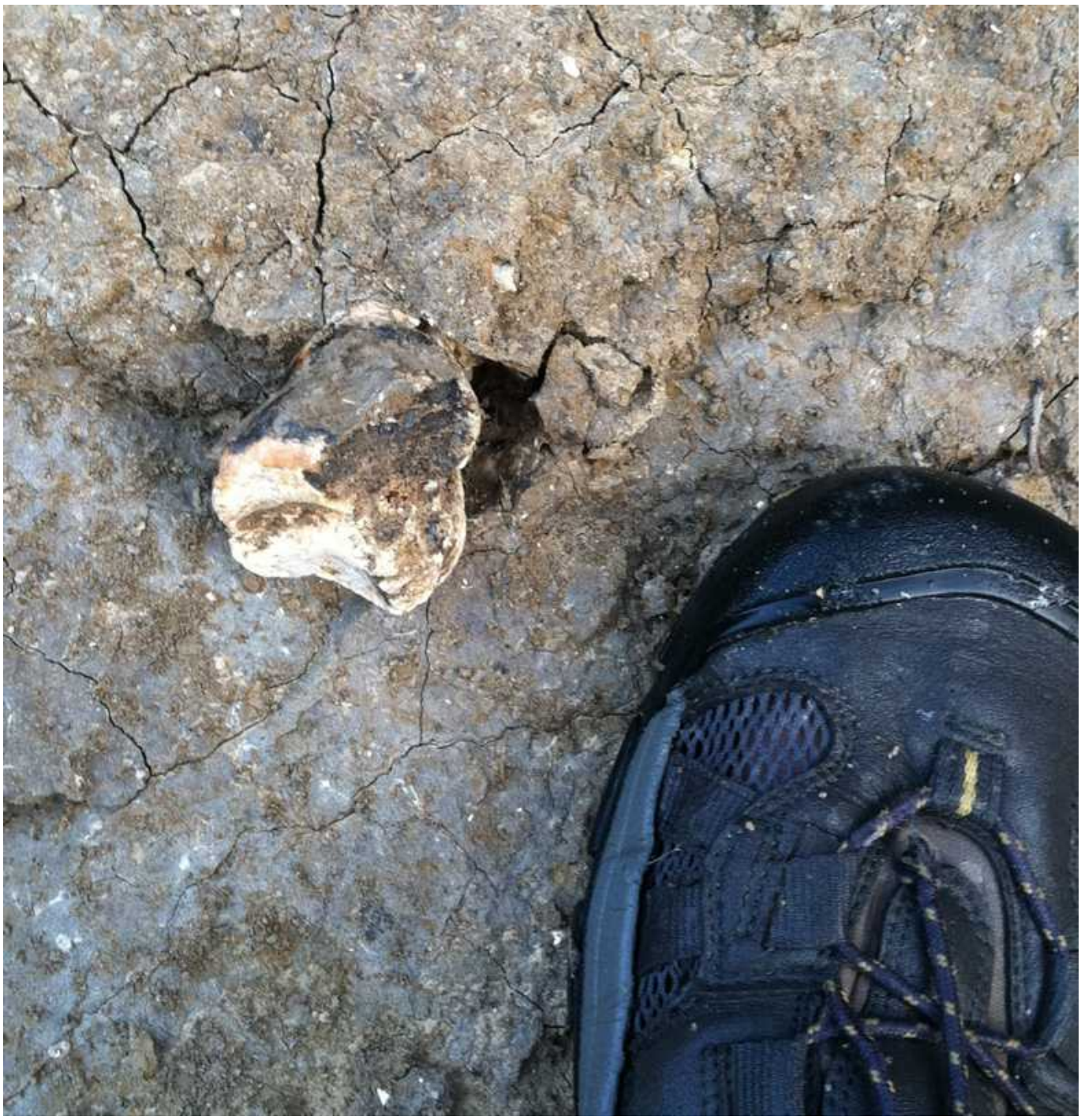
FIGS 7-8: Debitage this page, *Bison bison* phalanx in situ next page (Site 611)



Poking around downstream, I spotted what looked like a possible *Bison* phalanx jutting out of a hard packed silt bluff, and it came out in several pieces. Content with my finds, I quit while I was ahead and went about my day.

October 4, 2012: Corsicana with Preferred Company

Lovely Ms. Brett was able to join me this day on a field outing, once again to the Corsicana Formation (Maastrichtian, 68 MYA). This site had been her nemesis for quite some time, hiding its better fossils from her. With a little coaxing I talked her into a rematch, and despite diminishing returns at the site, she did quite well.

I'm pleased to report that Brett got her first *Dakoticancer australis* crab from the site, spotted first as a couple legs separated from the carapace, then a partial claw a few inches away, and the carapace was hiding in a marl

nodule scant inches away. We grabbed a few *Hemiaster bexari* echinoids, a nice little *Eutrephoceras* nautiloid, her cool little *Gyrodes petrosus* gastropod, one stunning *Striatocostatum bexarensis* gastropod, her little chunk of *Sphenodiscus* ammonite (good eye) and her cute little *Plicatula mullicaensis* bivalves.

FIGS 9-12: Ms. Brett's first Corsicana Formation crab *Dakoticancer australis* this and next 2 pages, followed by the author's singled tattered carapace found that day (Site 349)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FIGS 13-15: A nice *Eutrephoceras* nautiloid from the Corsicana Formation this and next 2 pages (Site 349)

FIG 16: Ms. Brett's keen eye picked up this fragment of a *Sphenodiscus* ammonite in the Corsicana Formation (Site 349)

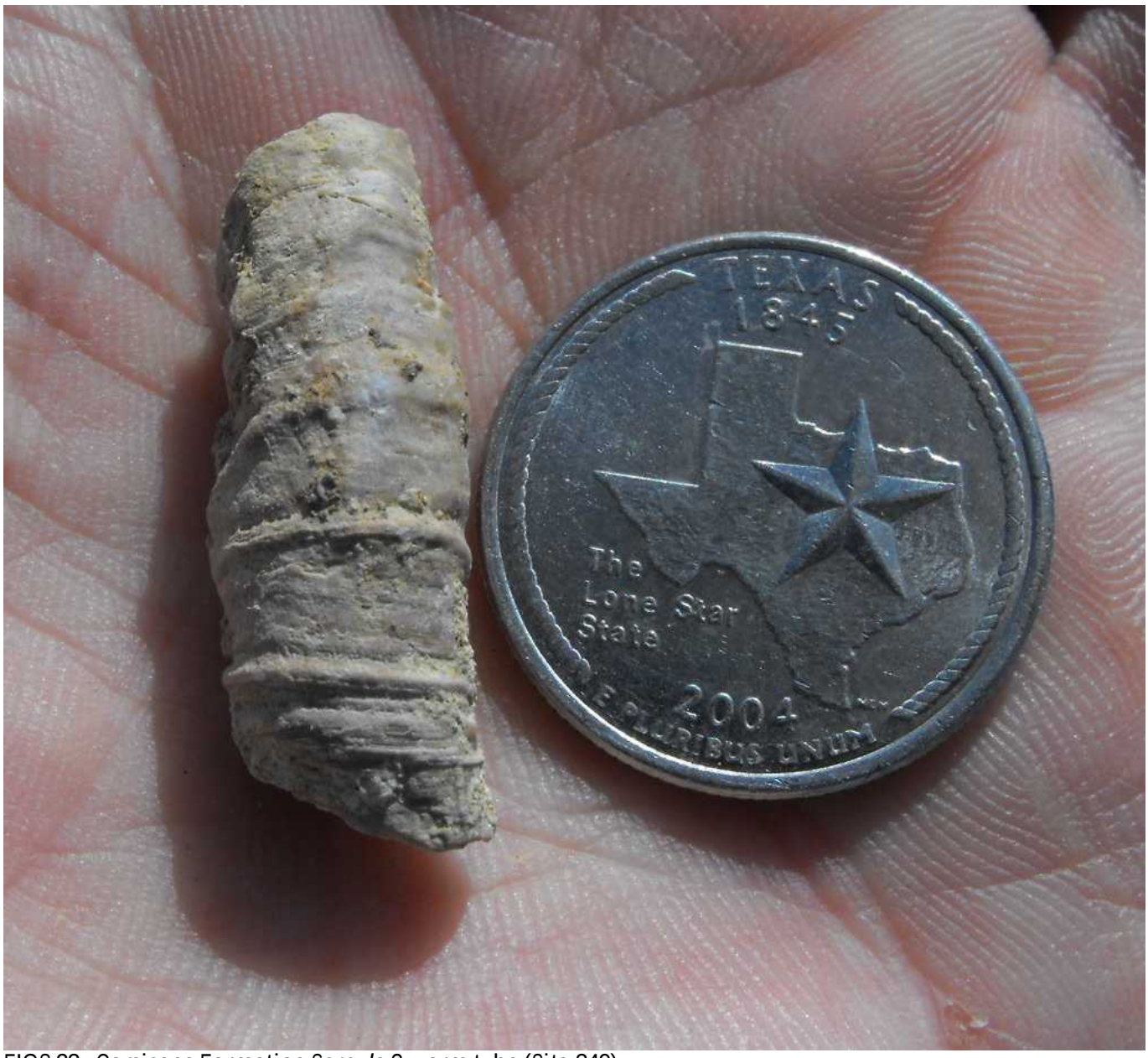
FIG 17: Ms. Brett's *Hemiaster bexari* echinoids from the Corsicana Formation (Site 349)

