

15th CONFERENCE ON AUSTRALASIAN VERTEBRATE EVOLUTION, PALAEOLOGY AND SYSTEMATICS

THIRD CIRCULAR

Tuesday 1 September – Saturday 5 September 2015

You are invited to attend the 15th Conference of Australasian Vertebrate Evolution Palaeontology (CAVEPS), a biennial meeting of palaeontologists and evolutionary biologists from Australia and around the world. The 2015 meeting will be held in the heart of Australia at Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

CAVEPS is a multidisciplinary forum that showcases research from all fields directed at understanding the past, present and future of Australasia's vertebrate fauna and their environments. Fields of research include but are not necessarily limited to: vertebrate morphology, phylogeny, palaeontology, development, taphonomy, taxonomy, evolution, zooarchaeology, palaeoecology and ancient environments. As in previous meetings, we encourage neontological researchers and researchers from outside Australasia who may have a more global focus to contribute to CAVEPS 2015

THE CONFERENCE

The meeting begins with a welcome function held at the Museum of Central Australia on the evening of Tuesday 1 September 2015. The remaining four days will consist of general sessions of presentations from the attendees and three themed symposia that reflect either the importance of Central Australia in understanding the evolution of Australian vertebrates or its strengths in the vertebrate fossil record. These include:

1. **Vertebrates and the Aridification of Australia:** This focuses on the evolutionary response of vertebrates and their communities to prolonged climate change, with keynote speaker Professor Peter Murray. The famous locality of Alcoota lies on the doorstep of Alice Springs. The site preserves Australia's oldest megafauna and records the response of the Australian biota to the onset of aridification. What better way to celebrate the return of CAVEPS to the centre of Australia than with a symposium highlighting the latest research on the evolutionary response of our vertebrates to aridification. We encourage authors to submit abstracts on all

aspects of palaeoenvironmental change and vertebrate evolution in the late Cenozoic. Symposium Convenor: Adam Yates – adamm.yates@nt.gov.au

2. **Archosauria:** Charting the evolution of birds, crocodylians and their stem lineages in Australasia will be the focus of keynote speaker Professor Anusuya Chinsamy-Turan. Mesozoic archosaurs are ever popular subjects with the general public and researchers alike. Recent decades have seen a flowering of dinosaur, pterosaur and crocodyliform discoveries and research in Australia. But the crown groups of the Cenozoic have fascinating tales to tell as well. The recent unravelling of the volant dispersal of ratites is an excellent case in point. Research on new fossils, molecular phylogenetics and ancient DNA has completely overturned old ideas about how the southern land masses got their large flightless birds. This symposium aims to bring together recent research on the palaeobiology, biogeography and evolution of birds, crocodiles and their Mesozoic forebears in Australasia. Symposium Convenor: Adam Yates – adamm.yates@nt.gov.au
3. **The intersection of Zooarchaeology and Palaeontology:** Zooarchaeology is the study of animal remains from archaeological sites that can help inform on human-animal interactions including what species people preferred to hunt, which specific body parts they selected, and how these were butchered and processed. Vertebrate palaeontology and zooarchaeology are in many ways overlapping disciplines having common interests in various areas including taphonomy, site formation processes, seasonality and palaeoenvironmental reconstruction. Yet, in Australia these two disciplines have not generally shared ideas. This symposium aims to facilitate dialogue between these interrelated research areas, and encourages abstracts covering all aspects of zooarchaeology and faunal analysis. Symposium Convenor: Jillian Garvey – J.Garvey@latrobe.edu.au

The conference will conclude with a spectacular outdoor dinner to be held at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station, amid historic buildings and the beautiful natural backdrop of riverine bushland. Please see the attached map for the location of this and other events.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Professor Peter Murray

Described most succinctly as “a true legend of ‘strayan palaeobiology’”, Peter Murray is an Emeritus Curator of Palaeontology at the Museum of Central Australia. In a career spanning more than three decades he was instrumental in developing and interpreting the Alcoota site. He was largely responsible for building up the Museum’s collection of more than 10 000 vertebrate fossil specimens. He is the winner of the 2013 Riversleigh Society Medal for excellence in promoting the understanding of Australian prehistory. He

is a well-known author of many popular science books and is an accomplished artist. His illustrations of fossils and prehistoric animals adorn many books, posters and websites on palaeontology. Perhaps most relevant to this conference, he coined the name 'CAVEPS' for the meeting held in Alice Springs in 1991.

Professor Anusuya Chinsamy-Turan

Hailing from South Africa, Anusuya is recognised as a global expert on palaeohistology, the study of the microstructure of bones of extinct vertebrates. She has had a distinguished career including the directorship of natural history collections of the Iziko Museums, South Africa. She is the recipient of many prestigious awards, not limited to the 2005 South African Woman of the Year and the 2013 World Academy of Science, sub-saharan prize for the popularisation of science. Apart from her impressive list of peer reviewed publications she is also the author of several books, both popular and academic, on the science of palaeontology and palaeohistology. She is currently the Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Cape Town.

Doctor Richard Cosgrove

Richard has researched and taught in Australian archaeology for over 30 years. He has worked in many places throughout Australia and internationally. He specialises in faunal analysis from archaeological sites and has worked extensively on the humanly hunted fauna from ice age cave sites. He is an Associate Professor at La Trobe University in Melbourne. He has taught Australian Indigenous archaeology, zooarchaeology, rock art, early human evolution, archaeological methods and techniques and, directed the Neds Corner Archaeological Field School over the last 10 years. He works closely with Indigenous communities and has trained and mentored heritage officers during field work. He has been awarded 6 consecutive Australian Research Council Discovery grants, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and the Australian Academy of Sciences grants. His impressive CV also involves public outreach through engagement with television and has appeared in the SBS television documentary *First Foot Prints: Australia Before Captain Cook* and the BBC Channel 5 film *Where We Come From*.

