

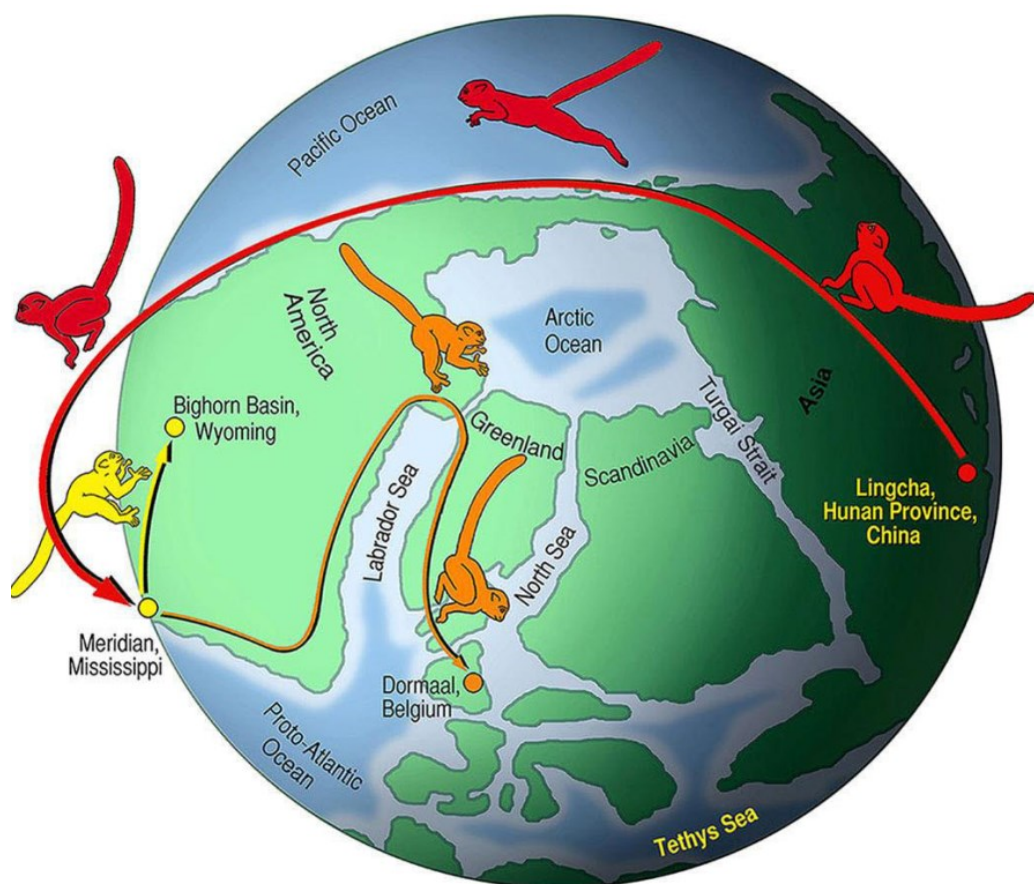
MISSISSIPPI GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

eBULLETIN

Volume 74

No. 1

September 2025



SEPTEMBER SPEAKER

Howard Duhom - Viking Engineering

MISSISSIPPI FOSSILS IN THE NEWS

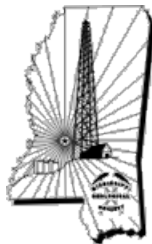
Dr. David Dockery III, RPG

SPE SPORTING CLAY SHOOT

November 12, 2025



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2025-2026 MGS MEETING SCHEDULE

When	What/Who	Where
September 10	Howard Duhom - Viking Engineering	River Hills - 11:30am
October 8		River Hills - 11:30am
November 12		River Hills - 11:30am
TBD	Christmas Party	TBD
January 14		River Hills - 11:30am
February 11		River Hills – 11:30am
March 11		River Hills – 11:30am
April 8		River Hills - 11:30am
May 13		River Hills - 11:30am
TBD	Spring Fling	TBD

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TBD
TBD
TBD
TBD
TBD
TBD
TBD
TBD

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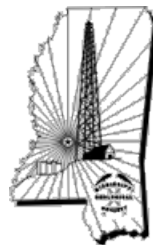
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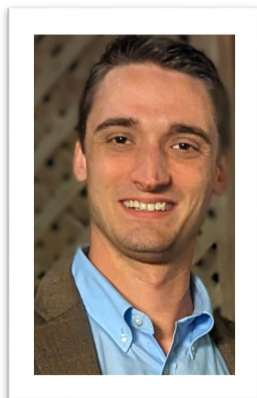
Geologist

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER



MGS Members,

As we gather for our first meeting of the Fall, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for the privilege of serving as President of the Mississippi Geological Society. It has been an honor to work alongside such a dedicated and passionate group of professionals who care deeply about advancing geoscience in our state.