FIGS 18-19: Corsicana Formation echinoids *Hemiaster bexari* and gastropod *Striatocostatum bexarense* this and next page (Site 349)

FIGS 20: Corsicana Formation gastropods *Anchura, Gyrodes, Turritella, Bellifusus* and possibly others (Site 349)

FIGS 21: Corsicana Formation bivalve, possibly *Cyprimeria* (Site 349)

FIGS 22: Corsicana Formation bivalves including *Neithea bexarensis, Plicatula mullicaensis, Cyprimeria, Crassatella* and others (Site 349)



FIGS 23: Corsicana Formation *Serpula* ? worm tube (Site 349)

FIGS 24-26: Ms. Brett's ultra rare Corsicana Formation echinoid *Rachiosoma hondoensis* this and next 2 pages (Site 349)

But the final surprise came during the cleaning detail. Brett pocketed one of the most rare echinoids from the site, *Rachiosoma hondoensis*, a small regular echinoid studded with tubercles. I think results from this trip may stoke her interest in a return visit.

October 14, 2012: Washita on a Whim

Young Weston and I found ourselves with some time on our hands after church, so I decided it was time to buy some more fossil display cabinets, and we fired up the truck and headed north. Not one to spend fuel just on shopping, we hopped along a few temporary exposures of Georgetown Formation (100 MYA) coinciding with some road work. Sunday is a great day to visit construction exposures as unless the construction schedule is extremely busy, workers tend not to be present on Sundays.

Our first stop presented a few pyrite crystals and half an *Eopachydiscus marcianus* ammonite, indicating the basal Duck Creek member of the Georgetown Formation. We were hoping to target members higher in section, so we moved along.

Second stop produced a big pudding like mud puddle for Weston to throw rocks into and laugh at the splats while I surveyed nearby rock piles and bedded exposures. Exposed fossils in the gray layers were dusted with pyrite, and I picked up a few *Rastellum* oysters and *Neithea* scallops featuring this attractive preservation. But my best find was a nice *Macraster* echinoid from the gray marl, also dusted with pyrite.

FIGS 27-32: A beautiful pyritized *Macraster* echinoid from the Georgetown Formation this and next 5 pages (Site 628)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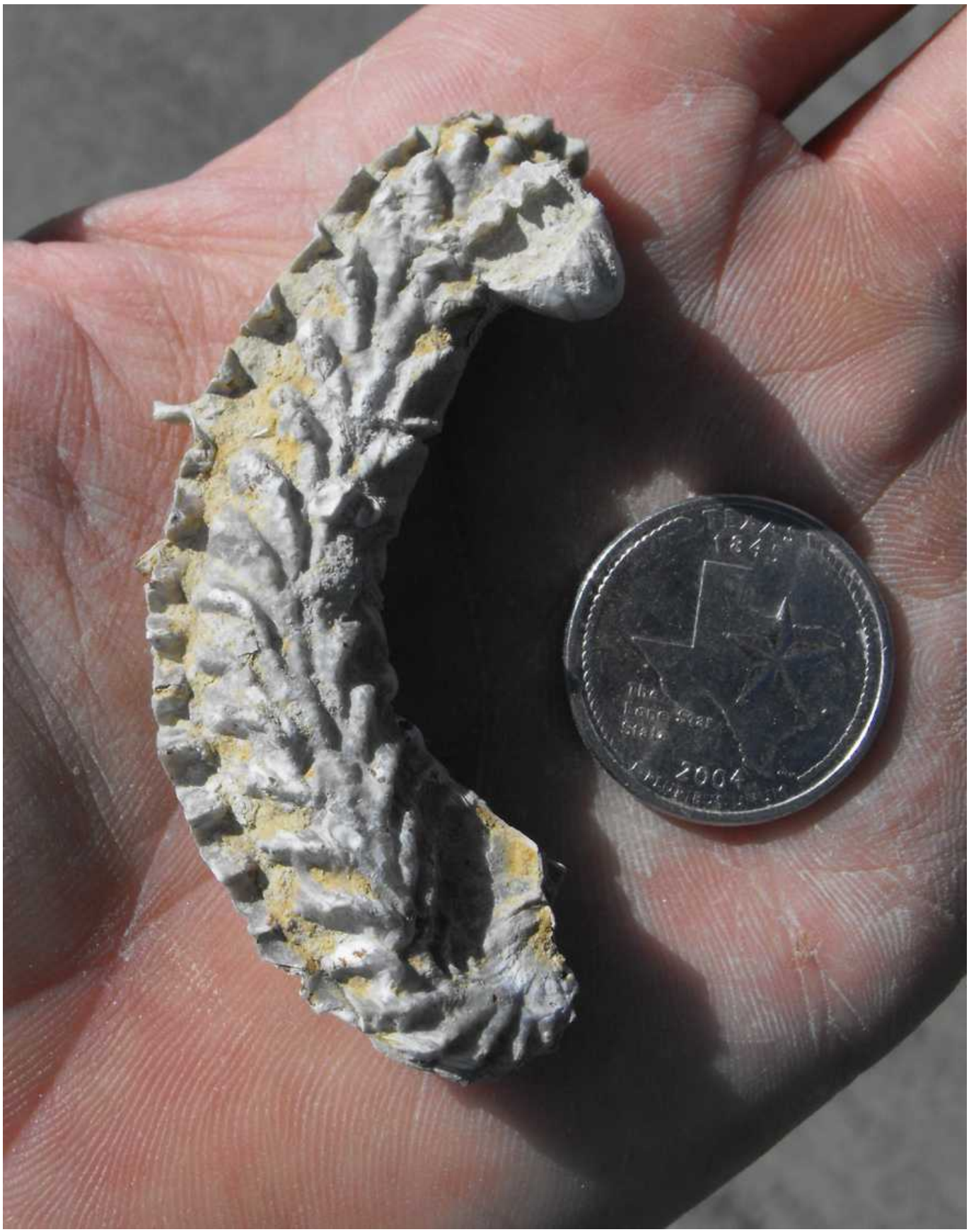
FIGS 33-34: Pyrite dusted Georgetown Formation *Gryphea* oyster piggy backing on a *Lima* bivalve this and next page (Site 628)

FIG 35: Pyrite encrusted Georgetown Formation *Neithea* scallop (Site 628)

