

OREGON PALEO LANDS CENTER

June 2019

Our Mission Statement

The Oregon Paleo Lands Center (OPLI) works with the Gateway Communities of the mid-John Day Basin (Condon, Antelope, Fossil, Service Creek, Spray, Mitchell, Kimberly, Dayville and Monument) to build social and economic vitality through efforts:

To conserve, interpret, and promote the natural and cultural history of the John Day Basin/Blue Mountains through time.

To develop and connect, with partners, the John Day Basin/Blue Mountains' visitor services, recreational services, natural and cultural history education opportunities.

To welcome, educate, and connect visitors, schools, area residents and businesses at the Oregon Paleo Lands Center (OPLC), and through other media.

Contact OPLI at:

**333 Fourth Street
Post Office Box 104
Fossil, Oregon 97830**

(541) 763-4480

paleolands@gmail.com

www.paleolands.org

Presidents Message:

Hello supporters of the Paleo Lands Center. We are pleased to offer some updates on the growth of the organization.

We are moving closer to our goal of a full Board. Margaret Eoute, one of the owners of Cross Rifle BBQ in Fossil has joined the leadership team at the Center and is already helping us develop the important third leg of a stable financial stool; securing unrestricted funds to support operations and maintenance. She has taken the lead and offered to donate all proceeds from a food booth in support of the Bluegrass Festival July 4th.



New board member, Suzette Greear

We are so pleased to also announce the inclusion of another new Board Member from Fossil, Suzette Greear. Suzette brings some much needed Information Technology knowledge to the group and we anticipate an improved outreach website and Facebook presence with their help.

These new team members will improve the Center's local interaction with the Fossil community and strengthen our ability to partner with Oregon State Parks to realize the Boards ultimate mission of full utilization of a fine public facility.

Our partnership with Oregon State Parks to secure volunteer Park Hosts to staff the Center has been the most important step to realizing full Center utilization. The feedback from these experienced park hosts has also spurred us into focusing more on the Center's Store. The Store does provide a small amount of unrestricted funds for the Center, but it is a fine balancing act to allocate the appropriate resources for the potential return. In direct response to the Park Host feedback we are pleased to announce a 'lahar' of new materials that will be offered to visitors in 2019.

Our office coordinator, Emily Smitherman, secured some fine new stuffed animals that include representations of animals currently living in the John Day Basin (big horns, rattlesnakes) as well as ancient animals that have been found here, (saber tooth cat, woolly mammoth). Board treasurer Richard Ross, acquired eight new regional pocket guides on Oregon Wildlife, Butterflies, Dinosaurs, Animal Tracking, Dragonflies, Birds of Prey, The Night Sky, and Birds of the High Desert. We also have new posters of 4.5 billion years of life in North America. I was able to design a new Center logo and get it embroidered on a few articles of clothing that include a sage brush camo baseball cap. Sage brush is found across 70 percent of Oregons land mass!

We will continue to ask you (and thank you) for your donations that provide the unrestricted funds needed to support ongoing operations and the ability to respond to an unforeseen cost or partnership opportunity in the Community. Come on by to snag a new hat or notify Emily at the Center that you'd like to have one sent to you.

Thanks again for your continuing support,

*Jeffrey Kee, Oregon Paleo Land Center Board President
jkee@hevanet.com*



UO Scientists Uncover a Rare Oregon Dinosaur Fossil

—By Kristin Strommer, Museum of Natural and Cultural History

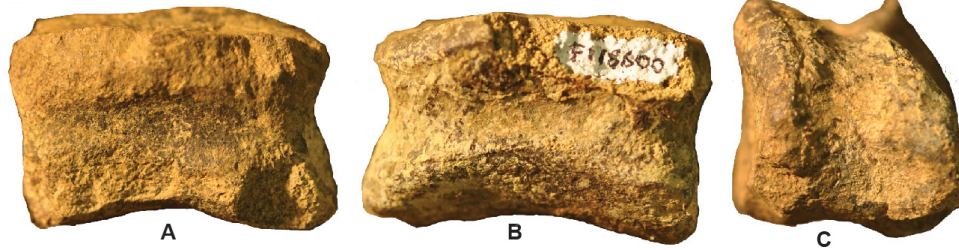
Paleontologists at the Museum of Natural and Cultural History have reported the discovery of a land-dwelling dinosaur's fossilized bone in Eastern Oregon — an exceedingly rare find in a state that was underwater throughout most of the dinosaur age.

