

SCIENCE

Published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), *Science* serves its readers as a forum for the presentation and discussion of important issues related to the advancement of science, including the presentation of minority or conflicting points of view, rather than by publishing only material on which a consensus has been reached. Accordingly, all articles published in *Science*—including editorials, news and comment, and book reviews—are signed and reflect the individual views of the authors and not official points of view adopted by the AAAS or the institutions with which the authors are affiliated.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science was founded in 1848 and incorporated in 1874. Its objectives are to further the work of scientists, to facilitate cooperation among them, to foster scientific freedom and responsibility, to improve the effectiveness of science in the promotion of human welfare, to advance education in science, and to increase public understanding and appreciation of the importance and promise of the methods of science in human progress.

Membership/Circulation

Director: Michael Spinella
Deputy Director: Marlene Zendell
Member Services: Rebecca Dickerson, *Manager*; Mary Curry, *Supervisor*; Pat Butler, Helen Williams, Laurie Baker, *Representatives*
Marketing: Dee Valencia, *Manager*; Jane Pennington, *Europe Manager*; Hilary Baar, *Associate*; Angela Mumeka, *Coordinator*
Research: Renuka Chander, *Manager*
Business and Finance: Kevin Bullock, Nina Araujo de Kobes, *Coordinators*
Computer Specialist: Chris Hageman
Science Member Services
 Washington, DC: 202-326-6417
Other AAAS Programs: 202-326-6400

Advertising and Finance

Associate Publisher: Beth Rosner
Advertising Sales Manager: Susan A. Meredith
Recruitment Advertising Manager: Janis Crowley
Business Manager: Deborah Rivera-Wienhold
Finance: Randy Yi, *Senior Analyst*; Shawn Williams, *Analyst*
Marketing: John Meyers, *Manager*; Allison Pritchard, *Associate*
Traffic: Carol Maddox, *Manager*; Christine Pierpoint, *Associate*
Recruitment: Terri Seiter Azie, *Assistant Manager*; Pamela Sams, *Production Associate*; Celeste Miller, Bethany Ritchey, Rachael Wilson, *Sales*; Debbie Cummings, *European Sales*
Reprints: Corrine Harris
Permissions: Lincoln Richman
Exhibits Coordinator: Arlene Ennis
Administrative Assistant: Nyana Gollopp de King
PRODUCT ADVERTISING SALES: East Coast/E. Canada: Richard Teeling, 201-904-9774, FAX 201-904-9701 • Midwest/Southeast: Elizabeth Mosko, 312-665-1150, FAX 312-665-2129 • West Coast/W. Canada: Neil Boylan, 415-673-9265, FAX 415-673-9267 • UK, Scandinavia, France, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands: Andrew Davies, (44) 1-457-838-519, FAX (44) 1-457-838-898 • Germany/Switzerland/Austria: Tracey Peers, (44) 1-270-760-108, FAX (44) 1-270-759-597 • Japan: Mashy Yoshikawa, (3) 3235-5961, FAX (3) 3235-5852
RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING SALES: US: 202-326-6555, FAX 202-682-0816 • Europe: Gordon Clark, (44) 1-81539-5211, FAX (44) 1223-302068 • Australia/New Zealand: Keith Sandell, (61) 02-922-2977, FAX (61) 02-922-1100
 Send materials to *Science* Advertising, 1333 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Information for Contributors appears on pages 112–114 of the 6 January 1995 issue. Editorial correspondence, including requests for permission to reprint and reprint orders, should be sent to 1333 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Science World Wide Web address: <http://www.aaas.org>
Other Internet addresses: science_editors@aaas.org (for general editorial queries); science_letters@aaas.org (for letters to the editor); science_reviews@aaas.org (for returning manuscript reviews); membership@aaas.org (for member services); science_classifieds@aaas.org (for submitting classified advertisements); science_advertising@aaas.org (for product advertising)

LETTERS

Significant players?

Volunteer and amateur fossil diggers (right) can make valuable contributions to museum and university collections, but they need to know the rules of the game. Prominent “coaches” in paleontology write optimistically in light of a dinosaur discovery by nonprofessionals that was ruled “out of bounds.” Other letters discuss Florida scrub jays, Italian research funding, interleukin-12, downsizing, and “idiot savants.”



DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Helpful Fossil Hunters

It is unfortunate that the Parker family had the misfortune of not realizing who owned the land where they discovered the *Albertosaurus*, as reported in the article “Amateur fossil hunters dig up trouble in Montana” by Carol Potera (News & Comment, 14 April, p. 198). Amateur paleontologists are an important resource to many of the paleontology programs in Colorado. Many professionals have amateur paleontologists listed as responsible personnel on their state and federal permits. We go to extra efforts to ensure that the amateurs who work with us collect in a professional fashion and know the laws and ethics that pertain to collecting. For vertebrate fossils, the laws and regulations are clear: To collect on public land you need a permit, and on private lands you need the owner's permission.

Our institutions are the major repositories for fossils in Colorado. None of our three institutions has made an offer to the Peebles family to collect the *Albertosaurus*.

Richard K. Stucky

Denver Museum of Natural History,
 Denver, CO 80205–5798, USA

Peter Robinson

Museum, University of Colorado,
 Boulder, CO 80309, USA

Brooks Britt

Museum of Western Colorado,
 Grand Junction, CO 81502–5020, USA

As a member of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP), I am concerned about some implications in Don Miller's letter, “Amateur fossil hunting” (9 June, p. 1420). SVP's committees on outreach and on education are working to support the well-

recognized contributions made by the avocational community, and most major public museums in the United States have strong outreach programs as well. Miller is correct in saying that at this time it is illegal for avocational paleontologists to collect fossil vertebrates from federal public lands. The SVP is helping to develop legislation designed to enfranchise avocational collecting on these lands.

In 1991, Richard Stucky of the Denver Museum of Natural History conducted a survey of 33 public institutions in the United States (1). Of 1.8 million cataloged fossil vertebrate specimens, 48% had been acquired from U.S. public lands; 94% of the 1.8 million were collected by professional scientists; 6% were donated by avocational paleontologists; and 0.3% were acquired from commercial paleontologists. I hope that the outreach programs cited above will increase the contributions made by the avocational community.

It is deplorable that the commercialization of fossils has resulted in monetary concerns supplanting scientific and educational ones. SVP is also working to ensure that our nation's heritage of fossils is retained in the public domain, rather than being lost from it through commercial activities.

Michael O. Woodburne

Society of Vertebrate Paleontology,
 c/o Department of Earth Sciences,
 University of California,
 Room 1432, Geology Building,
 Riverside, CA 92521, USA

References

1. R. K. Stucky and S. Ware, *Fossil Collections in Museums* (Denver Museum of Natural History, Denver, CO, 1991).