FIGS 36-39: Georgetown Formation oysters *Rastellum carinatum* this and next 3 pages (Site 628)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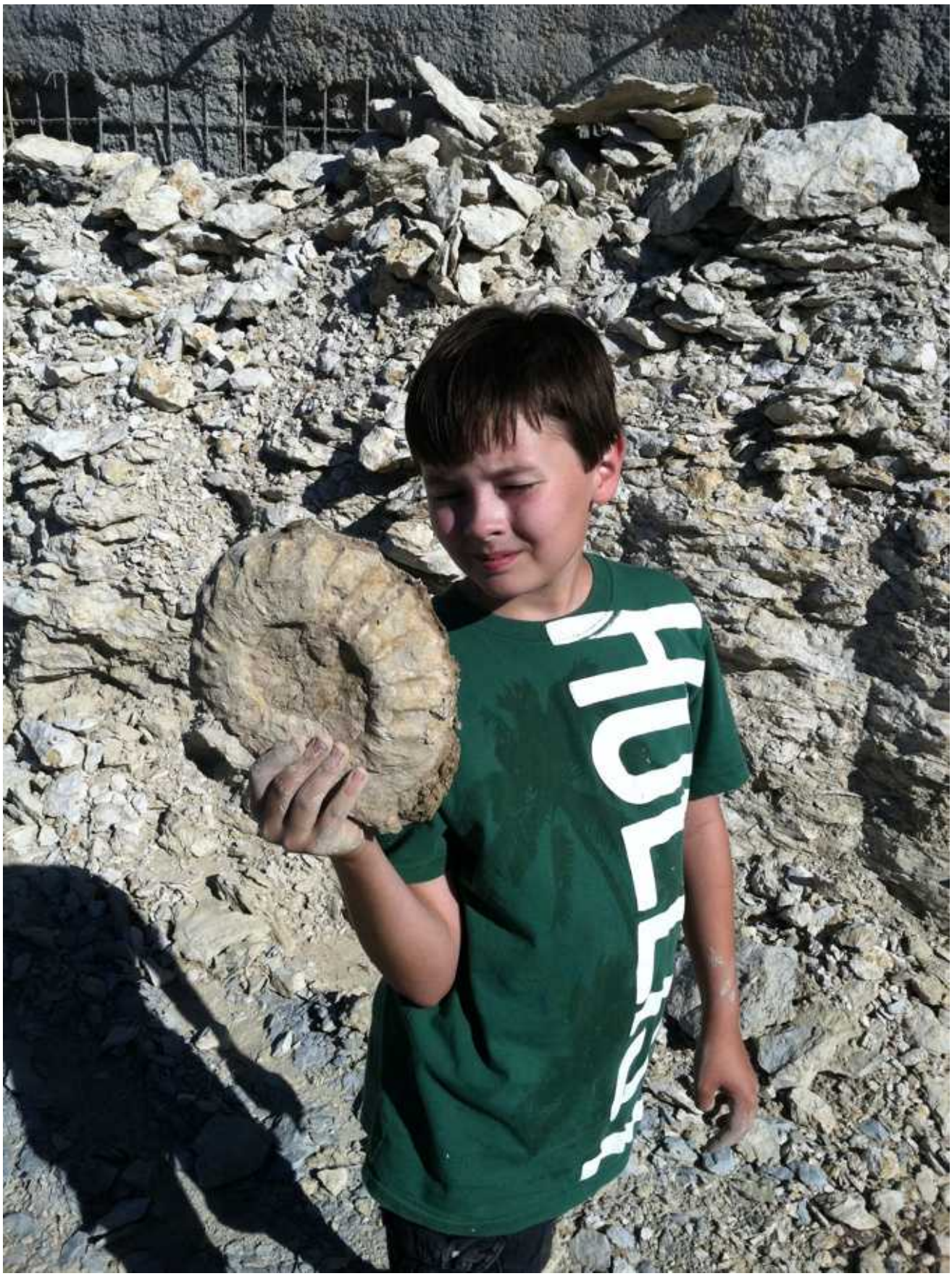
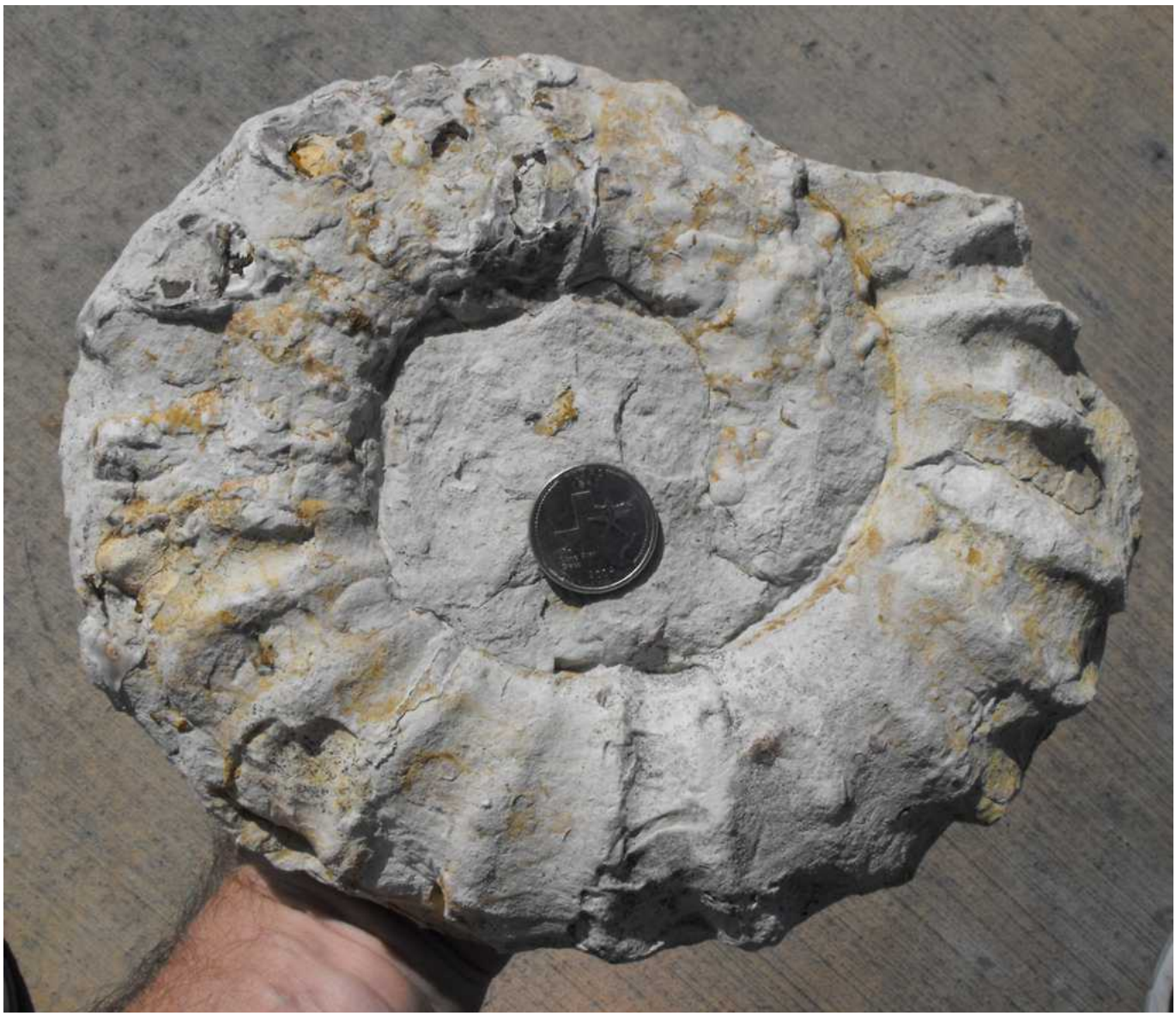
Moving on, the third site was large, but gave up little in fossil content, at least to me. I moved along quickly looking for concentrations of fossils while a more leisurely Weston lobbed rocks into a puddle closer to the truck, in the process spotting two *Mortoniceras* ammonites, the second one being the largest and best preserved of the day…you go, boy!



FIGS 40-44: Weston's Georgetown Formation *Mortoniceras* ammonites this and next 4 pages (Site 629)

