



# SOCIETY OF AVIAN PALEONTOLOGY AND EVOLUTION

- Newsletter -

n° 29, October 2015

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## SOCIETY OF AVIAN PALEONTOLOGY AND EVOLUTION



1<sup>st</sup> Circular

9<sup>th</sup> International Meeting of the Society of Avian Paleontology and Evolution

**Diamante, Argentina, 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> August 2016**

**Venue:** The meeting will be hosted by and held at the Centro de Investigaciones Científicas y Transferencia de Tecnología a la Producción (CICYTTP), belonging to the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET).

### Organizing Committee

Carolina Acosta Hospitaleche  
Museo de La Plata-Universidad Nacional de La Plata (MLP-UNLP); CONICET

Federico L. Agnolin  
Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales (MACN); Fundación de Historia Natural Félix de Azara (FHN)

Juan I. Areta  
Instituto de Bio y Geociencias (IBIGEO), CONICET-Universidad Nacional de Salta (UNSA)

Sara Bertelli  
Fundación Miguel Lillo; CONICET

Marcos M. Cenizo  
Universidad Nacional de La Pampa; FHN

Juan M. Diederle  
CICYTTP-CONICET

Federico Degrange  
Centro de Investigaciones en Ciencias de La Tierra (CICTERRA), CONICET-Universidad Nacional de Córdoba (UNC)

The CICYTTP is located at Diamante city (Entre Ríos Province, Argentina) which is placed on the cliffs high above the magnificent Paraná River.

María Alejandra Fernández Osuna  
CICYTTP-CONICET

Nadia Haidr  
Instituto de Biología Marina (IBIOMAR); CONICET

Washington Jones  
Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, Uruguay

Emilio Jordan  
CICYTTP-CONICET

Jorge I. Noriega  
CICYTTP-CONICET; Universidad Autónoma de Entre Ríos (UADER)

Andrés Rinderknecht  
(MNHN)

Claudia P. Tambussi  
CICTERRA, CONICET-UNC

## Scientific Committee

Chairman: Jorge I. Noriega, cidnoriega@infoaire.com.ar  
Carolina Acosta Hospitaleche, acostacaro@museo.fcnym.unlp.edu.ar  
Federico Agnolin, fedeagnolin@yahoo.com.ar  
Marcos Cenizo, cenizomarcos@yahoo.com.ar  
Claudia Tambussi, tambussi@gmail.com

**Dates and preliminary schedule:** 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> August 2016.

- 1<sup>th</sup> (Monday) – Evening “ice breaker” get together in the CICYTTP  
(optional: ornithological excursion in the Pre-Delta National Park during the day)  
2<sup>nd</sup> (Tuesday) – Scientific sessions  
Conference (Optional: Late afternoon: “Fossil identification session”).  
3<sup>rd</sup> (Wednesday) – Scientific sessions  
Conference. Evening: quadrennial general meeting and auction  
4<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) – Scientific sessions (Late afternoon: Poster session)  
Conference. Evening: conference dinner  
5<sup>th</sup> (Friday) – Scientific sessions (Symposia)  
6<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) – Field trip - Excursion

If you wish to attend the meeting, please download and fill the registration form from:

<http://www.cicyttp.org.ar/sape2016.html>

or

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sape-Meeting-2016-Diamante/439452246131110?ref=stream>

and return it by e-mail to [sapemeeting2016@gmail.com](mailto:sapemeeting2016@gmail.com) by the 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

## Deadlines

Registration: 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016  
Proposals for symposia: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016  
Conference fee payment: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016  
Abstract submission: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016  
Paper submission for Proceedings: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016

## Proceedings

We are pleased to announce that the 9<sup>th</sup> International Meeting of the Society of Avian Paleontology and Evolution proceedings will be dedicated to Larry Martin (USA), in order to honour his memory and his outstanding paleornithological contributions.

Proceedings will be published at *Publicación Especial de la Asociación Paleontológica Argentina (PE-APA)*, an open access electronic journal, whose articles are made freely and permanently accessible online immediately upon publication. It publishes original scientific papers in Spanish or English, with a broad spectrum within paleontology,

including anatomy, systematics, taxonomy, phylogeny, paleobiology, paleoecology, paleobiogeography, biostratigraphy and taphonomy. *PE-APA* also includes *Thematic Volumes* devoted to the development of a particular subject, including the publication of complete works of scientific events (congresses, symposia, conferences, etc.).