Our September meeting will be held on **Wednesday, September 10, 2025**, at **11:30 AM** at the **River Hills Club in Jackson**. We're pleased to welcome **Howard Duhon**, Principal Engineering Advisor at Viking Engineering, who will present "**A Study of the Role of Oil in World War II and Its Strategic Impact.**" Mr. Duhon brings over 50 years of experience in oil and gas consulting and systems engineering, and his insights into the wartime role of petroleum promise to be both fascinating and timely. Lunch will begin at 11:30 AM, followed by the presentation at noon. The cost to attend is \$25, and payment by check or exact change is appreciated.

As I step down from my role, I'm proud to pass the torch to **Tim Palmer**, who will be taking over presidential duties. Tim brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to our mission, and I have no doubt he will lead the Society with vision and integrity.

Thank you all for your support, your engagement, and your enthusiasm throughout my tenure. Whether it was through attending meetings, mentoring students, contributing to the Boland Scholarship Fund, or simply sharing your expertise, you've helped make this Society stronger and more vibrant.

I look forward to continuing as a member and seeing the great work that lies ahead. Let's keep building momentum — together.

Warm regards,

Jonathan R. Leard

President, Mississippi Geological Society (2023–2025)



SEPTEMBER SPEAKER

Howard Duhon



“A Study of the Role of Oil in World War II and Its Strategic Impact”

**Howard Duhon
Viking Engineering**

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

11:30 am Lunch/ 12:00pm Discussion

**The River Hills Club
Jackson, Mississippi**

Abstract:

In World War II (WW2), for the first time, the major armies' frontline striking forces were completely or mostly mechanized. These armies ran on oil. Both the Allies and the Axis Powers struggled at times to provide fuel to their armies, air forces, and navies, but the struggles were very different.

-

Biography:

Howard Duhon, SPE, is a principal engineering advisor at Viking Engineering (a GATE Energy company). He has served as Technical Director for Projects, Facilities, and Construction on the SPE Board of Directors, a member of the *Oil and Gas Facilities* Editorial Board, and on many SPE committees. He is currently the chair of the SPE Delta Section. He has 50 years of work experience. For the past 35 years, he has been in oil and gas consulting roles with more than 20 years being involved specifically in systems engineering.



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\$ **62.84**

▲ 0.58 0.93%

SETTLEMENT PRICE 09/08/2025

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▲ 0.035 1.13%

SETTLEMENT PRICE 09/08/2025

\$3.090





MISSISSIPPI OFFICE OF GEOLOGY

New Publications

The Mississippi Office of Geology is pleased to announce the publication of the following maps for the month of December

[OF-356 Geologic Map of the Bovina Quadrangle Hinds and Warren Counties, Mississippi](#)

[Native Lithic Materials of Mississippi](#)

[OF-349 Geologic Map of the Sharon Southeast Quadrangle Rankin, Madison, and Scott Counties, Mississippi](#)

[OF-348 Geologic Map of the Shoccoe Quadrangle Madison and Rankin Counties, Mississippi](#)

[OF-347 Geologic Map of the Canton Quadrangle Madison County, Mississippi](#)





MONTHLY POST

Dr. David Dockery III RPG

MISSISSIPPI FOSSILS IN THE NEWS

David T. Dockery III, RPG

Mississippi fossils should be in our local news, but I can remember a time they were not. On March 29, 2008, I was off from work cutting up a large fallen tree from our road through the woods when my wife Mary came with her cell phone for an interview request by a Pittsburg newspaper concerning a new fossil primate species from Mississippi. The Carnegie Museum of Natural History published the article and contacted me before their press release asking which newspapers in Mississippi should get the release. I listed the Jackson and Meridian newspapers. After the news release, papers across the country ran the story, but it was not covered by any paper in the state from which the new species was found. Figure 1 shows an artist's concept of what this primate looked like and its mi-

