
THE BADGER DIGGIN'S

The Badger Lapidary and Geological Society, Inc.
Monroe, Wisconsin

Devoted to the Earth Sciences

Vol. 44, No. 9

November 2009

President's Message

Dear Badgers,

The club will need to begin planning field trips and meeting activities for the next year and I would love to hear from everyone on the subject. Please forward to me your ideas and suggestions for new or repeat field trips, meeting activities, or guest speakers (some already have done so, thank you). I also want to encourage you to actively support the club and contact me if you would like to volunteer to give a talk / demonstration, coordinate and lead a field trip, contact a potential speaker, volunteer as an officer, chair or co-chair a committee, and so on. The club needs you!

The next Badger Club meeting is on Saturday, November 14th. We don't have a formal program scheduled at this time. But after the business meeting is over, a number of us are planning to head down to the Freeport Show, which can serve as our (extended) meeting program. Hope to see you there.

In the meantime, please let me know if you would like to give a talk during a future meeting. (This is the only known cure for that guilty feeling you may or may not know you have from winning a door prize and not yet submitting a newsletter article or talk.)

On a different note, I am happy to report that the October Lapidary Party and "Iowa County Petrified Snake Quarry Fossil Collecting Trip" (I'm just exercising my naming rights) was a great success, with 52 members and guests joining in for the quarry trip, running the machines, or just enjoying the food and company. The quarry produced specimens for everyone, certainly the best of which was the massive cephalopod fossil collected by Teri and Jordan Marché. Back at the farm, I was very glad to have reinforced the floor in our little kitchen years ago as the number of ravenous rockhounds surely would have tested the old farmhouse beams underfoot. The food everyone brought was wonderful. We missed those of you that could not join us and we shall have to try to do this again next year.

By comparison, the Beetown bat cave / mine and Dickeyville Grotto field trip was a much cozier group, but the weather was beautiful. As soon as we reached the cave, we saw a newborn calf take its first shaky steps to follow its mother who apparently didn't appreciate visitors. At the cave, our group split up into two parties and Erin Trocke (age 7) took the lead, exploring the many winding and diverging tunnels. Altogether, we saw perhaps a hundred fuzzy bats and collected some galena, while Erin found a *Receptaculites* (algae) fossil. The Dickeyville Grotto was even better than I had remembered and seems to reveal new things each time one goes to see it. Take care.

Dan Trocke

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held at 9:45 a.m. on Saturday, November 14, 2009, at the Monroe Public Library, 925 16th Avenue, Monroe, WI. Take the elevator to the second floor.



Officer Roster:

President

Dan Trocke
4771 County II
Highland, WI 53543
608-935-0597
dtrocke@acscm.com

Vice-President

Teri Marché
5415 Lost Woods Court
Oregon, WI 53575
608-835-2653
tmarche@education.wisc.edu

Secretary

Laurie Trocke
4771 County II
Highland, WI 53543
608-935-0597
lor3@netscape.com

Treasurer

Daisy Peterson
W4647 County FF
Monroe, WI 53566
608-328-1523
daisyjovilu@gmail.com

Editor

Jordan Marché
5415 Lost Woods Court
Oregon, WI 53575
608-835-2653
jordanmarche@hotmail.com

Show Chairperson

Teri Marché
(see above)

Field Trip Chairman

Dan Trocke
(see above)

Officer-at-Large

Tyrel Rouse
131 Langdon Street, Apt. 1
Madison, WI 53703
608-235-2865
karmacop_7@hotmail.com

Tentative Calendar of Club Events – 2009

Nov. 14 Regular meeting

Dec. 12 Christmas Party; officer elections

MWF Club Events

Nov. 14-15: Freeport, IL. Northwest Illinois Rock Club’s Annual Show. Student Conference Center, Highland Community College, Sat. 9-5; Sun. 10-4. Contact: Brian Green, (815) 745-2228, or e-mail: bgreen57@hotmail.com.

Nov. 21-22: Madison, WI. Madison Gem and Mineral Club’s 46th Annual Show. Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Sat. 10-5; Sun. 10-4. Adults \$3. Contact: Nevin Franke, (608) 251-2601, or e-mail: madisonrockclub@gmail.com.

Dec. 12-13: Sheboygan Falls, WI. Glacial Drifters Geologic Society’s 5th Annual Show, Sheboygan Falls Municipal Building, 14240 Washington Ave., Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4. Contact: Kevin Ponzio, (920) 980-6413.

