59th Symposium of Vertebrate Palaeontology and Comparative Anatomy

20th Meeting of the Symposium of Palaeontological Preparation and Conservation

Geological Curators' Group

Lyme Regis – 12th to 17th September 2011

First Circular

In 1811 Joseph Anning found the skull of a huge ichthyosaur, and with his sister Mary collected the whole animal. This and other later discoveries brought to public attention that realisation that there had once lived animals completely different from any alive today, and that the history of the earth was vastly deeper and more complex than had previously been imagined. This stimulation of both public and scientific imagination can in many ways be seen as the origin of the science of palaeontology in the UK. To mark the 200th anniversary of this significant event, the annual SVPCA meeting will be held in Lyme Regis, the historic town which has been the centre for the collection and preparation of fossils from the Jurassic Coast Natural World Heritage Site . With grants from the Lottery Heritage Fund, it has been possible to buy a number of important and spectacular specimens found on the coast over recent years, emphasising it's current scientific importance as well as it's unique historic status.

This year we are joined by the Geological Curators' Group, who are holding a seminar in association with the SPPC.

Because of the scientific importance of the area, and the public interest in the science of fossils and their interpretations, we plan to host three lectures open to the general public in the early evenings during the conference, two in Lyme Regis and one in Dorchester. These will be along the same lines as the talk given by Ryosuke Motani at the Street conference in 2009 which was well attended and well received.

Booking and Abstracts

Delegates will be able book their places for the conference via the web site shortly. An email will be sent out when the site is ready to receive bookings and abstract submissions.

Offers of papers should be accompanied by a short abstract of not more than 250 words. Your abstract will form the basis of our decision as to whether or not your paper will be included. Abstracts will be evaluated by an academic committee whose members will be posted on the web site. Your preference as to a poster or oral presentation will be taken into account as far as possible, depending on the availability of platform talks. Note that the abstract submitted will also constitute a submission for the symposium abstracts volume, which will be made available in PDF format from the SVPCA website.

In view of the theme of the meeting, we would like to get as many papers which refer to fossils from the Heritage Coast as possible, although this should not discourage authors from submitting offers of other papers.

The deadline for bookings and abstract submission is 4th July 2011.

Jones-Fenleigh Award

The Jones-Fenleigh fund awards grants covering registration fees, accommodation costs and basic subsistence to help delegates with no institutional financial support to attend the SVPCA.

Applications should be sent to lyme2011@svpca.org before Friday June 10th, 2011. They should include: - an abstract (see above for abstract formatting guidelines) - a covering letter explaining your circumstances and need, - and (where appropriate) a letter from your employer/institution supporting your application and including an assurance that you will not be financially supported by them. Selection of successful candidates will be made on the basis of the relevance, originality and general quality of the abstract. The successful applicants will be notified before the end of June.

Preliminary Programme:

Monday 12th September	Venue to be decided	SPPC/GCG Talks and Posters
Tuesday 13th	Venue to be decided	SPPC/GCG Talks and Posters Workshop visits
Tuesday evening	Venue to be decided	Icebreaker for SVPCA
Wednesday 14th	Marine Theatre	SVPCA Talks and Posters
Wednesday early evening	Marine Theatre	Public Lecture
Thursday 15th	Marine Theatre	SVPCA Talks and Posters
Thursday late afternoon	Dorchester Museum	SVPCA Talks
Thursday early evening	Dorchester Museum	Public Lecture
Thursday evening		To be arranged
Friday 16th	Marine Theatre	SVPCA Talks and Posters
Friday early evening	Marine Theatre	Public Lecture
Friday evening	Venue to be decided	Conference Dinner
Saturday 17th		Field Trip

Accommodation

Delegates will need to make their own arrangements for accommodation, but if they are made in good time there should be little problem in finding B&Bs, hotels, shared flats and houses or caravans. Contacts for the local tourist information are posted on the svpca.org web site.

Getting there

Lyme Regis is easily accessible by road and public transport. Axminster station is 5 miles away on the main Waterloo to Exeter line. Buses or taxis can be used to complete the journey.

More details can be found on the svpca.org web site.

Organisers

Richard Forrest (Electronic ether)
Richard Edmonds (Dorset)
Steve McLean (GCG)