Figure 1

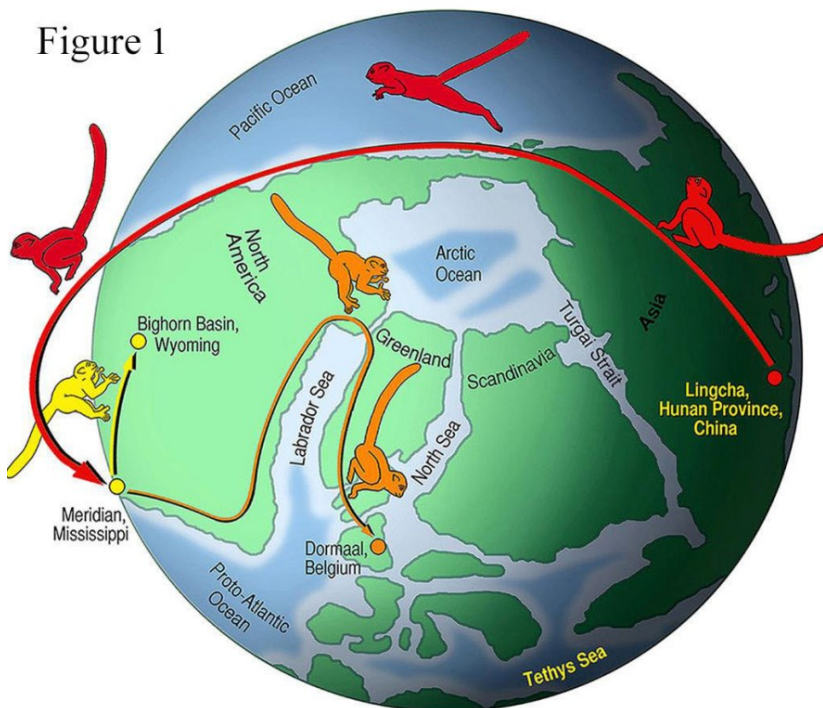


Illustration: Mark A. Klingler / Carnegie Museum of Natural History

Figure 459. Migration route of early primates 55.5 million years ago from China, around the eastern Pacific and northern Gulf of Mexico to Meridian, Mississippi, and then north to Wyoming and east to Belgium by way of the North American east coast and Greenland (according to Beard, 2008); Image 1610.



Figure 457. Artist reconstruction of *Teilhardina magnoliana*, an early primate from the T4 sand at the Red Hot Truck Stop locality at Meridian, Mississippi (DVD 57; Image 1007).



MONTHLY POST

Dr. David Dockery III RPG

The following is from an article on the new species from the October 2008 issue of *Environmental News* with citations from newspaper nationwide: *Teilhardina magnoliana* was characterized in a Carnegie Museum of Natural History press release as a tiny primate weighing approximately 28 grams or about one ounce. Like other small primates it was an “acrobatic leaper and proficient climber, and it probably ate insects, fruits, sap and gum.” The discovery in Meridian has generated much national media attention this year. The *Pittsburgh Tribune Review* (March 4, 2008) described *T. magnoliana* as a wide-eyed primate small enough to fit in the palm of a child’s hand. The *Boston Globe’s* website (March 3, 2008) said the animal was so tiny that one could loll in a tablespoon. *The New York Times* (March 4, 2008) cited Beard as saying it was about the size of the pygmy mouse lemur of Madagascar, the tiniest living primate. The paper also cited Peter Wilf, a paleobotanist at Penn State who studied fossil leaves at the Meridian site, as describing the ancient landscape in which the primate lived as “a subtropical forest of shrubs and tall trees, flowering plants and ferns, sassafras and sumac.” *The San Diego Union-Tribune* (March 6, 2008) compared the appearance of *T. magnoliana* with that of “the big-eyed tarsiers of Southeast Asia or a small monkey.” Based on the numerous press accounts, one can see that Mississippi is a happening place for paleontology and for scientific research.

In recent years a collaboration between MDEQ Office of Geology and Office of Public Relations, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, and Clarion Ledger writer Brian Broom has put Mississippi fossils and geology in the news. On November 17, 2021, Brian published an article on our geologic mapping work in the Clarion Ledger, showing James Starnes sieving for artifacts. Some paleolithic projectile points indicated an age for surficial sediments of more than 11,000 years rather than 4,000 years as once mapped. The article was titled “Rewriting the Delta’s history.” On August 21, 2022, he published a front-page article on the excavation of a mosasaur by our staff and the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, showing two impressive tooth-filled jaws resting side by side. The title stated “80-million-year-old ‘sea dragon’ skeleton found in Mississippi.” On September 19, 2022, he published a front-page article on the fossil whale, a *Basilosaurus*, found during the excavation of the Ross Barnett Reservoir. We still have two of the large vertebrae at our office.