<http://www.apaleontologica.org.ar/?cat=62&lang=es>

Information on the format for submission will be provided in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circular. Deadline for submission of manuscripts will be shortly after the meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

## Oral presentations and posters

Both oral and poster papers are invited. We encourage presentations on all aspects of Avian Paleontology,

Morphology, Paleobiology, Evolution, and theoretical issues.

## Symposia or special sessions

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August is reserved for small symposia, special sessions or round table discussions. Proposals for possible symposia have to be sent to the chairman of the scientific committee before 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

If necessary (depending on how many proposals we get and how many talks are offered for each symposium) a selection will be made by the scientific committee.

## Travel grants

SAPE will be awarding the Cécile Mourer-Chauviré travel grant/s to one or more attendees of the Argentina

meeting in 2016. The fund honors the prestigious career and outstanding dedication to mentoring of

Cécile Mourer-Chauviré, SAPE's first Secretary and one of the Society's founding members. For further

information, see below.

### Auction

Members are encouraged to bring reprints, books, casts or any other items of paleornithological interest to

spare to be auctioned. These will be auctioned on the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> August to raise funds for the Society.

**Information about conference fees, payment, abstracts, proceedings, accommodation and excursions will be announced in the 2nd Circular, which will be sent in November 2015.**

### General information about Diamante city

General information and tourist information is available by the webpage

[www.diamante.tur.ar](http://www.diamante.tur.ar)

The climate in Diamante in August is characterized by: daily mean temperature of 12.6°C (54.7°F), with the

monthly average low temperature of 6.8°C (44.2°F) and the average high temperature of 19°C (52.2°F), with a monthly average of precipitation of 35.6 mm (6 days per month) and relative humidity of 74%. Evenings are not much colder than the day.

### Arrival

Buenos Aires can be reached by several major airlines. All flights come into *Ezeiza* International Airport, which is situated about 30 minutes from the center of Buenos Aires city. Transport from the Airport to the city center is available by special buses (about U\$10; see <http://www.tiendaleon.com>) and taxi (about U\$50). Diamante is 460 km away from Buenos Aires city and can be reached directly by bus from Buenos Aires (about U\$45 from *Retiro* Bus Terminal to Diamante Bus Terminal; see <http://www.flechabus.com.ar> with three daily departures: 9.15, 14.20 and 23.00, arriving to Diamante at 15.20, 20.15 and 04.40 respectively).

If you prefer to travel by plane you must go from *Ezeiza* International Airport to *Aeroparque Jorge Newbery* airport (*AJN* is in Buenos Aires) by special buses (see <http://www.tiendaleon.com>; about U\$10) or taxi, and then fly from there to Paraná (40 km North to Diamante). There is only one daily flight (about U\$90) from *AJN* to the Paraná Airport (Departure: 19.40; Arrival: 20.40) which returns from Paraná to Buenos Aires (Departure 21.00; Arrival 22.00). Remis from Paraná to Diamante costs about U\$50.

**For questions and all other issues please contact the organizers:**

**Mails:** [sapemeeting2016@gmail.com](mailto:sapemeeting2016@gmail.com); [acostacar@museo.fcnym.unlp.edu.ar](mailto:acostacar@museo.fcnym.unlp.edu.ar); [cidnoriega@infoaire.com.ar](mailto:cidnoriega@infoaire.com.ar)

## THE CÉCILE MOURER-CHAUVIRÉ TRAVEL GRANT

The scope of this fund is to provide travel aid to graduate students and other disadvantaged scholars presenting papers at SAPE meetings. SAPE will award one successful applicant upwards of US \$1500 in 2016 for the attendance of the SAPE Meeting in Argentina. The successful applicant will be selected on the basis of need and merit by the executive. Potential applicants are invited to send the SAPE executive (via Gerald Mayr [[Gerald.Mayr@senckenberg.de](mailto:Gerald.Mayr@senckenberg.de)], Trevor Worthy

[[trevor.worthy@flinders.edu.au](mailto:trevor.worthy@flinders.edu.au)], or Luis Chiappe [[lchiappe@nhm.org](mailto:lchiappe@nhm.org)]) an email detailing the significance of the paper he/she will present, something about how the meeting will help networking his/her research, a CV, and a budget or outline of projected costs they wish to offset for their attendance. In addition, any recipient will be expected to contribute their paper to the conference proceedings volume.

