



# COPROLITE

*Coprolite* is the newsletter of the Geological Curators' Group, compiled and produced by Lu Allington-Jones, Senior Conservator at the Natural History Museum, London. Contributions from everyone are welcomed, and should be sent to the Newsletter Editor ([coprolite@geocurator.org](mailto:coprolite@geocurator.org)) by the appropriate deadline:

Spring edition issued in March - Deadline 15<sup>th</sup> February. Summer edition issued in June - Deadline 15<sup>th</sup> May. Autumn edition issued in September - Deadline 15<sup>th</sup> August. Winter edition issued in December - Deadline 15<sup>th</sup> November.

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Please log into our website and check that your contact details and preferences are correct and check whether you need to pay your subs (due from January 1st).



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[www.geocurator.org](http://www.geocurator.org)

## Events

### Webinars

The Geological Society of London is hosting "2021: The Year of Space!" A series of talks on our solar system are taking place throughout the year: The Geology of Pluto, by Dr Veronica Bray, University of Arizona. Online 5pm BST, 10th November 2021. <https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/YOS-The-geology-of-Pluto>

SedsOnline is an online webinar series sponsored by the International Association of Sedimentologists. They have a webinar every Wednesday at 4pm BST. <https://sedsonline.com/events/>

The Natural History Museum's Nature Live Online is continuing with its lunch-time webinars, frequently on geological topics, every Tuesday and Thursday. 28th September 2021 is Triassic Dive, all about fossil marine reptiles *Tanystropheus* <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/events/nature-live-online-triassic-dive.html>

### Conferences and Events

The Geological Society is hosting William Smith Virtual Meeting 2021: Geological Mapping – of Our World and Others 19th – 21st October 2021. <https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/wsmith21>

The annual conference of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology will take place online again this year, 1st – 5th November 2021. The abstract deadline has passed but general registration is now open. <https://vertpaleo.org/svp-annual-meeting/>

The Geologists' Association is hosting a special meeting Fossil Crustaceans Conference, to celebrate the life and work of Joe Collins, on 25th November 2021. Deadline for abstracts is 15th October 2021. <https://geologistsassociation.org.uk/conferences/joecollins/>

The Geological Society is hosting The Moon and Early Earth conference. To be held in person at the Geological Society, Burlington House, London, 29th – 30th November 2021. <https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/11-gsl-early-moon-and-earth>

The 3rd Palaeontological Virtual Congress will take place 1st – 15th December 2021. Deadline for abstracts is 20th September 2021. <http://palaeovc.org/>

The Palaeontological Association is holding their annual conference at the University of Manchester 18th – 20th December 2021. The deadline for Early Bird Registration and Abstracts is 30th September. Registration closes altogether 10th December. <https://www.palass.org/meetings-events/annual-meeting/2021/annual-meeting-2021-manchester-uk-registration-and-abstracts>

The Marine Reptile Conference will now take place in May 2022 (exact dates TBC). The decision to postpone for another year is due to the strong desire from polled delegates to have an "in-person" meeting. <http://www.marinereptiles.org/>

### Special Information

The exhibition Titus: T. rex is King is now open at Wollaton Hall and runs until the 31st August 2022. <https://wollatonhall.org.uk/titus/>

Elgin Museum is now open at weekends with tickets bookable online! Having closed to the public at the end of October 2019, The Moray Society is delighted that Elgin Museum has now reopened, with additional measures in place to ensure the safety of both visitors and volunteers. The Museum is open 11 am – 3 pm on Saturdays and Sundays and tickets can be booked online. The highlight of the 2021 season is the new exhibition, At the Water's Edge, which brings together fossils of the early tetrapod *Elginerpeton pancheni*, the crawler from Elgin, for the first time in 375 million years! Loans from National Museums Scotland, the British Geological Survey, and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History form the core of the exhibition, which has been made possible with a grant from the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund. <https://elginmuseum.org.uk/>