Brian published 5 front-page articles on Mississippi fossils and geology in 2024. On April 23, 2024, he published on a saber-toothed tiger toe bone find. On June 9, 2024, he wrote about a new book on the Archaeology of Mississippi. This book had a geoarchaeological section written by James Starnes, a contributing author. On July 7, 2024, he featured the excavation of a dinosaur in northeast Mississippi. On August 13, 2024, Brian published the discovery and excavation of a mammoth tusk in Yazoo County. Geologists from our Surface and Environmental Geology Divisions hauled the 600-pound plaster jacket with the tusk out of a creek bottom. During the excavation, a fossil whale vertebra from the Yazoo Clay was discovered. Brian put that on the front page on September 18, 2024, paper. If all this wasn’t enough, Brian featured a large front-page picture of a butterfly taken by James Starnes in the May 28, 2024, issue.



MONTHLY POST

Dr. David Dockery III RPG

In 2025, Brian put fossils on the cover of four issues of the Clarion Ledger in a five-month period. The headlines are grouped by publication date in Figure 2.

They include: (1) a large mosasaur vertebra (featured first in #FossilFriday) in the April 25, 2025,

Clarion Ledger

FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2025 | CLARIONLEDGER.COM PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

What is a giant mosasaur?

Miss. geologists unearth 'sea monster' fossil



This fossilized vertebra from an extinct marine reptile known as a mosasaur was recently discovered in Mississippi. The animal has been described as a sea monster and grew to lengths over 50 feet and weighed up to 20,000 pounds.

JAMES STARNES/MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Brian Broom
Mississippi Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

A team of geologists was mapping an area near Starkville on April 15 when they came across a fossilized vertebra from an animal that lived millions of years ago. When it was pulled from the mud along a creek they realized it was from a sea monster known as a mosasaur and the size of it shocked them.

"This is a true, true sea monster," said James Starnes Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality's Office of Geology. "This is about as big as mosasaurs get."

While there were many different species of mosasaurs, this one was identified as *Mosasaurus hoffmanni*.

"This is the largest of the mosasaurs in the very, very last part of the Cretaceous (period)," Starnes said. "This animal can grow up to 50-something feet."

"This is a big animal. The maximum (weight) is about 20,000 pounds that this animal could have gotten. This is bigger than most dinosaurs walking around on land."

Mosasaurus were an apex predator of the seas

Mosasaurus were marine reptiles; lizards that adapted to swimming and living in seas, and the world they knew was quite different than the world we live in today. For instance, most of Mississippi was the bottom of a sea.

And that sea would have largely been ruled by apex predators mosasaurs. According to MDEQ, mosasaurs were very fast swimmers and highly agile which made them excellent hunters.

Their mouths were a thing of nightmares. Their jaws had up to 60 dagger-like teeth that curved inward to help grab and secure the prey they ate whole. As if that wasn't enough, there was an extra set of teeth in the roofs of their mouths to make sure no meal got away. Those meals consisted of fish, swimming shellfish called ammonites, other marine reptiles and likely, each other.

T. rex, a contemporary of mosasaurs, may have dominated on land, but mosasaurs were one of the fiercest creatures of the seas.

Finding a 66 million-year-old fossil in Mississippi

Starnes said he and co-workers Tim

See MOSASAUR, Page 2A



MONTHLY POST

Dr. David Dockery III RPG

(2) “A Fossil Frontier” article featuring the mammoth tusk and the find of a saber-toothed cat jaw in the May 11, 2025, issue,



‘A FOSSIL FRONTIER’



George Phillips, paleontology curator at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, poses for a photo with a mammoth tusk fossil that was recently found in Madison County. It's just one of countless fossils that make Mississippi a fossil-rich state. LAUREN WITTE/CLARION LEDGER

From saber-toothed cats to prehistoric whales, this state is rich in archaeology

Brian Broom Mississippi Clarion Ledger | USA TODAY NETWORK

Mississippi is rich in fossils from creatures that lived long ago, and in recent years, many fascinating finds have turned up.

In 2024, Sherry Couey of Rosedale found a part of a jaw from a saber-toothed cat while looking for fossils along the Mississippi River.

About the same time, fossil-hunter Eddie Templeton of Madison found the first Columbian mammoth tusk ever discovered in the state while walking along a creek in Madison County. Amazingly, Templeton walked further down the creek and found a vertebra from an ancient whale known as a basilosaur.