Calcite from Quebec, Quartz from New York

(excerpts from a letter received from Dave Zimmerman)

Bonjour, Badgers!

I hope all is going well for you. I had an experience a few days ago that might be of interest to many of you. I managed to open up the largest pocket of crystals I have ever found! It is assumed to be about 20 feet tall (we did not have flashlights powerful enough to verify!) by about 10 feet deep and about 12 to 20 inches wide. Inside this behemoth, and studded on the walls, were modified, yellow dogtooth calcites, similar to many from Shullsburg, WI. The color was a true yellow, with no hint of orange or honey. The crystals ranged from 2 to 6 inches and we recovered many plates, up to 80 lbs. Unfortunately, our discovery of the pocket occurred near the top edge, so that material was constantly falling down into the pocket and damaging other crystals on its journey to a watery grave below. In fact, due to the water at the bottom, it has been impossible to ascertain the true height of the pocket. Ironically, the pocket also contained some of the same species of moths that I had collected for Jordan from the railroad tunnel near Monticello. The quarry is located near Granby, Quebec. My father was also here when I found it, which makes the event all the more special.

Jane and I also did some substantial digging on our quartz claim in New York and did exceptionally well. It was a wonderful weekend, and we have heard from others that this claim is considered to be one of the best producers on the property. We managed to find about 50 lbs. of quartz, with about 1 lb. of jewelry points, and maybe ten matrix pieces, while the rest were the “goony” variety that ranged in size from 4 to 14 inches or so! Many of the quartz crystals had some smoky wisps running through them, and about seven were fully smoky. We were very happy with the results.

Have fun!

Dave

New Mineral Cleaning Gun

(data provided by Dave Zimmerman).

For those interested, there is a new product, the MYSTIC™ Textile Cleaning Gun, that is available exclusively through eBay. Dave notes that this is an example of a manufacturing company using eBay as a direct sales route to reach potential customers.

The Gun operates at 110 V and develops up to 1,650 p.s.i. Brand new, it comes with a 12-month warranty. It has an adjustable nozzle and all-metal handle. Best of all, no additional air compressor is needed; the unit is self-contained and operates like a paint sprayer. The retail cost is \$54.99. For a link to the site, go to:

http://cgi.ebay.com/hi-pressure-Cleaning-Gun-self-contained-MYSTIC-NIB110v_W0QQitemZ190343996642QQcmdZViewItemQQptZLH_DefaultDomain_0?hash=item2c5162e4e2

Dave says that he is already using one of these guns to clean the calcite collected from the large pocket described above. If you have any questions, contact david@showchair.com.

Ancient Beachcombers in Wisconsin

by Jordan Marché

Fossilized trackways of primitive arthropods that bear a strong resemblance to the tracks of modern hermit crabs have been described from Cambrian-age strata located in central Wisconsin (presumably from the same quarry at Mosinee that has yielded the large fossil impressions of jellyfish).

Two researchers, James W. Hagadorn of Amherst College in Massachusetts, and Adolf Seilacher of Yale University, studied the loop-shaped tracks that were deposited on a sand flat some 500 million years ago. It is believed that a thin microbial mat likely saved the tracks from obliteration by wave action.

The tracks display intermittent, off-center impressions that reveal where the animal’s borrowed shell touched the ground as it walked. But these marks also suggest that the primitive arthropods wore their shells upside down, as compared with modern hermit crabs. In turn, the borrowed shell was too small to cover the animal’s body completely, and so may simply have protected its gills from drying out. As there were no known land predators in existence at this time, the shells probably did not serve as a defensive function; that step evidently evolved later.

For a photo of the trackways, see the July/August issue of *Natural History*, p. 10, from which this summary is derived; the original research was published in the journal, *Geology*.

Note on the annual Christmas Party

We are all set for the Christmas Party on December 12th, starting at 6:00 p.m. at the American Legion. The meal will be served at 6:30 p.m. and then we will play the Gold Brick Game. Prices will be \$14.00 for adults and \$10.00 for kids up to 10 years of age – the same as last year. I will need to know in advance who is coming and who is not, so that we can plan for the food. Thanks.

Daisy Peterson
(608) 328-1523
daisyjovilu@gmail.com

Badger Lapidary and Geological Society, Inc.
Jordan Marché, Editor
5415 Lost Woods Court
Oregon, WI 53575