The toe bone belonged to a plant-eating, bipedal dinosaur known as an ornithomimid and is estimated to date back 103 million years to the Cretaceous, a geological period that also gave rise to *Tyrannosaurus rex*.

Uncovered by UO earth sciences professor Greg Retallack during a 2015 field excursion near Mitchell, the find was published online in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology* and is the first Oregon dinosaur fossil ever reported in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

"Oregon landscapes are rich with Cretaceous rocks, but they rarely contain the kinds of dinosaur remains we see elsewhere in the U.S.," said Retallack, the museum's director of fossil collections and the report's lead author. "The rocks here are the right age but are mostly from under the sea where dinosaurs did not live or from swamps where dinosaur bones are seldom preserved."

During the 2015 trip to Mitchell, part of a University of Oregon course on fossil plants, Retallack and his students surveyed a shale slope on Bureau of Land Management property. There he spotted the toe bone amid an array of mollusk fossils preserved in the marine rocks.



Views of the fossil from several angles. It was found on a field excursion near the Eastern Oregon town of Mitchell.

Edward Davis, a co-author on the report and the museum's fossil collections manager, said the land-dweller's bone likely ended up there after a posthumous stint in the ocean.

"It's a phenomenon we sometimes call 'bloat and float,'" he said. "That is, the animal died on shore in its terrestrial habitat, then washed out to sea, where it floated while bloated with decomposition gasses. Eventually it burst, and only this toe bone was entombed and became a fossil."

Based on comparisons with other ornithomimids, the co-authors estimate that the Mitchell dinosaur was more than 20 feet long and weighed nearly a ton.

"With such a small piece of the ornithomimid, it's hard to say much about its ecology," said report co-author Samantha Hopkins, the museum's curator of paleontology and an associate professor of earth sciences at the Clark Honors College. "However, just finding it in Oregon is exciting, because we rarely see evidence here of the dinosaurs we know must have been nearby."

The report was also co-authored by the University of Calgary's Jessica Theodor and UO doctoral student Paul Barrett. Retallack said he doesn't expect to find more dinosaur bones in Oregon marine rocks anytime soon.

"But we are now looking more carefully," he said.

**December 2018- May
2019 Donors, Sponsors,
and Grantors**

Senator Ron Wyden
David Griffith
C.C. Baker
B.L. Kavan
Jan McGowan NonProfit
Consulting
Wayne Kee
Molly Kee
Charles R Ault Jr
Stephen Carlson
Lee Walker
Mary Weil
Richard Bastasch
Linda Nettekoven
Neil Jones
Peter Dalke
Jeffrey Pratt
Scott Klag
Catherine Susman
Richard Ross
Robert Strebin
Donald Leetham
Lowell Smith
Charlotte Corkran
David Corkran
Fletcher Frisch
Page Frisch
Jeffrey Kee
The Fossil Cartel
Martin Winch
Carolyn Winch
Susan Hebert Imports Inc
Bette J Andrew
Remmal D Nivens
State of Oregon

***Thank you for your
ongoing support!***

Oregon Paleo Lands Center Needs You!

You can support the Oregon Paleo Lands Center in a variety of ways. Your financial support now in 2019 is vital to continue our mission of exploring, teaching about, and protecting Oregon's paleo lands. Donor benefits include a 10% discount on retail merchandise at the Oregon Paleo Lands Center in Fossil, a regular newsletter with information about scientific discoveries, history, and news of the Paleo Lands, and advance notice of upcoming OPLI and partner organization events. All donations are tax deductible.

Interested in volunteering at the Center or serving on the Board?
Contact us at paleolands@gmail.com or www.paleolands.org or at PO
Box 104, Fossil, Oregon 97830 (541) 763-4480.