



The Fossil Record

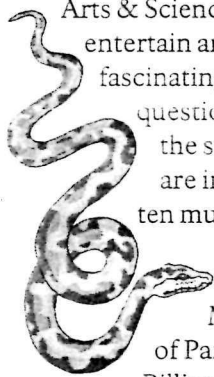
Bare Bones of This Issue:

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Winter Programs - free admission

- **Snakes Alive!** January 24, 2004 2-3 p.m.

This very popular program returns! Herrett Center for Arts & Science educator Nick Peterson will entertain and educate children and adults with fascinating facts and live touchable snakes! A question and answer period will follow the short program. People of all ages are invited to attend, but children under ten must be accompanied by an adult.



This event is co-sponsored by Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. Location: Billingsley Creek State Park one mile

north of Hagerman on Hwy. 30.

- **Family Film Fest:** February 6 & 20, 2004 6:30-8 p.m.

Free popcorn! (Children are welcome to bring their favorite blanket.) *Land Before Time* shown Feb. 6, *Ice Age* shown Feb. 20.

- **Women's History Month** - two programs

March 4, 2004, Noon - 1 p.m.
Bring your brown bag lunch and enjoy a women's history program about the Oregon Trail by Grannie Miller (Mary Inman). Beverage and dessert provided.

March 18, 2004, Noon - 1 p.m.
Bring your brown bag lunch and learn about Middle Eastern women's history from Boise State University's Joanne Klein. Beverage and dessert will be provided.

- **Bats!** March 20, 2004 2-3 p.m. Fun and educational activities for kids of all ages. Program held at Billingsley Creek State Park, a mile N. of Hagerman.

- **Bats!** March 25, 2004 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Preschoolers (3-5 yrs. old) are invited to our story and activity program about bats, with Hagerman Library staff and NPS educational specialist Annette Rousseau. Held at Fossil Beds Visitor Center.

Fossil Beds Visitor Center

The Visitor Center is located across from the high school at 221 North State Street in Hagerman, Idaho. View the slide show, fossil exhibits, and Minidoka Internment National Monument exhibit, and stop by the Natural History Association bookstore. There is no fee to enter the Visitor Center or the Monument. Hours during the winter are

Thursday through Monday
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For more information visit our website: www.nps.gov/hafo or call (208)

837-4793.



Critter Corner

Pearce's Peccary -

Platygonus pearcei

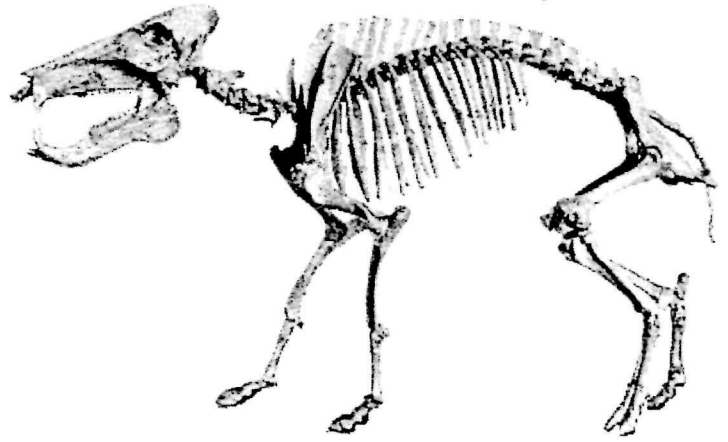
Greg McDonald, NPS Paleontologist

In 1938, one of the scientists who excavated at the Hagerman Horse Quarry, Dr. C.L. Gazin, described a new species of peccary, *Platygonus pearcei*, from the Hagerman fossil beds. The name *Platygonus* means flat head and refers to the straight shape of the forehead. The species name *pearcei* is for the discoverer, George B. Pearce, a member of the 1934 Smithsonian field crew. Since its original discovery at Hagerman, Pearce's peccary has been found near Grand View Idaho and at White Bluffs, Washington.

People often confuse peccaries, which are found in the New World, with pigs which originated in the Old World, especially since some domestic pigs brought by European settlers have escaped over the years and now run wild in many parts of the United States. These feral pigs are popularly known as razor-back hogs. Relatives of the Old World pigs include the wart hog of Africa. One of the ways to tell the two groups apart is the shape of the canine tooth or "tusk". In the Old World pigs the tusk is long and curves around on itself, whereas in the New World peccaries the tusk is short and straight. Peccaries are plant eaters and use it for defense. By rubbing the tusks together they can make a chattering noise that warns potential predators to not get too close.

Today there are three living species of peccary. They are found from the southwestern United States through Central America and into South America. The only peccary in the United States is the collared peccary (*Dicotyles tajacu*), also known by its Spanish name, javelina. It is often found in dry arid habitats. A second species is the White-lipped peccary (*Tyassu peccari*) which is found in the rain forests of Central and South America. The last species, the Chacoan peccary (*Catagonus wagneri*) is the closest living relative to the extinct *Platygonus pearcei* found at Hagerman. It is found in the dry shrub habitat or Chaco of Paraguay, Bolivia and Southern Brazil. The Chacoan peccary has the unusual distinction of having been first described based on fossils and was originally thought to be only an extinct species. In 1975 the animal was discovered to still be alive and well in the Chaco region of Paraguay. This third species of peccary was well

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known by the native Indians but it took awhile for scientists to discover its existence.