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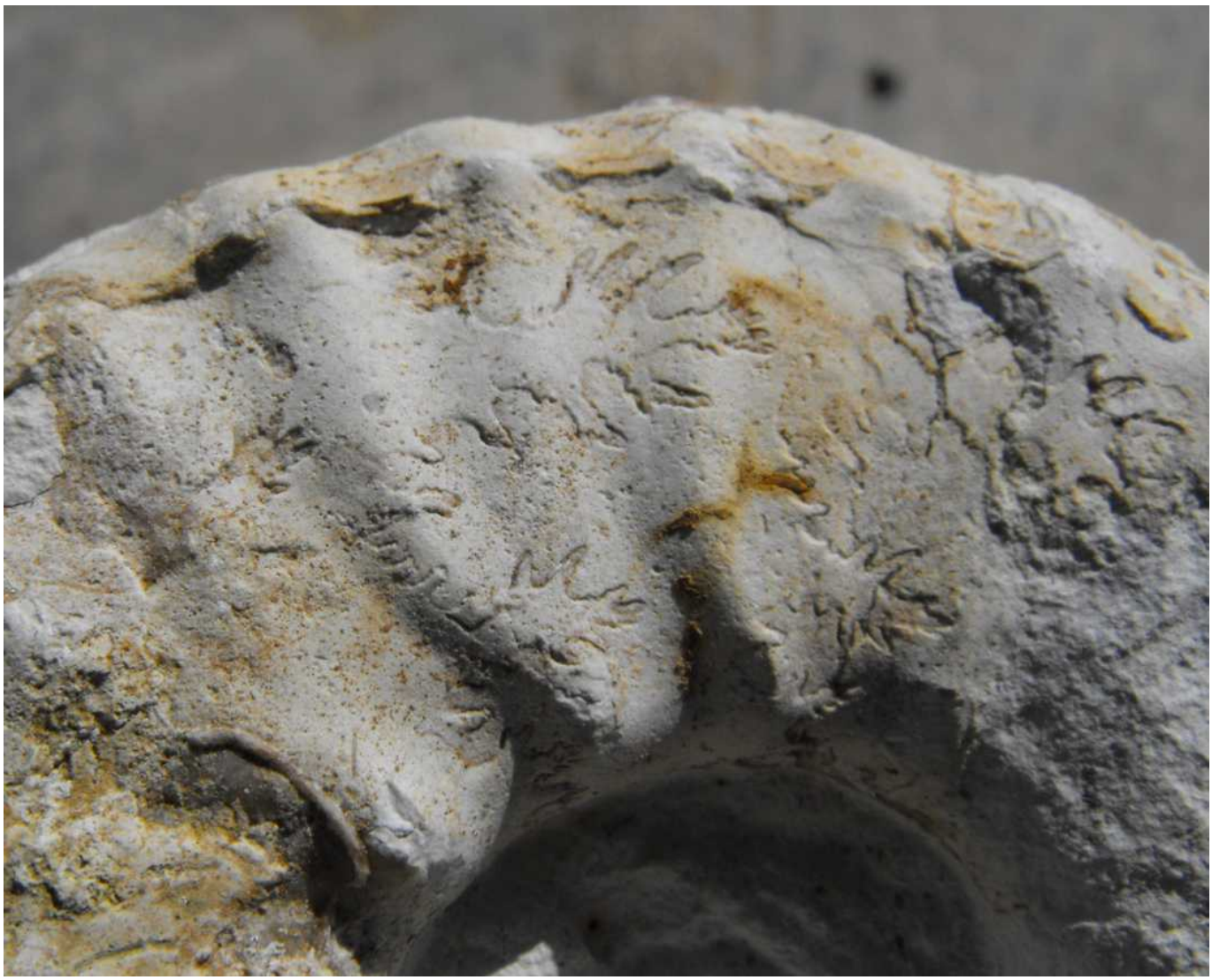
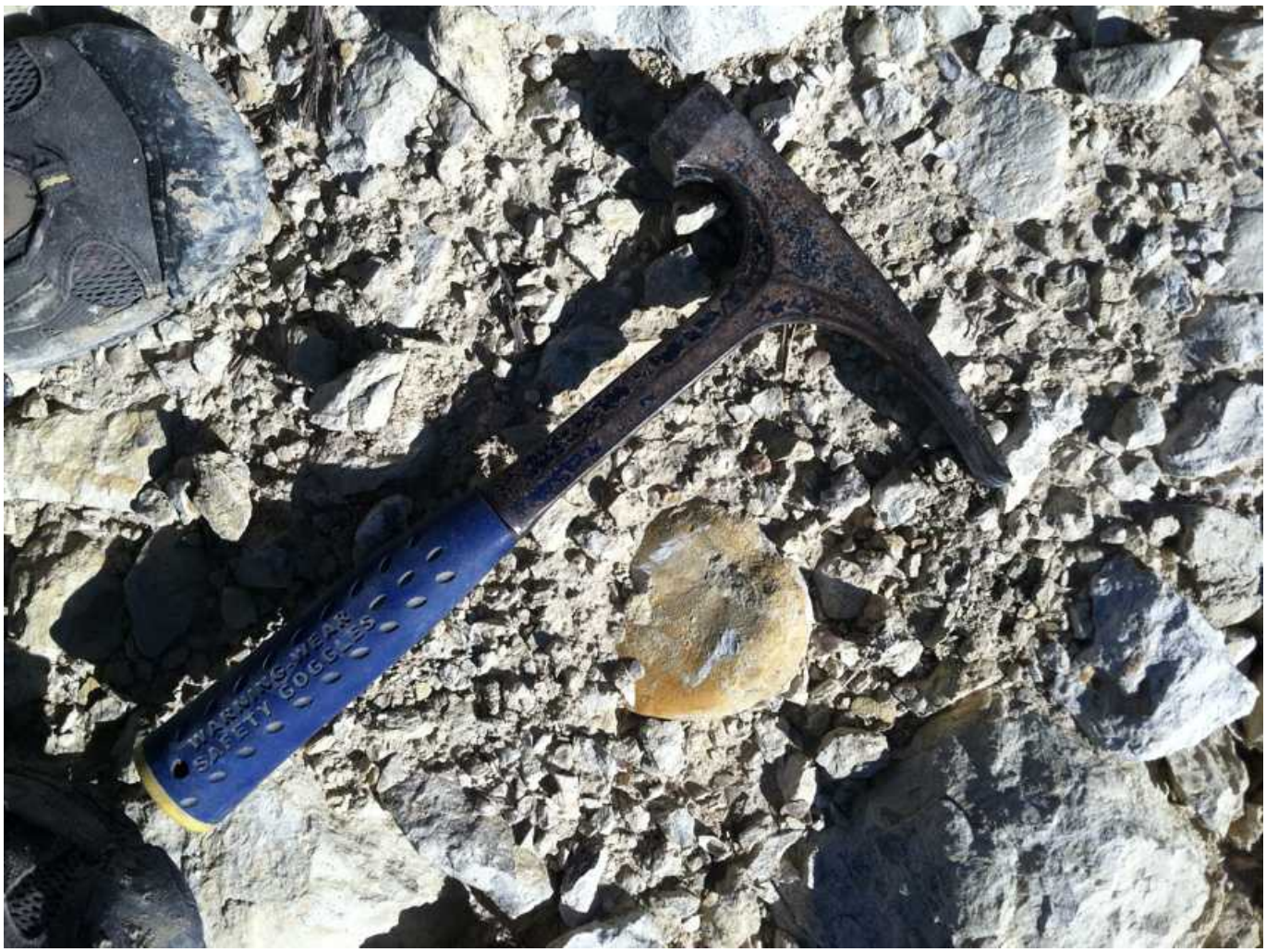
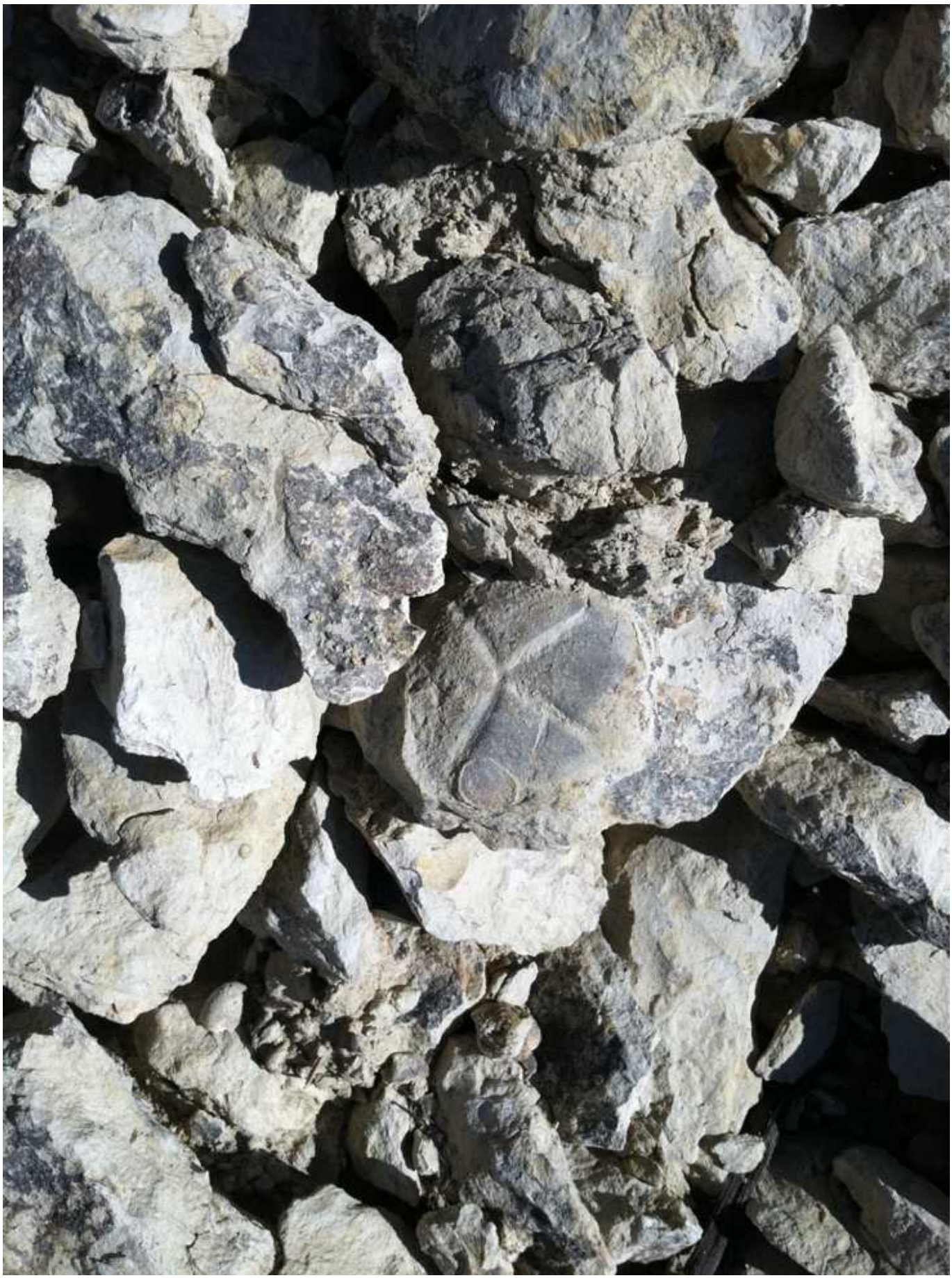