## NEWS FROM THE MEMBERS AND RECENT PUBLICATIONS

### ARGENTINA

CAROLINA ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE is working in different fossil birds from South America and Antarctica. As always, she continues working with fossil penguins, through different approaches doing taphonomic and biomechanical studies, mainly from Antarctica. From Cretaceous-Eocene levels come other seabirds that are under study, such as Gaviiformes and Procellariiformes. Regarding her students: Nadia Haidr is successfully developing one of this line, analyzing different structures in fossil and modern penguins working in her Ph.D with Carolina and her other advisor Flavio Quintana. Juan Diederle has finished his Ph.D. studying the Anhingidae from South America and he is applying to a postdoctoral

fellowship together with Carolina and Jorge Noriega. Undergraduate students are collaborating with different tasks related to Antarctic and morpho-anatomical studies. She is working also on the organization of the next RAO (Reunión Argentina de Ornitología 2015) and on the SAPE meeting that will take place in Argentina next year.

CLAUDIA TAMBUSI at CICTERRA in Córdoba had a busy year mainly with two new undergraduate students and the completion of two PhD theses. Marcos Manzanares finished his postgraduate work at Universidad Central de Venezuela studying theoretical limits in the active flight of Neornithes, analyzing

networks and skeletal nodes. Julieta Carril finished her PhD thesis at Universidad Nacional de La Plata recognizing reprogramming evolutionary processes by studying embryonic development, ossification and patterns of muscle differentiation in parrots in a phylogenetic context and analyzing how these patterns might correlate with adaptive strategies. Sofia Pestoni was devoted to the study of the mandibular muscles and mandibular biomechanics of the Guira cuckoo. Manuela Demmel finished her undergraduate thesis studying osteology and mandibular muscles of the Band-winged Nightjar. Research highlights included the description (with Federico Degrange) of a new phorusrhacid from the Pliocene of the Atlantic coast of Argentina and comparative brain morphology of penguins, parrots and phorusrhacids. Claudia is now focusing on two projects, the morphological transformation patterns in the evolution of the brain and the sensory system of South American birds (passerines, woodpeckers and cuckoos), as well as the study of birds of the Mio-Pliocene of Sierras Pampeanas at La Rioja and Cordoba in Argentina.

- ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. (2014): New giant penguin bones from Antarctica: systematic and paleobiological significance. – 4th International Palaeontological Congress, Cretaceous-Tertiary palaeobiogeographic connections with Antarctica Symposium, p. 209. Mendoza, Argentina.
- ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. (2015): Implicancias del registro fósil de aves Neornithes de la Cuenca James Ross, Península Antártica. – Reunión Argentina de Ornitología. La Plata, 9 al 12 de septiembre de 2015.
- ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. (online first): Paleobiological remarks on a new partial skeleton of the Eocene Antarctic penguin *Palaeudyptes klekowskii*. – Ameghiniana.
- ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. & GELFO, J.N. (2015): Nuevos hallazgos de Gaviiformes en el Cretácico Superior y Eoceno de Antártida. – Congreso Latinoamericano de Ciencia Antártica, Montevideo, 8 y 9 de octubre de 2015.
- ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C., GELFO, J.N. & REGUERO, M. (2015): Implications of the Procellariiformes (Aves) fossil record from the Eocene of Antarctica. – XII International Symposium on Antarctic Earth Science, 13 al 17 de julio de 2015. Goa, India.
- ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. & DE LOS REYES, M. (2015): Un nuevo Falconidae del Eoceno inferior de Antártida. – 29 Jornadas Argentinas de Paleontología de Vertebrados. Diamante, 27 al 29 de mayo de 2015.
- ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. & PÉREZ, L. (2014): Taphonomic analysis of *Crossvallia unienwillia*: significance of the oldest penguin of Antarctica. – 4th International Palaeontological Congress, Vertebrate Taphonomy Symposium: Applications and implications, p. 163. Mendoza, Argentina.
- ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C., PÉREZ, L., MARENSSI, S. & REGUERO, M. (online first): Taphonomic analysis of *Crossvallia unienwillia* Tambussi et al. 2005: significance of the oldest penguin record of Antarctica. – Ameghiniana.
- CARRIL, J., DEGRANGE, F.J. & TAMBUSI, C.P. (2015): Jaw myology and bite force of the Monk Parakeet (Aves, Psittaciformes). – Journal of Anatomy. doi: 10.1111/joa.12330.
- CARRIL, J., TAMBUSI, C.P., DEGRANGE, F.J., BENITEZ, J. & PICASSO, M. (2015): Comparative brain morphology of Neotropical parrots (Aves, Psittaciformes) inferred from virtual 3D endocasts. – Journal of Anatomy, Avian Brain, special issue. doi: 10.1111/joa.12325.
- CENIZO, M., ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. & REGUERO, M. (accepted): Diversity of pseudo-toothed birds (Pelagornithidae) from the Eocene of Antarctica. – Journal of Palaeontology.
- DEGRANGE, F.J., TAMBUSI, C.P., TAGLIORETI, M., DONDAS, A. & SCAGLIA, F. (2015): A new Mesembriornithinae (Aves, Phorusrhacidae) provides new insights into the phylogeny and sensory capabilities of terror birds. – Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology, 35 (3). doi 10.1080/02724634.2014.912656.
- DE MENDOZA, R. & TAMBUSI, C.P. (2015): Osteosclerosis in the extinct *Cayaoa bruneti* (Aves, Anseriformes): insights on behavior and flightlessness. – Ameghiniana, 52: 305-313.
- GELFO, J., DE LOS REYES, M., ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. & REGUERO, M. (2015): Additions to the knowledge of *Notiolofo*s (Mammalia: Sparnotheriodontidae) early Eocene of West Antarctica. – XII International Symposium on Antarctic Earth Science, 13 al 17 de julio de 2015. Goa, India.
- PAULINA CARABAJAL, A., ACOSTA HOSPITALECHE, C. & YURY-YÁÑEZ, R. (2014): Paleoneurología de *Spheniscus urbinai* (Aves: Sphenisciformes) del Neógeno del desierto de Atacama, Chile. – IV Simposio Paleontología en Chile. Valdivia, 8 al 10 de octubre de 2014.
- TAMBUSI, C.P., DEGRANGE, F.J. & TIRAO, G.A. (2015): Neo y Paleornitología Virtual. – El Hornero, 29: 51-60.
- TAMBUSI, C.P., DEGRANGE, F.J. & KSEPKA, D. (in press): Endocranial anatomy of Antarctic Eocene stem penguins: implications for sensory system evolution in Sphenisciformes (Aves). – Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology, 35 (6).

## AUSTRALIA

The 2014-2015 year has been busy for the Palaeontology group at Flinders University, South Australia. Trevor and Jenny Worthy did a whirlwind trip through USA in April-May 2015, staying with Kenneth Campbell in Los Angeles, Helen James in Washington and in New York hosted by Joel Cracraft. We had a most enjoyable and productive excursion thanks to them. Workwise, Trevor was finally getting the opportunity to examine the wonderful *Gastornis*, lithornithid, and *Presbyornis* specimens in these institutions. In May, our lab said goodbye to Vanesa De Pietri as her Postdoc had come to an end, but we continue to collaborate on St Bathans (NZ) and other

projects with her from her new home in New Zealand. The *Genyornis* project was frustrated by floods in the desert in mid-summer 2014/15 making access to Lake Callabonna impossible for a year or two. We did however have a productive fieldtrip to the 8-9Ma Alcoota site in the Northern Territory in late June collecting very nice dromornithid material (*Ilbandornis lawsoni*, *I. woodburnei*, and *Dromornis stirtoni*), and an undescribed *Emuarius* species. Trevor then attended the Lapita 2015 conference in Port Vila, Vanuatu in the first week of July and presented the avifauna from the 3000-2500yr Teouma Site which was published in Pacific Science about then. Somewhere along the line

we worked on fossil waders from St Bathans with Vanesa De Pietri and minimally 5 species were revealed including scolopacids, charadriids and larids. Trevor has progressed work on the dromornithids on several fronts. Firstly, with Adam Yates, we sorted out some of the confusion with the *Ibandornis* species showing that there are both *lawsoni* and *woodburnei* in the successive faunas Bullock Creek (12-14Ma), Alcoota (8-9 Ma). Secondly, we have described a well preserved *Ibandornis* cranium attributed to *I. woodburnei* and described a new (4<sup>th</sup> and oldest) species of *Dromornis* from the Late Oligocene (see JVP forthcoming). Lastly Warren Handley and I have submitted a ms on *Dromornis stirtoni* examining the size variation in relation to sexual dimorphism being work from his Honours project. Warren has now embarked on his PhD project examining galloanseriform cranial morphology. Elen Shute has continued work on the exciting avifaunas from the Early-Mid Pleistocene deposits in caves on the Nullarbor plain in Western Australia. New coucals, and megapodes are keeping her busy.