The Micropalaeontological Society is looking to fill a number of committee roles; Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Special Publications Officer, Publicity Officer, Newsletter Editor, Forum Group Secretary, Nanno Group Chair, Silicofossil Group Roles x2 (chair and secretary roles vacant). Please see their website for more information. Deadline for applications is 30th September 2021. They are particularly interested in applications from individuals from underrepresented minorities and early career researchers. <https://www.tmsoc.org/>

*Many thanks to Emma Nicholls, GCG Blog Editor, for collating this information.*



# News Feature

## Creswell Crags: A Phoenix Rising

Creswell Crags, one of the most significant Ice Age sites in the UK, and a well-loved visitor attraction is run by Creswell Heritage Trust, a registered charity. Going into the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown, we weren't sure that we would come out of the other side. Reliant on income from visitors and school trips, all of which had to stop, the future looked bleak.

However, the level of emergency funding the Trust was able to attract reflects its significance, both locally and nationally. With most staff furloughed, the small team remaining focused all efforts into emergency funding and online profile-raising activity. Funding came from Historic England, Bolsover District Council, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and, finally, the government's Culture Recovery Fund – as well as significant contributions from individual donations and a fundraising auction.

*Below: This Reindeer jaw (specimen no. CWCHT:PH881, approx. 75 mm in length) is one of the amazing finds from the site. It was found within Pin Hole and is believed to be from the middle of the last glacial period, around 40-55 thousand years old.*

© Creswell Heritage Trust



The leadership team were able to use this funding, and the quiet time in lockdown, to work with consultants, and the board of trustees, to look at what the future of Creswell Crags holds, as a resilient charity, an engaging visitor attraction and a site of international significance for archaeology, palaeontology and geology. The result is a plan which focuses on raising the profile of our important heritage and collection, telling our Ice Age story clearly and widely, and ensuring audiences connect with the layered past of the site. Events, going forward, will focus on helping visitors connect with the deep past, or on appreciating how humans interact with their environment, in the context of both human ingenuity and adaptability, and climate change, as well as the flora and fauna of the limestone landscape.

Our immediate plans involve engaging our audiences, and new audiences, on a deeper level. Our longer-term plans include working towards a redevelopment of our museum and visitor experience, to put a sharper focus on our collection and status as a museum and archaeological site. Audience focus groups tell us this is what our visitors want; especially in 2021, when staycationers have become a lot more aware of the attractions and curiosities on their doorstep.

Specific to the collections, we've been lucky to have received a few pots of funding to both help us improve conservation of the collections, and aid access to them. This includes not only the items held in the collection store, but also caves, which also fall under the responsibility of the Curator.

We received the AIM Collections Care Audit Grant with ICON and supported by The Pilgrim Trust. The audit, undertaken by Spencer & Fry, highlighted some important areas for us to improve in order to best preserve the collections.

Following on from the advice in the Collection Care Audit, the ICON Collections Care Stimulus Fund enabled a visit by Accredited Conservation Specialist, Lucie Mascord. This visit focused specifically on the osteological specimens within the palaeontology and modern comparative parts of our collections.