At our final fossil stop Weston stayed in the truck since he wore himself out at the last stop wading shin deep in mud. I struck out solo at this exposure, scanning the lower levels unsuccessfully for choice Georgetown Formation fauna. Moving a bit up section, I finally struck the Mother Lode…first a couple little *Mortoniceras* ammonites, then a constant procession of *Macraster* echinoids, 13 in all, some quite large in the 3 inch + range, more than I could stuff in my tool apron. This was the slam dunk I was after, but I wish Weston had been alongside me to experience the thrill of discovery.



FIGS 45-59: Bumper crop of Georgetown Formation *Macraster* echinoids this and next 14 pages (Site 630)

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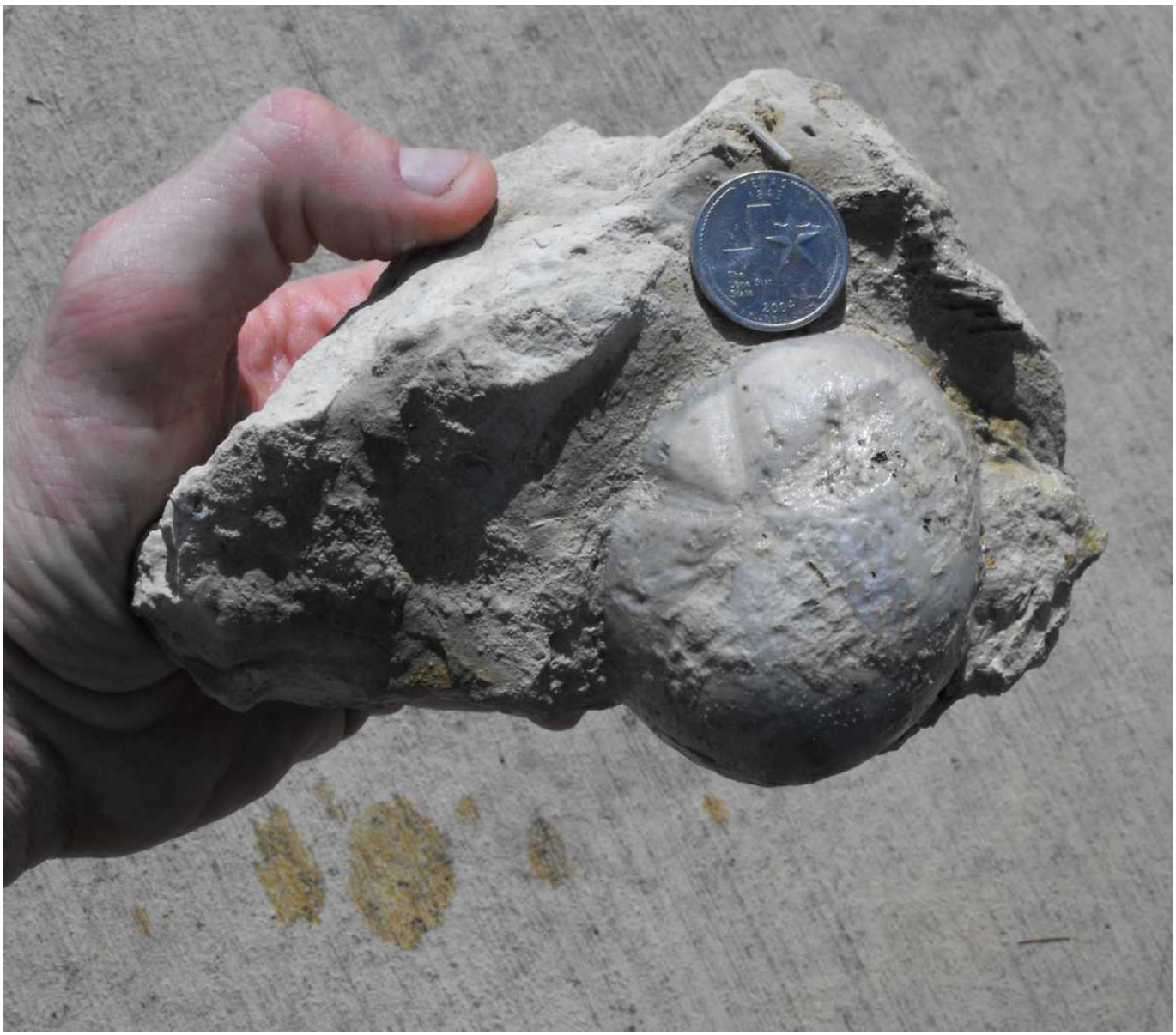
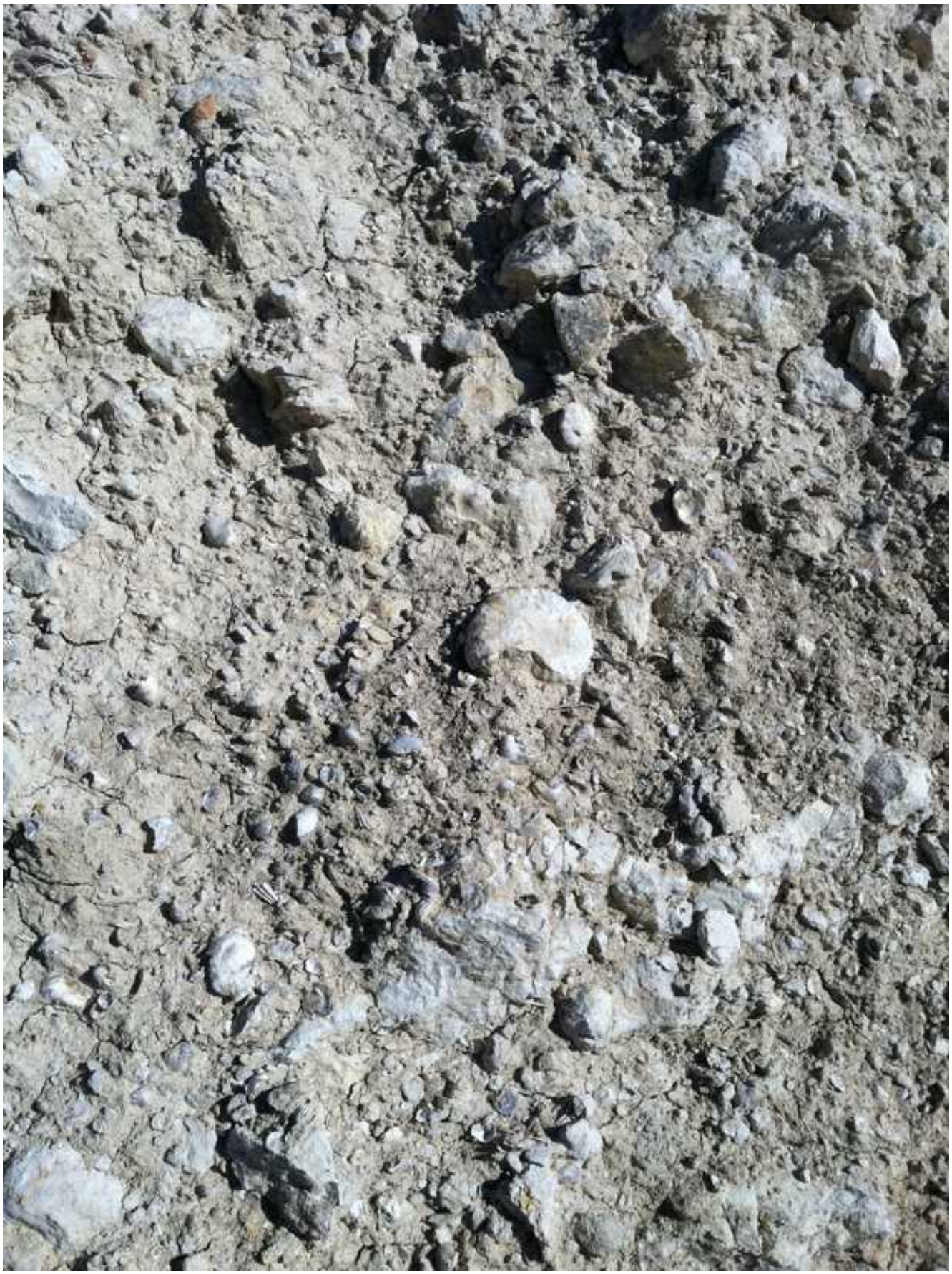