JACQUELINE NGUYEN commenced a postdoctoral fellowship at the Australian Museum in Sydney. She continues to work on fossil passerines from Riversleigh, Australia and St Bathans, New Zealand with Walter Boles (Australian Museum), Trevor Worthy (Flinders University) and other researchers

- DE PIETRI, V., CAMENS, A.B. & WORTHY, T.H. (2015): A new species of "Plains-wanderer" (Aves: Pedionomidae) from the Oligocene of South Australia reveals lineage longevity on the continent. – *Ibis*, 157: 68-74; Blog at <http://www.bou.org.uk/plains-wanderer/>.
- DE PIETRI, V.L., SCOFIELD, R.P., TENNYSON, A.J.D., HAND, S.J. & WORTHY, T.H. (in press): Wading a lost southern connection: Miocene Fossils from New Zealand reveal a new lineage of shorebirds (Charadriiformes) linking Gondwanan avifaunas. – *Systematic Paleontology*.
- WORTHY T.H., HANDLEY, W.D., ARCHER, M. & HAND, S.J. (in press): The extinct flightless mhirungs (Aves: Dromornithidae): cranial anatomy, a new species and assessment of Oligo-Miocene lineage diversity. – *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*.
- WORTHY, T.H., HAWKINS, S., BEDFORD, S. & SPRIGGS, M. (2015): Avifauna from the Teouma Lapita Site, Efate Island, Vanuatu, including a new genus and species of megapode. – *Pacific Science*, 69(2): 205-254.
- WORTHY, T.H. & YATES, A. (2015): Connecting the thigh and foot: resolving the association of post-cranial elements in the species of *Ibandornis* (Aves: Dromornithidae). – *Alcheringa*, 39(3): 407-427.

## AUSTRIA

In 2014, URSULA GÖHLICH was busy with co-curating a temporary exhibit called "Mammuts. Eismumien aus Sibirien" (Mammoths. Ice mummies from Siberia) which was shown from November 2014 to March 2015 at the Natural History Museum Vienna, Austria, and which included original mummies and skeletons on loan from the St.-Petersburg Zoological Museum. Ursula's research projects are predominately dealing with Miocene mammals, but she is currently finishing a manuscript on Miocene penguins from Peru.

- GÖHLICH, U.B. (2015): Als Mammuts noch durch Niederösterreich streiften. – *Naturschutz bunt. Nachrichten des Naturschutzbund Niederösterreich*, 1: 6.
- GÖHLICH, U.B. (2014): Mammut, Mensch und Permafrost. – *Universum* 2014(12), *Das Naturhistorische*: 3-5.
- GÖHLICH, U.B. (2014): Was vor den Elefanten kam. Die Evolution der Rüsseltiere. – *Universum* 2014(3), *Das Naturhistorische*: 106-107.

- GÖHLICH, U.B., DE MUIZON, Ch., MOURER-CHAUVIRÉ, C. & LEGENDRE, S. (2015): The penguin with an Albatross-like bill: anatomy of *Spheniscus urbinai* (Aves, Spheniscidae) from the Mio-Pliocene Pisco Formation in Peru. – *Abstracts of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Symposium for Vertebrate Palaeontology and Comparative Anatomy*, p. 36, (31.8.-4.9.2015, Southampton, UK).
- HARZHAUSER, M., GÖHLICH, U.B., KROH, A., LUKENEDER, A., MANDIC, O. 2014. *Geologie & Paläontologie*, 73-107 pp.. – In: JOVANOVIĆ-KRUSPEL, S. (ed.): *Naturhistorisches Museum Wien. Ein Führer durch die Schausammlungen. Sammlungsführer*, 2. Auflage, 251 pp., *Naturhistorisches Museum Wien*, ISBN 978-3-902421-87-6.
- MARIDET, O., DAXNER-HÖCK, G., BADAMGARAV, D. & GÖHLICH, U.B. (2015): The eomyid rodents (Rodentia, Mammalia) from the Oligocene and Miocene of the Valley of Lakes (Central Mongolia). – *Paläontologische Zeitschrift*, 89: 207-228.