Peccaries have a long history in North America. They first appear in the Early Oligocene, about 32 million years ago and a variety of different species are present in faunas of different ages across the continent. Some of these extinct peccaries have been found at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument in Oregon and at Badlands National Monument in South Dakota. Although common in South America today, peccaries did not reach that continent until about 9 million years ago. Prior to that, there was no isthmus of Panama, and South America was an island continent. As the Panamanian isthmus formed, many North American animals entered South America. Along with peccaries, llamas and tapirs also migrated south. Today people think these animals are South American, yet all come from North American ancestors. The exchange was a two-way street however, and some of the ancient South American species, like the ground sloth, migrated north and are found at Hagerman.

Modern peccaries are social animals and often form herds. Over 100 individuals have been recorded for a single herd of white-lipped peccary but smaller size groups are usually the case in the collared peccary and Chacoan peccary. Such social behavior seems to have been the situation in extinct peccaries as well. Pearce's *Platygonus* discovery at Hagerman included 3 individuals, an adult and two juveniles. The skeletons were found articulated (all of the bones in proper position to each other) suggesting that this small family group died at the same time and were quickly buried.

The entire family group was preserved as one piece and is on display at the Smithsonian in front of the Hagerman mural. That Pearce's peccary must have been a common member of the Hagerman fauna 3.5 million years ago is also indicated by the numerous isolated bones and teeth that have been found throughout the Monument.

(Reprinted from a previous *Fossil Record*.)

Outdoor Lessons: Students Get Involved

Education Specialist Annette Rousseau spent a day last October teaching 5th grade students about paleontology. Children from five local schools enjoyed their outdoor fossil lesson at Gooding's Little City of Rocks, where they also learned about hydrology, archeology, geology, and wildlife. The 13th annual Little City of Rocks Workshop, sponsored by Gooding Soil Conservation District, helps to make science real for students.

Photo by GSCD, October 2003



New Park Guide

Stephanie Martin has lived in Hagerman since 1985. She has two children, Luke and Lainey.

She is completing her Master of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Stephanie says, "I love living in the Hagerman Valley and my special interests are botany, geology and history of Shoshoni Indians in this area."



Stephanie's job is to keep the Visitor Center open and greet the many people who visit the Hagerman Fossil Beds in winter. She also assists Annette Rousseau, the Monument's Education Specialist, in preparing next summer's programs and working with our new partnership program with Hagerman Library.

February Family Fossil Film Fest!

February 6 & 20, 2003 6:30-8 p.m.

Watch DVDs with us &
meet our park paleontologist.

Feb. 6: *Land Before Time*

Feb. 20: *Ice Age*

Admission is free. Popcorn is provided and children are welcome to bring their favorite blanket. Movie rentals donated by Movieland in Hagerman.

Japanese Landslide Expert Visits Monument

Last September a well-known landslide scientist from Japan visited the Hagerman Fossil Beds Monument. Dr. Osamu Nagai from the Japan Landslide Society spent a couple of days with NPS hydrogeologist Neal Farmer and translator Sandy Bosteder. The scientists' goal was to inspect geologic conditions where landslides are occurring to determine a needs assessment. Six slope failures have occurred in this area since 1979. The Fossil Beds as well as private property need to be protected as the landslides are still very active.

Upon his return to Japan, Dr. Nagai wrote about his visit in the international Journal of Japan Landslide Society.

He plans to return this year with a group of engineers and install equipment to monitor the landslides.



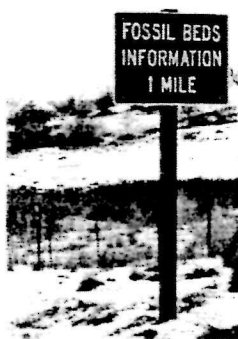
Hagerman Fossil Council Update

Hagerman Fossil Council, Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to provide fundraising, grant writing and volunteer support to assist the Fossil Beds Monument in its goals and objectives. Plans for Council projects in 2004 include publishing an educational coloring book and new postcards, a Fossil Beds Monument trail clean-up day, funding support for research, and holding an open house.

New members are welcome! The membership fee is \$10; send your tax-deductible donation to HFCI Inc., P.O. Box 56, Hagerman, ID 83332 or call (208) 837-4793 x5221.

New Signs Point the Way

The Idaho Transportation Department has recently installed signs along Interstate 84 near the Bliss exits and on State Highway 30 near Hagerman. The new signs will help direct travelers to Hagerman Fossil Beds Visitor Center.



Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument
Minidoka Internment National Monument
P.O. Box 570
Hagerman, ID 83332-0570

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

Volunteer Builds Bookracks

Glenn Andersen of Twin Falls used his woodworking skills to create two rolling book racks just in time for Fossil Days last May. The racks increased the sales area and made it more accessible. Glenn is a V.I.P. - a member of the Volunteer in Parks program. He lives in Twin Falls, and when he's not busy in his home woodshop he might be found in the Fossil Beds Visitor Center in Hagerman, cataloging the slide and photo collections.



Call the office at (208) 837-4793 to learn about joining the Volunteer In Parks program.

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