Note regular echinoid spine just above quarter

Gotta love the Georgetown!



FIGS 60-62: Georgetown Formation *Mortoniceras* ammonites in situ this page, as prepped next page (Site 630)

Lima bivalve impression

FIG 63: Georgetown Formation *Rastellum carinatum* oysters (Site 630)

Adequately bogged down by cool finds, we turned to the mundane drudgery of shopping, but overall we enjoyed our time together one on one.

October 21, 2012: Upshot in the Upper Glen Rose

Ms. Brett and I agreed to take a needed respite from the cares of daily life by immersing ourselves once again in the therapeutic pursuit of echinoids and such, this time in the Upper Glen Rose Formation (108 MYA). She had never collected this site with me, and soon came to enjoy the easy access to the site and largesse of the gritty yellow marls.

With minimum guidance, she was plucking choice *Loriolia rosana* echinoids from the marl while I did the same. When things got slow I ushered us to localized hot spots. Many perfectly preserved echinoids came to hand, some presenting in doubles. Some nice gastropods made their way into our catch bags as well, and we both found partials of the rare ammonite *Paraengonoceras* as we bounced around from the source layer high in the hillside wall to the fallen rubble down below. Some of our better finds came from fallen blocks that had weathered to the point of disintegration.

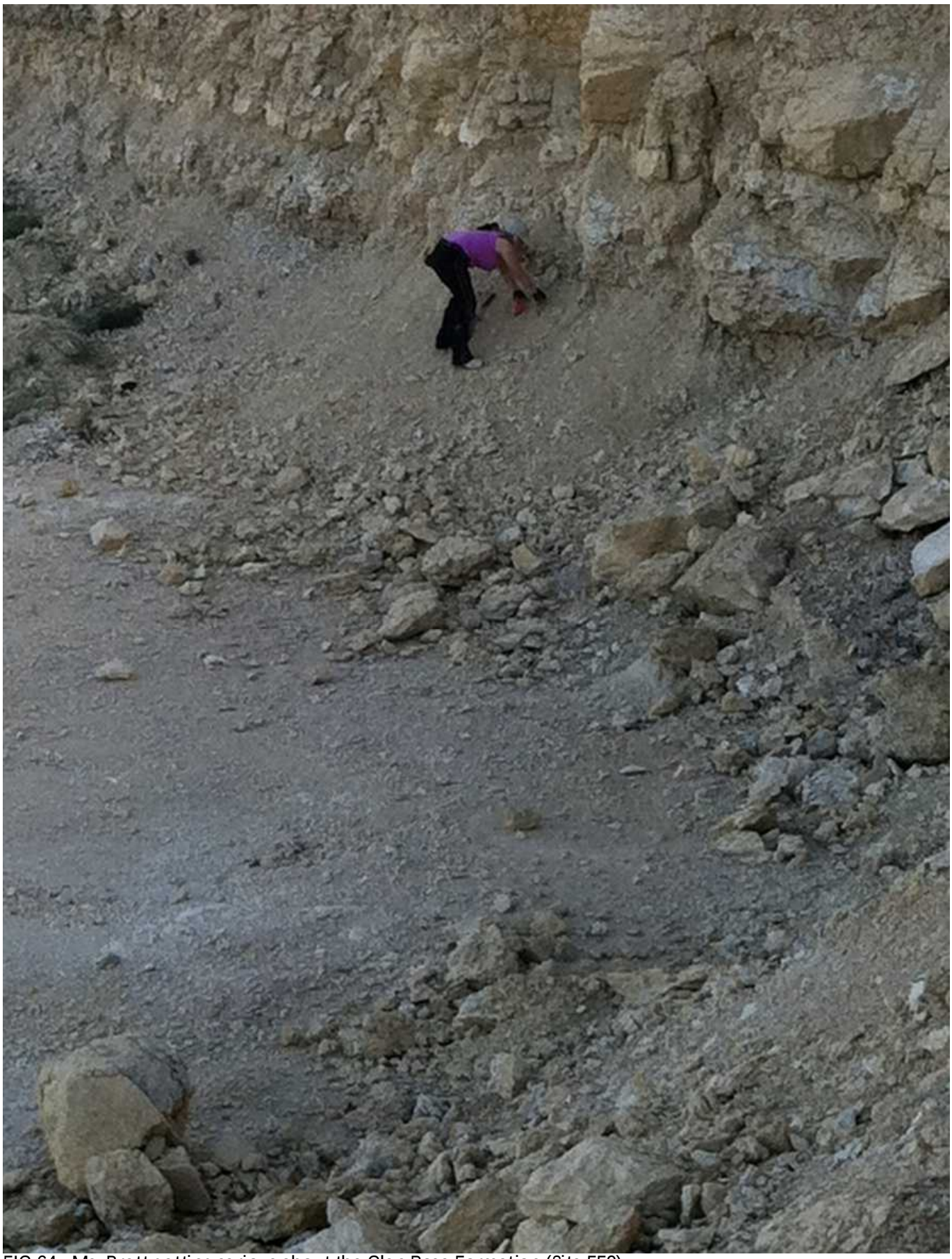
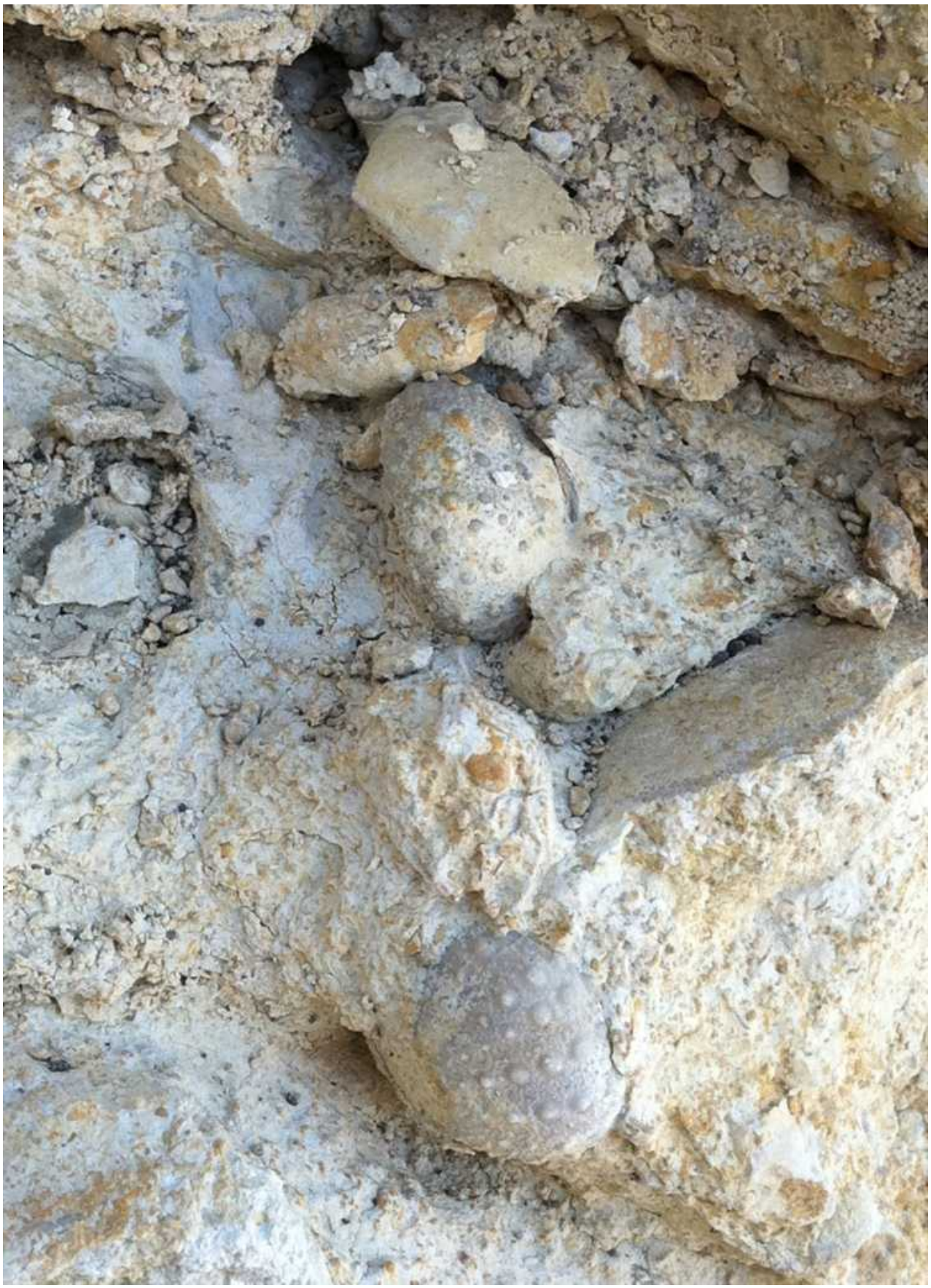