## BULGARIA

ZLATOZAR BOEV participated at the project: "Urgent measures for conservation of the Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) in Bulgaria and Greece". He further was scientific tutor of three PhD candidates [Dimitar Plachiyiski: "Distribution of Eurasian Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus* Linnaeus, 1758) in Bulgaria depending on the landscape-ecological habitat characteristics"; Dobromir Dobrev: "Distribution and ecology of the Gryffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus* Hablizl, 1783) in Bulgaria"].

- BOEV, Z. (2014): Dinosaurs, cobras and dragons – fossil reptiles from Bulgaria. – *Priroda, BAS*, 4: 84-92.
- BOEV, Z. (2015): An Early Pleistocene Snake-eagle (*Circaetus haemusensis* sp. n. - Aves, Accipitriformes) from Varshets (NW Bulgaria). – *Acta zoologica bulgarica*, 67 (1): 127-138.

- BOEV, Z. (2015): Fossil and subfossil remains of birds and mammals from the Mirizlivka cave (Vidin Region – NW Bulgaria). – *ZooNotes*, 75: 1-3.
- BOEV, Z. (2015): *Porzana botunensis* sp. n., a New Early Pleistocene Crake (Aves: Rallidae) from Bulgaria. – *Acta zoologica bulgarica*, 67 (2): 283-290.
- BOEV, Z. (2015): A new synthesis of Western Rhodopes biodiversity. – *Historia naturalis bulgarica*, 21: 272 (in Bulgarian).
- BOEV, Z. (2015): Binagada – the largest asphalt pit on Earth. – *Priroda, BAS*, 1: 66-74.
- BOEV, Z. (2015): Deposit near Muselievo – a window into the animal world in the early Pliocene. – *Priroda, BAS*, 2: 40-47.
- BOEV, Z.N., LAZARIDIS, G. TSOUKALA, E. 2013. *Otis hellenica* sp. nov., a new Turolian bustard (Aves:

Otididae) from Kryopigi (Chalkidiki, Greece). – *Geologica Balcanica* 42 (1-3): 59-64.

DOBREV, V., BOEV, Z., OPPEL, S., ARKUMAREV, V., DOBREV, D., KRET, E., VAVYLIS, D., SARAVIA, V., T., BOUNAS, A. & NIKOLOV, S.C. (2015): Diet of the Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) in Bulgaria and Greece (2005-2013). Technical report under action A5 of the LIFE+ project "The Return of the Neophron" (LIFE10 NAT/BG/000152). BSPB, Sofia. 1-31.

VANDOVA, V., MESHEKOV, Y., SPASOV, R., ANASTASOVA, E., MITKOVA, R., STEFANOVA, T., TODOROV, V., ANASTASOVA-TIMEVA, N., GALABOVA, B. & BOEV, Z. (2015): Salvage excavations in the locality Gerena near Mursalevo village. – pp. 51-53 in: KABAKCHIEVA, G. (ed.): National archaeological Institute and Museum. Archaeological discoveries and excavations in 2014. Sofia. Aktiv Commers Ltd., ISSN: 1313-0889. BAS, NAIM.

## FRANCE

DELPHINE ANGST is currently doing a postdoc with Anusuya Chinsamy-Turan in the laboratory of Biology at the University of Cape Town, and works on the bony crests of guinea fowl in order to better understand this structure in terms of histology (construction, function, ontogeny...) so as to better understand the similar structures in fossil birds such as dromornithids. In parallel a histological study will be done on Dodo bones from the Carié collection in the Elbeuf Museum. This new postdoc is the continuity of his work about large fossil ground birds begun during her PhD with her work about *Gastornis*. Several new papers from her PhD have been published this year about this bird. The first is the estimation of the herbivorous diet of *Gastornis* using in parallel a functional morphological study and a geochemical analysis. The second publication about *Gastornis* is the study of the eggshells from Southern France which have been attributed to this bird and permit to obtain some new information on its reproduction. A second paper on these eggs deals with geochemical results and their implications for diet and climate. One other publication is in preparation about a new method to estimate the locomotion type of these giant ground birds. Associated to these works about *Gastornis*, other studies were done about fossil giant ground birds more generally, like the publication done with Eric Buffetaut about the stratigraphic distribution of these birds in the Palaeogene of Europe and the description of a new specimen of *Gargantuavis*, or a histological study of *Gargantuavis* done with Anusuya Chinsamy-Turan and Aurore Canoville.