GETTING AROUND

A bus will be available to transport people to and from their hotels to the opening function at the Museum of Central Australia on Tuesday 1 September 2015. The bus will pick up from each hotel so please let our conference organisers know in advance which hotel you are staying at if you require a pick up. The bus will be available again to transport people to the conference dinner on Saturday 5 of September 2015.

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

In addition to the main meeting the following extra events will be held in conjunction with CAVEPS 2015:

A **scientific drawing workshop** will be held by Peter Murray on Tuesday 1 September 2015 at the Museum of Central Australia from 9am to 4pm with a one hour lunch break. The cost of the workshop is \$25 per head and places are limited to 15 participants

A **pre-conference field tour** will be run over two nights from Saturday 29 August through to Monday 31 August 2015. This trip will take in vertebrate fossil sites south of Alice Springs, including Palaeozoic marine vertebrates, Oligocene terrestrial vertebrates and an early Holocene lakeside community as well as the spectacular natural features of Rainbow Valley and Chambers Pillar. This tour will cost \$535 and includes all meals and a swag. Participants may bring their own sleeping bag or hire one at an additional small fee.

A **post-conference field trip** to the Alcoota Scientific Reserve will be run over night from Sunday 6 September to Monday 7 September 2015, returning in the afternoon (so if you are planning to go on this trip please make sure you have accommodation for Monday night). The Alcoota Scientific Reserve includes late Miocene outcrops of the Waite Formation which bear the Alcoota and Ongeva local fauna. The Alcoota local fauna is derived from a large, concentrated bone bed that is estimated to contain the remains of perhaps 3000 individual animals including diprotodontids, kangaroos, mihirung birds and crocodiles. The cost of this trip will be \$380 and includes meals and a swag. Participants may bring their own sleeping bag or hire one at an additional small fee.

Both field trips are limited to 15 seats, but if there is sufficient interest we will arrange a second tour bus.

REGISTRATION

You can register for this conference and submit your abstract (no more than 500 words please) by going to this website:

<http://www.magnt.net.au/#!caveps-conference-alice-springs/c1sse>

Registration is in two stages:

- Fill out all fields in the online form
- Then pay your fees online:

- Select your conference fees
- Select any additional extras including field trips or T-shirts. Please note that you must select a size if you order a T-shirt.
- 'Checkout' your cart
- You will then be taken to Paypal for payment
- You will then return to the CAVEPS page.

If you are having difficulty paying online please make sure you are using a current web browser (such as Firefox or Chrome. Internet Explorer is not supported). Also please ensure that pop-up windows are enabled.

CHANGE IN REGISTRATION PRICES

Based on recent feedback from the student community, we are lowering the price of CAVEPS registration for full-time students to \$200. The regular price will remain unchanged at \$500.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

The deadline for abstracts is **Wednesday 15 July 2015 (a ten day extension from the original due date)**. Conference registrations without abstracts will be accepted up to Tuesday 18 August 2015.

CONFERENCE T-SHIRTS

We will be printing conference T-shirts featuring the conference logo. If you would like to order one or more of these shirts please do so on the registration page and then pick up your shirt at the registration desk of the conference. The cost is \$25 per T-shirt.

ACCOMODATION

Alice Springs offers a range of accommodation to suit every budget and taste, including luxury hotels, self-catering apartments, motels and hostels. We recommend the following establishments which have deals for CAVEPS delegates:

Lasseters Hotel – This is the official conference hotel located right next door to the Convention Centre. Standard Rooms are \$125 per night, Deluxe Room \$145 are per night. Breakfast is \$20 per person, per day when booked with accommodation. Quote 'CAVEPS15' when booking.

Phone: 08 8950 7770.

Email: reservations.lhc@lasseters.com.au

Doubletree Hilton - A short two-minute-walk from the Convention Centre. Rooms are \$135 per night.

Phone: 08 8950 8000.

CAVEPS reservation page:

http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/A/ASPDADI-GCAVA-20150901/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG#hotel

Alice in the Territory – Backpacker-style accommodation. A short five-minute walk to the Convention Centre. Dorm share (4 beds) start from \$35 per night. Discount continental breakfast (\$9 per person per day) if included in the package when making your booking.

Phone: 02 9373 5984.

Book online: <http://www.aliceintheterritoryalicesprings.com>

Chifley Alice Springs Resort - A 20-30 minute walk from the Convention Centre.

Rooms from \$135 per night.

Phone: 08 8951 4545.

Online reservations: <http://www.silverneedlehotels.com/chifley/alice-springs>

If you wish to look for other accommodation you may find it here:

<http://www.discovercentralaustralia.com/>

THE CONVENTION CENTRE

The Alice Springs Convention Centre will be hosting the conference. It is located conveniently close to town within a 15 minute walk from the civic centre. It's accommodation is with the Lasseter's Hotel and Casino which is located right next door to the Convention Centre and has spectacular views of the surrounding area.

The Convention Centre hosts its own restaurant and Alice Springs town centre has a multitude of eateries is within walking distance for those interested in trying other venues.

If you have any queries please send them to: strehlow@nt.gov.au.

We look forward to seeing you in Alice Springs for CAVEPS 2015!

Adam Yates

SENIOR CURATOR, EARTH SCIENCES

MAP OF ALICE SPRINGS