FIG 64: Ms. Brett getting serious about the Glen Rose Formation (Site 550)



FIGS 65-77: Glen Rose Formation echinoids *Loriolia rosana* in situ and prepped, this and next 12 pages (Site 550)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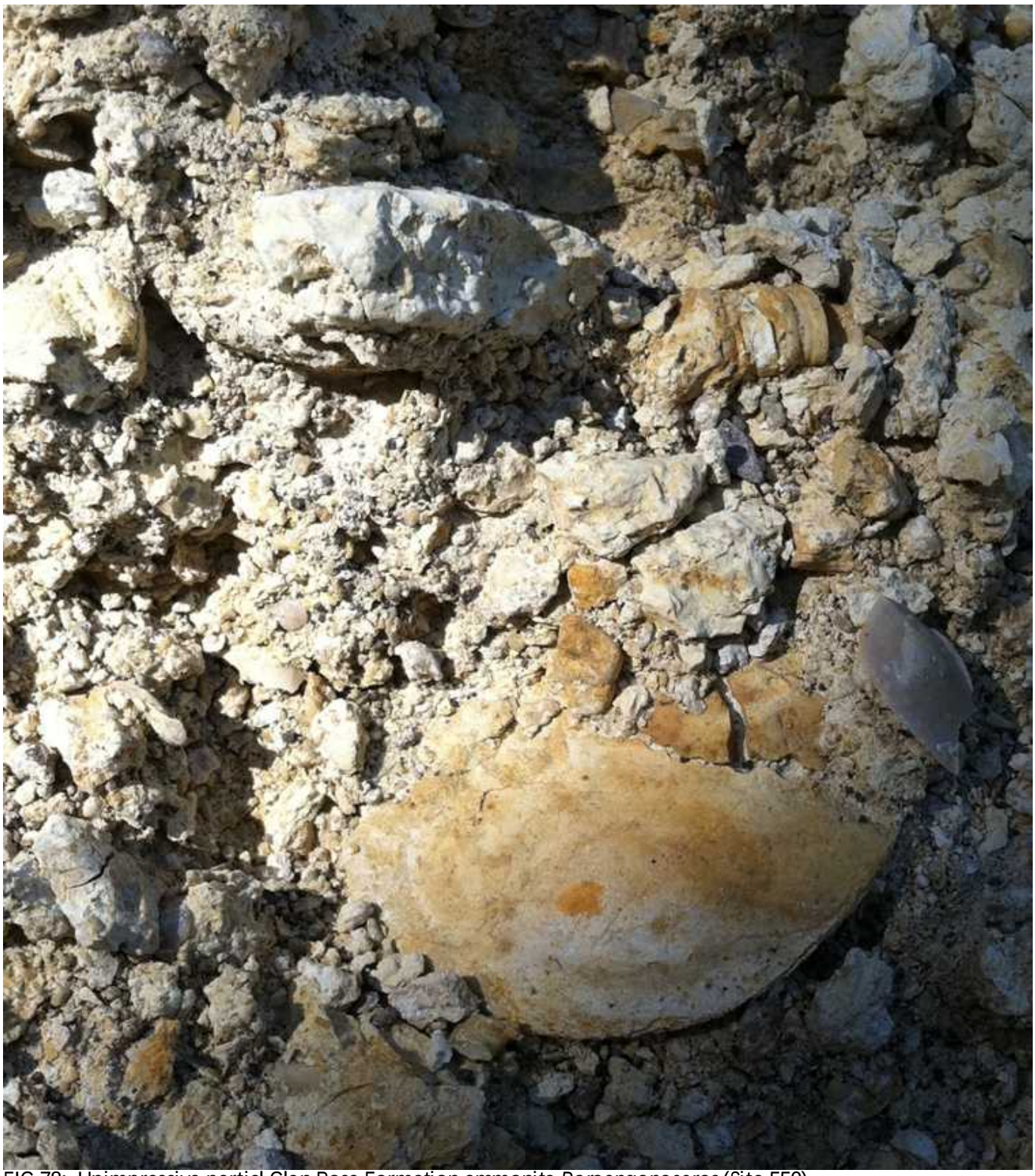


FIG 78: Unimpressive partial Glen Rose Formation ammonite *Paraengonoceras* (Site 550)

FIGS 79-80: Unidentified Glen Rose Formation gastropods this and next page (Site 550)

In the end Brett was enjoying herself so much that I was ready to leave before she was…now if I could only get that level of enthusiasm for the 600 mile round trip, 26 hour trips…

October 28, 2012: Winding Down in the Corsicana

And a stressful month October has proven to be. Ms. Brett was diagnosed with adenocarcinoma in her sinus early in the month, and surgery this past week rendered her cancer free with no need for radiation or chemotherapy. She'll be largely recovered within a month. While she napped part of the afternoon away, I opted for a visit to the Corsicana Formation for a little leisure time of my own, with prospects elevated by the 1.4 inches of rain that fell at the site late in the week.

A house foundation that had capped the hill at the most productive exposure for the last 2 years finally had a house built on top of it that wasn't there 3 weeks prior! This may soon spell the demise of the single most productive fossil site I've ever found. I knew this time would come eventually, and its been a good run for the last

7 years. This was a Sunday so construction workers weren't present, affording me the opportunity to move about the site freely.

The first section that I visited was graded a month or two ago, and the 2-3 decent rains since had flushed out a few keeper fossils. This day I grabbed a handful of nice *Hemiaster bexari* echinoids along with a couple coveted *Schizaster variabilis*.