ERIC BUFFETAUT's palaeornithological researches, largely in collaboration with Delphine Angst, have focused on giant birds from various places and periods. Newly discovered specimens of *Gargantuavis* from Provence have been described and additional material from Languedoc is under study. A *Gargantuavis* sacrum from the Late Cretaceous of Spain is being described (with X. Pereda and C. Corral). A paper on the histology of *Gargantuavis*, with Anusuya Chinsamy as senior author appeared in 2014. Unpublished *Gastornis* material from the Paleocene of Berru kept at the Institut royal des Sciences naturelles in Brussels has been examined, which has prompted a re-examination of some of the Berru specimens described by Larry Martin and kept at the Paris Natural History Museum. A revision of some of this material is in progress. Two papers on the stratigraphic distribution of giant birds in the Paleogene of Europe, issuing from the International Congress on Stratigraphy, appeared in 2014. A description of bird material from the Tertiary of Patagonia collected by André Tournouër at the beginning of the last century and kept at the Paris Museum has been published. In connection with this, avian specimens from the Oligocene of Bolivia have been studied and will be published soon. This has led to a re-examination of some problematic specimens in the Ameghino collection at the Natural History Museum in

London, some of which showing clear brontornithid affinities. After a presentation of preliminary results at the 2014 EAVP meeting in Torino, papers on these South American fossils are in preparation.

ANTOINE LOUCHART, in the team «Paleogenomics and evolution» and the National Platform of Paleogenetics (Palgene) at ENS Lyon, participated in ancient DNA analyses of two groups of extinct insular birds. Results have now been obtained for one of them and the publication writing is well advanced. Antoine is also eventually about to submit three other articles in the frame of his previous thematics involving avian teeth and pseudoteeth. Other projects are continuing as well, on various fossil birds from France or Africa. Since last year the article in collaboration with Chris Torres, Vanesa de Pietri and Marcel van Tuinen was published, about the skull morphology of *Harrisonavis croizeti*, a basal flamingo.

CÉCILE MOURER-CHAUVIRÉ has published, in collaboration with Martin Pickford and Brigitte Senut, a paper on the birds from the Middle Eocene of Eocliff, in Namibia, in the *Journal of Ornithology*. This material includes a small galliform and a small psittaciform, the tarsometatarsus of which is fully zygodactyl. Martin and Brigitte have gathered a new material of these birds, and Cécile intends to study it in the near future. The work by Roger Bour et alii, on the extinct giant tortoises of the Mascarene Islands, has finally been published after many years of trials and tribulations. The authors are very happy that this work is now available to the international scientific community. Although it does not concern directly the birds, it complements the knowledge of the extinct insular faunas of these islands. In collaboration with Estelle Bourdon, Cécile has studied the *Gastornis* material from the Late Paleocene locality of Louvois, in eastern France. This rich but very fragmentary material includes distal parts of tarsometatarsi and pedal phalanges which show the existence of a sexual dimorphism. This sexual dimorphism had not been previously recorded in the genus *Gastornis*. In addition, the *Gastornis* material from Louvois is different from the two other species previously described in the Paleocene, *G. parisiensis* and *G. russelli*, which implies that three different forms were living simultaneously in this area. This paper has been accepted in the *Swiss Journal of Palaeontology* but is not yet published online. At the moment, Cécile works on new remains of the very tiny cuckoo, *Chambicuculus pusillus*, from the late Early or early Middle Eocene of Tunisia.

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## GERMANY

In the past two years, GERALD MAYR spent much time in the preparation of a book on avian evolution, which is to be published at Wiley.

HANNEKE MEIJER just finished an Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellowship at the Senckenberg Museum in Frankfurt, Germany, with Gerald Mayr, looking at Late Pleistocene and Holocene passerines from Liang Bua, Indonesia. A forthcoming paper describes the first Early/Middle Pleistocene bird remains from the So'a Basin, a site in central Flores. She will be continuing and extending her work on Indonesian fossil birds from the University of Bergen, Norway, where she will start as an Associate Professor in Vertebrate Zoology. At the University of Bergen, she will also work on Norwegian bird remains from archaeological sites and manage the osteological collection of the University Museum. Together with Julian Hume and Leon Claessens, she edited a monograph on the only two associated dodo skeletons, the Thirioux dodos, which is set to appear as a Memoir of the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology* in early 2016.