Other recent finds include a vertebra from an extinct sea monster called mosasaur, bones from a giant ground sloth and bones from an 82 million-year-old dinosaur known as a hadrosaur.

So, how does Mississippi hold so many relics of the past that range from dinosaurs, to extinct cats to monstrous whales of the sea? It comes down to the right conditions, an abundance of large animals and an



Sherry Couey of Rosedale holds a jaw bone from a saber-toothed cat she found while hunting fossils. The giant cats became extinct about 11,000 years ago the jaw is the first documented in Mississippi.

JO-JO AGUIZZI/SPECIAL TO THE CLARION-LEDGER

See FOSSILS, Page 4A



MONTHLY POST

Dr. David Dockery III RPG

(3) the excavation of a fossil whale with our new geologist Natalya Usachenko on the cover in the June 20, 2025, issue [Natalya is also in the 5th series of BBC's *Walking with Dinosaurs*]

Clarion Ledger
FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 2025 | CLARIONLEDGER.COM PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK



Natalya Usachenko is photographed with rib bones from ancient whale known as a basilosaurus that were recently found in Yazoo County. JAMES STARNES/VIDEO

Bones of nightmarish, extinct whale found in Mississippi

Irian Broom
Reporter Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Scientists searching for fossils in Yazoo County recently came across an interesting find — bones of a giant whale that was an apex predator of its day.

The whale is known as a basilosaurus and finding remains of them isn't slightly unusual, but these well-preserved bones are unusual because they offer insight into both the monstrous creature's life and what happened to it after death.

"These were the top predators at the time," said James Starnes, associate state geologist with the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Office of Geology. "These things were huge."

"They got up to 60-to-70 feet long. These things were more ferocious than mosasaurs. These things were crazy dangerous."

The discovery came while a new Office of Geology team member, Natalya Usachenko, was being taken to see Mississippi geology firsthand. It was a day in the field that paid off.



With fearsome teeth and growing up to 70 feet long, the ancient whale basilosaurus, like this reproduction in the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, were apex predators roughly 35 million years ago. BARBARA GAUNT/CLARION LEDGER

The bones were sticking out of an exposed layer of the Yazoo clay.

"There were two ribs that were sticking out of the edge. It was super exciting. It's never not exciting to find evidence of ancient life."

Ancient is a key word. These whales lived in the neighborhood of 35 million years ago when much of Mississippi was under water. The fact that two bones that apparently came from the same individual were found close to

Geologists find bones of a basilosaurus

"We were kind of exploring to see what we could see," Usachenko said.

See BONES, Page 2A



MONTHLY POST

Dr. David Dockery III RPG

(4) the find of a mastodon jaw with a large tooth in the August 14, 2025, issue.

Clarion Ledger
THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 2025 | CLARIONLEDGER.COM PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK



Recently, Tynn Sanders, 14, left, of the Scotland community in Yazoo County, and his cousin J.P. Ketchum, 15, of Bentonia, found a mastodon jaw while playing in a creek on family land. They donated the fossil to the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science in Jackson. PHOTOS BY BARBARA GAUNT/CLARION LEDGER

Teens find jaw of extinct Mastodon in Yazoo County

Brian Broom
Mississippi Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Two Mississippi teenagers went to a creek on a hot summer day in June and not only did they find relief from the heat, they discovered a fossil from a giant animal that went extinct more than 10,000 years ago.

"It was a weird thing," said J.P. Ketchum, 15, of Bentonia. "I was walking down a creek behind my house and stumbled upon it."

"It was me and my cousin. We went down there to play around and cool off. Half of it was in the rocks and half of it was in the water. I hit my foot on it and didn't know what it was until I dug it out and saw it was a bone."

Ketchum was with his cousin, Tynn Sanders, 14, of the nearby Scotland community in Yazoo County. What they found was a part of a large jaw with a single molar in it.

"We pulled it out of the ground and thought it was a big old bear bone or cow bone," Sanders said.

After thinking about it, the two concluded it was something bigger than a cow or bear. It was also very heavy. Ketchum estimated the weight to be 70-90 pounds. It was so heavy, the two left it beside the creek and came back the next day with a book bag to carry the jaw in.

"It made it 100 times easier," Sanders said.

Mississippi teens shocked by finding jaw of ice age mastodon

Ketchum and Sanders knew what the jaw wasn't, but they didn't know what it was. So, a few days later Ketchum took it to the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science for identification. It was identified as the jaw of a mastodon, a creature that went extinct roughly 10,000 years ago.