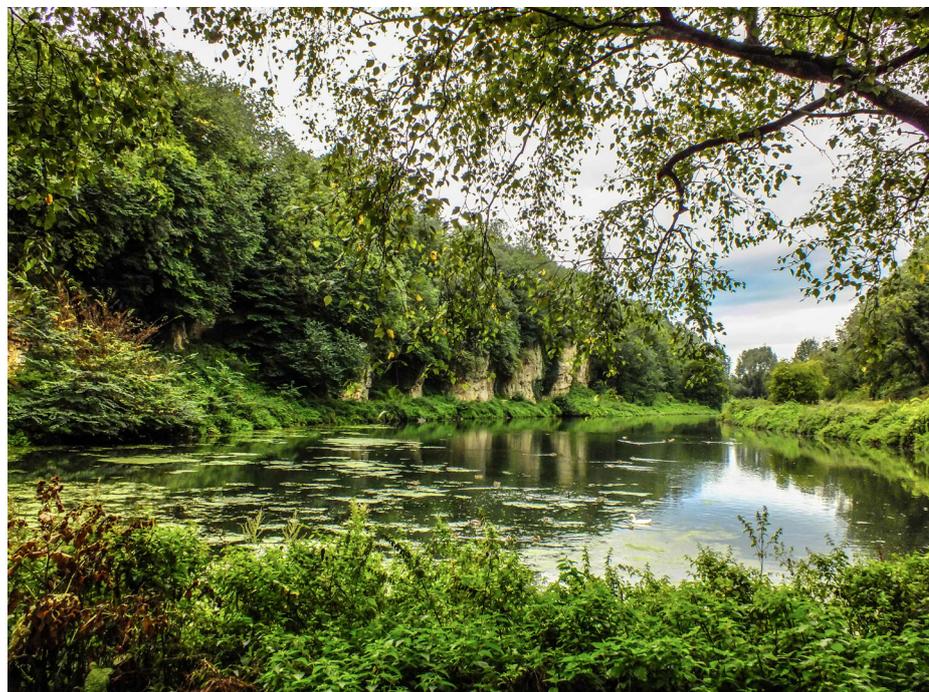
Historic England granted us the Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund, part of which funded an environmental assessment of the Ice Age rock art in Church Hole. Some of the rock art has been dated to more than 13,000 years old, and so we obviously want to do our best to preserve it. Tobit Curteis Associates LLP conducted the assessment, outlined potential threats and ways to mitigate some of these, and advised on best practices for monitoring the rock art for any deterioration.

*Left: The collections store © Cresswell Heritage Trust*



Funding from the DCMS Culture Recovery Fund allowed an access reviewer from EMBED to assess the entire site. This provided us with fantastic information to use in creating our new Access Plan, and most importantly to improve access to various aspects of the site for our current and future visitors.

Louise Revill, our Development Officer, must be acknowledged for writing such fantastic applications so that the above grants were awarded.



*Left: the beautiful Cresswell crags limestone gorge site. © Cresswell Heritage Trust*

Cresswell Crags is attracting new visitors every day as we go into 2021. We are also able to start to find new audiences across geographical boundaries, with an online talks programme and livestreamed education sessions to schools. Our aim is that Cresswell Crags becomes a household name for our Ice Age importance, a place to learn about the deep past, and to engage with our collection, caves and stunning limestone site.

by Dr Angharad Jones (Curator) and Rebecca Morris-Buck (Engagement and Programmes Manager)  
<https://www.cresswell-crags.org.uk/> @CresswellCrags



# Coprolite of the Quarter

Answer to last quarter's mystery coprolite:

Stratigraphy:  
Jurassic Lower Lias

Location:  
Dorset

Likely culprit:  
Marine reptile

Collection:  
Manchester Museum

Image:  
Nigel Larkin

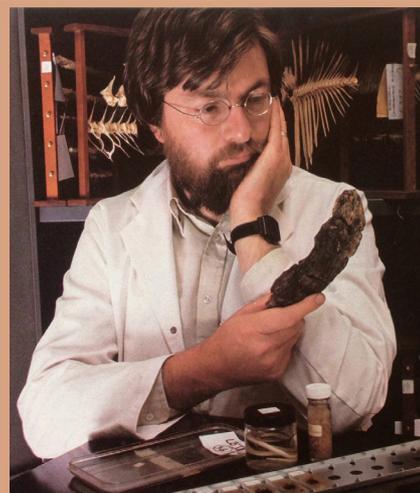


Last quarter's winner:

Congratulations to Professor David Martill, University of Portsmouth

## Guess the Coprolite

Please send guesses to [coprolite@geocurator.org](mailto:coprolite@geocurator.org)  
The answer and winner will be announced in the next quarterly newsletter. The winner will also receive an exclusive GCG tote bag.  
If there are several correct answers, one winner will be selected at random.



<https://www.geocurator.org/coprolite>