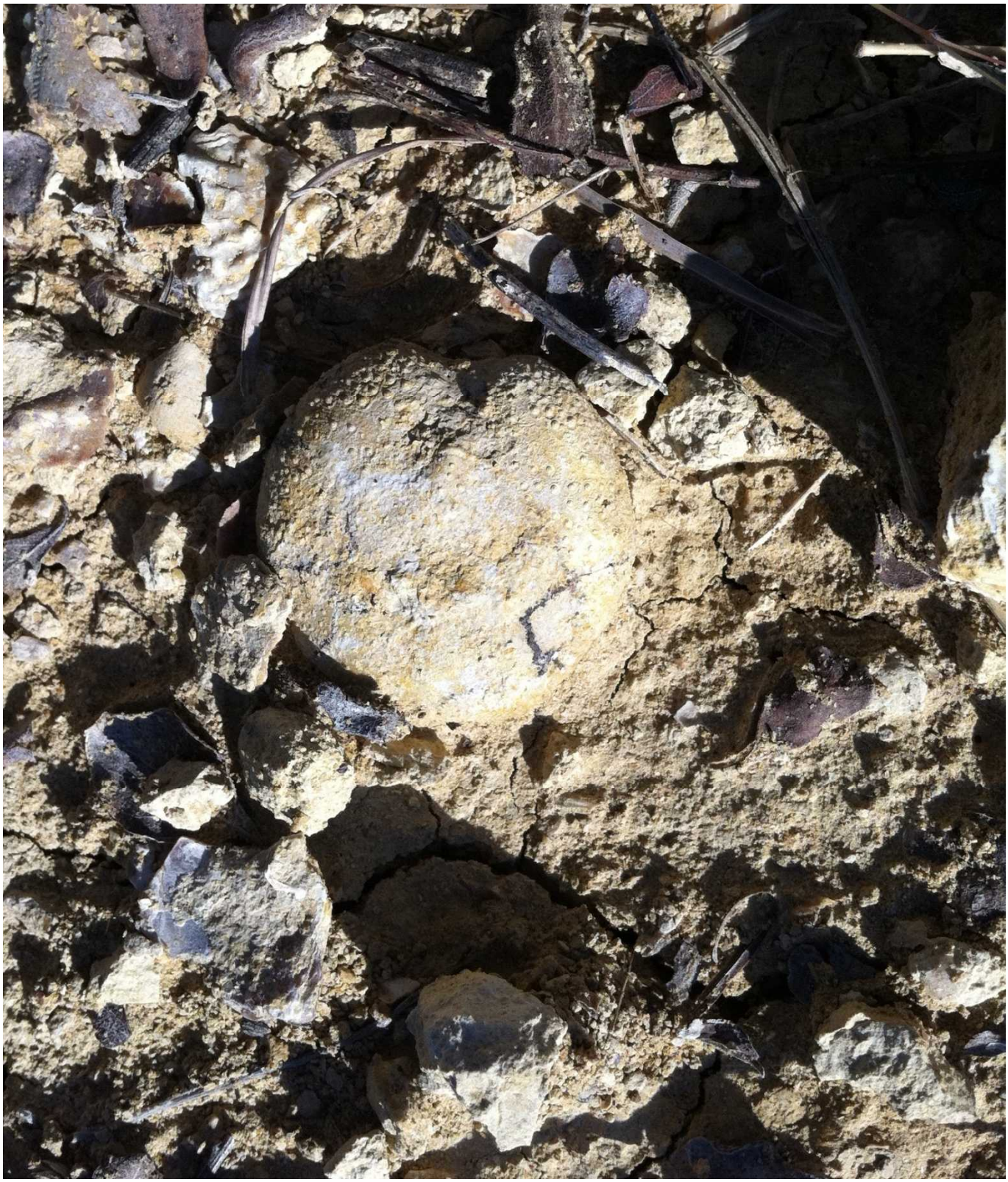
FIG 81: Corsicana Formation echinoid *Hemiaster bexari* in situ (Site 248)

FIG 82: Rough Corsicana Formation echinoid *Schizaster variabilis* above several *Hemiaster bexari* (Site 248)

FIG 83: Corsicana Formation gastropods clockwise from top center: *Cypraea*, unidentified, *Gyrodes*, *Anchura* (Site 248)

FIG 84: Corsicana Formation bivalve *Trigonia castrovillensis* below, unidentified above (Site 248)

Back at the main site things were looking a bit crusty despite the recent rain. Its looking as if construction or no construction, this site won't be producing much going forward. This time I found no crabs, but did pick up a couple *Hemiaster bexari* echinoids, gastropods, bivalves and *Pycnodonte mutabilis* oysters, but the hands down best find was a very nice *Proraster dalli* echinoid.



FIGS 85-91: Find of the day Corsicana Formation echinoid *Proraster dalli* this and next 6 pages (Site 349)


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FIG 92: Corsicana Formation echinoids *Hemiaster bexari* (Site 349)

FIG 93: Corsicana Formation gastropod *Bellifusus* sp. (Site 349)

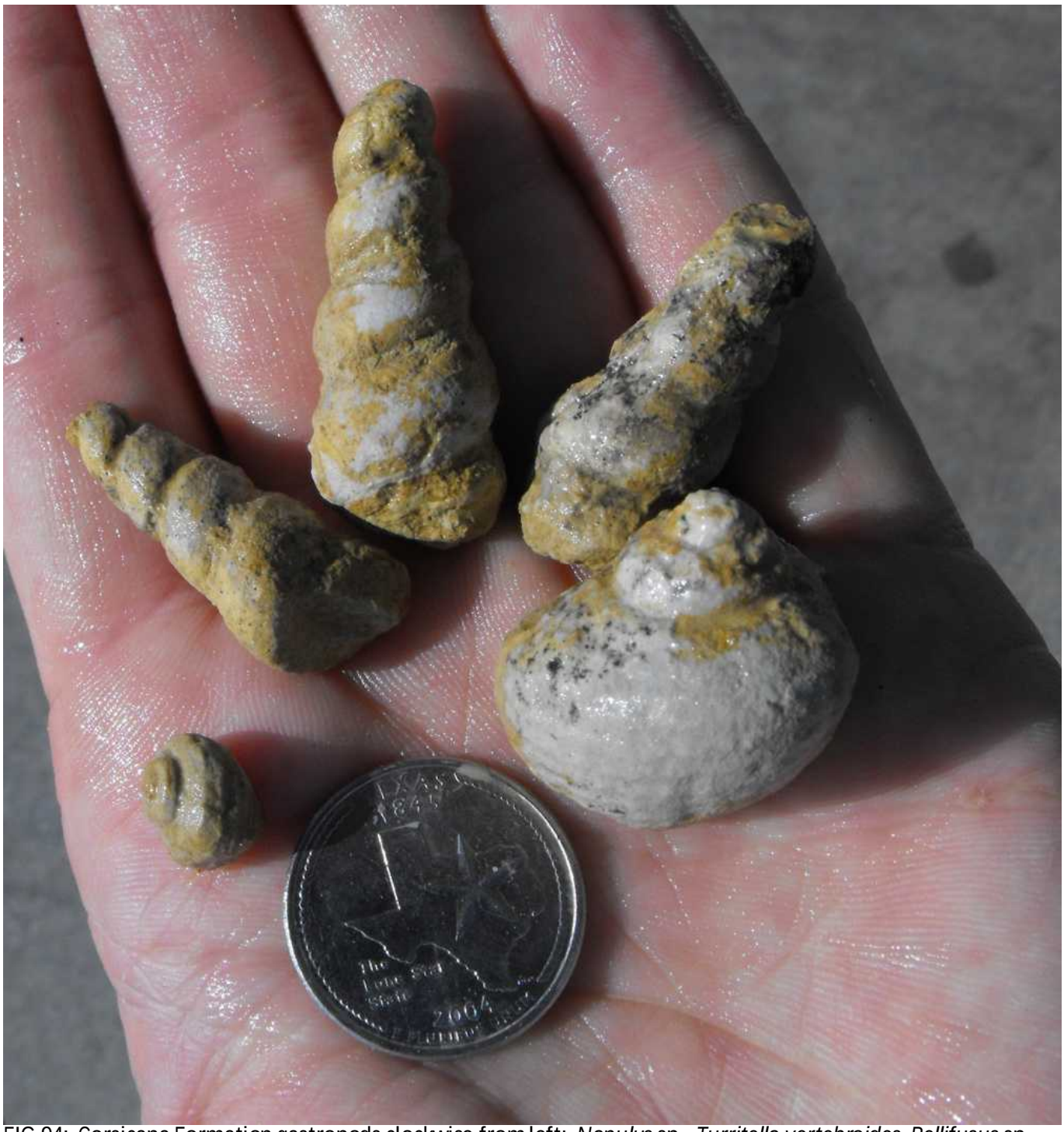

FIG 94: Corsicana Formation gastropods clockwise from left: *Napulus* sp., *Turritella vertebroides*, *Bellifusus* sp. (Site 349)

FIGS 95-96: Bivalves from the Corsicana Formation unidentified above, *Trigonia castrovillensis* below and next page (Site 349)

I cut my trip short to head on home and attend to higher priorities, but it was fun to recharge my batteries for a couple hours. Next month, I'm hoping that Ms. Brett will be joining me afield once again.

Addendum: A Gift from France

FIGS 97-99: From the Callovian (Jurassic) sediments of France a couple ammonites (*Hecticoceras hexcticum* shown here) in matrix with two enigmatic marine fossils *Oecoptychius refractus,* this and next 2 pages

Oecoptychius refractus

Oecoptychius refractus in foreground, *Choffatia* ammonite in background