"I was honestly really shocked," Ketchum said. "I didn't think I'd find something like that."

Sanders had a similar reaction when he heard the news.



The mastodon jaw fossil, seen Aug. 12 at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science in Jackson, is from an old adult mastodon and has only one tooth intact. The ancient elephants went extinct over 10,000 years ago.

"We pulled it out of the ground and thought it was a big old bear bone or cow bone."

Tynn Sanders
Found mastodon jaw with his cousin

"Personally, I was really surprised and I was confused at first," Sanders said. "Wow, this is actually a bone from an animal that lived thousands and thousands of years ago. I was surprised. I was astounded, even."

Are mammoths and mastodons the same thing?

Mammoths and mastodons are similar. Both resemble modern elephants such as the Asian elephant. Both mastodons and Columbian mammoths, a cousin of the more famous woolly mammoth, lived in Mississippi and went extinct at about the same time. But they are distinctly different.

One feature that differs is the shape of the tusks. According to the American Museum of Natural History, mammoth tusks curved outward and then inward at the ends, sometimes even crossing. An example of a Columbian mammoth tusk was recently found in Madison County and is the first known example to be discovered in the state. Mastodon tusks were much straighter and curved slightly upward.

The heads were also different. Mastodons had relatively flat heads while mammoths had a distinct knob on the tops of their heads.

Teeth are also defining characteristics. Mastodons had molars that were well-suited for crushing twigs and other vegetation. Mammoth molars were better suited for grinding tough grasses into small bits. So mammoths would have preferred open grassland habitat while mastodons would find woodlands more attractive.

This mastodon lived to an old age

George Phillips, who identified the jaw, is the paleontologist at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science. According to Phillips, the museum has a

See MASTODON, Page 3A

Should we expect to see more Mississippi fossils on the front page of our papers? Many of the fossils that have made front-page news first appeared in MDEQ Office of Geology's #FossilFriday posts. James Starnes has managed a new post every week with many getting over 10,000 views and often over 20,000. Seeing that much interest in the public might be one reason why writers such as Brian Broom promoted them to front-page news. Also, Brian shared with James that the Clarion Ledger's parent company said they wanted more stories about Mississippi fossils, which have been featured in their papers nationwide.



GEOLOGY POST

ARTICLES, PAPERS or NEWS?

ATTENTION!!!!!! Industry, Professors and Students:

I am looking for more content from the industry and our schools.

Submissions can include anything from professional papers, thesis abstracts, job opportunities to pictures. Anything!!!!

If you have any information or news you would like to share with the Society **PLEASE** email them to the MGS Editor at:

mcaton13@yahoo.com

Thanks & Regards,

Matt Caton
Editor

GEO LINK POST

USGS TAPESTRY OF TIME AND TERRAIN <http://tapestry.usgs.gov> The CCGS is donating to all of the 5th and 6th grade schools in the Coastal Bend. Check it out—it is a spectacular map. You might want a framed one for your own office. The one in my office has glass and a metal frame, and it cost \$400 and it does not look as good as the ones we are giving to the schools. Call Owen 510-6224 if you want one for your office for \$150. Duncan, Mike, Chris, Dave, Bob Randy, Seb., Kevin, Ken, Craig, Patrick, Robert.

FREE TEXAS TOPO'S <http://www.tnris.state.tx.us/digital.htm> these are TIFF files from your state government that can be downloaded and printed. You can add them to SMT by converting them first in Globalmapper. Other digital data as well.

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<http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html> Astronomy picture of the day — awesome. I click this page everyday.

<http://www.spacimaging.com/gallery/ioweek/iow.htm> Amazing satellite images. Check out the gallery.

<http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/seg/topo/globegal.shtml> More great maps to share with kids and students.

www.geo.org Don't forget we have our own web page.

<http://micro.magneet.fsu.edu/primer/java/scienceoptiscu/owersofl0/>

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www.ermapper.com They have a great free downloadable viewer for TIFF and other graphic files called ER Viewer.

www.drillinginfo.com This is an incredible (subscription) well and completion data service for independents. Can be demo'ed for free.

<http://terraserver.com/> Go here to download free aerial photo images that can be plotted under your digital land and well data. Images down to 1 meter resolution, searchable by Lat Long coordinate. Useful for resolving well location questions.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnmf/volcanocams/msh/> This is a live cam of Mt. St. Helens refreshed every 5 minutes. At the bottom are old videos of past eruptions in this cycle. It is worth a watch especially now.



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