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## HUNGARY

EUGEN (JENŐ) KESSLER finished the writing of the „Osteological guide of songbirds from Central Europe”, which will be released this autumn in *Ornis Hungarica* 2015 (2). The author provides an osteological guide to songbirds, based on 11 skeletal parts of 51 genera, at the genus level for ornithologists studying owl pellets, paleornitologists and archaeozoologists. The morphological characteristics and method of measurement of the examined skeletal parts and the photographs of the appropriate bones are illustrated on 52 plates and 17 figures. The measurement data are

also provided in 11 tables. For every discussed bone, 3-6 characteristics are chosen, and their codes consist of 3-6 letters. Also, in this year Eugen published a shortened version of his monograph on the fossil and subfossil bird faunas from the Carpathian Basin.

KESSLER, J. (E.) (2014): Fossil and subfossil bird remains and faunas from the Carpathian Basin. – *Ornis Hungarica*, 2014 (2): 65-125.

## ITALY

Since last year, MARCO PAVIA continued the analysis of the fossil remains from the Miocene of Moncucco Torinese and other Italian localities. He is also still involved in the study of birds from African sites, in particular Buia (Eritrea) Langebaanweg and Kromdraai B (South Africa). Regarding Langebaanweg, after the study of *Aegyptius* and the Strigiformes together with Albrecht Manegold and Pippa Haarhoff, they are starting the analysis of the diurnal raptors and the Charadriiformes; Marco is also involved, thanks to José Braga, in the study of the fossil birds coming from the new excavations at Kromdraai B, an Early Pleistocene *Paranthropus* site of the Cradle of Humankind (Gauteng). He is still busy with the organizing the fossil and recent skeleton collections at the Torino University and in local projects on recent birds, including a recent collaboration with Gary Woelker (Texas A&M University) about the evolution of European bird species, their relationships with Africa, also inferred by the study of blood parasites.

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SIORI, M.S., BOERO, A., CARNEVALE, G., COLOMBERO, S., DELFINO, M., SARDELLA, R. & PAVIA, M. (2014): New data on Early Pleistocene vertebrates from Monte Argentario (Central Italy). Paleoeological and biochronological implications. – *Geobios*, 47: 403-418.

## NEW ZEALAND

VANESA DE PIETRI moved from Flinders University in Australia to Canterbury Museum in Christchurch NZ, where she continues with her research on Australasian fossil birds.

PAUL SCOFIELD is now Senior Curator Natural History at Canterbury Museum in Christchurch NZ an adjunct in the Geology Department at University of Canterbury. Along with Vanesa, Alan Tennyson and Trevor Worthy he is still involved heavily working on the St Bathans Fauna as well as ancient DNA work on Holocene extinctions and Paleocene birds from the Waipara Greensands.

This year, ALAN TENNYSON (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington) has been busy with a range of fossil projects and studies of seabirds. He was the lead curator for a major exhibition touring from the Australian Museum (Sydney) - 'Tyrannosaurs – Meet the Family'. It was a huge success, attracting 127,000 visitors. Alan's collaborations on the Miocene St Bathans lacustrine project continue, primarily with Trevor Worthy (Flinders University), Paul Scofield and Vanesa de Pietri (both Canterbury Museum) and Sue Hand (University of New South Wales), with the fauna continuing to be published; notably a *Mystacina* bat being described in 2015. Collaborations with Nic Rawlence (Otago University) and Lara Shepherd (Te Papa), extracting ancient DNA from Holocene fossils, is also proving productive. Recently Alan has been involved in the excavation of a 'moa swamp' in the North Island, which was discovered by a farmer and is dominated by North Island giant moa (*Dinornis*) and little bush moa (*Anomalopteryx*).

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## RUSSIA

- NIKITA ZELENKOV informs that the catalogue of fossil birds (together with the crocodylians and choristoderans) from the territory of the former USSR and Mongolia has been published in 2015. The book also contains a section on the avian osteological nomenclature where several problematic issues from the *Nomina Anatomica Avium* have been pointed out and corrected. The electronic version of the book can be downloaded from the following link:  
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## UNITED KINGDOM

In 2013, JULIAN PENDER HUME re-visited the fossil locality at Beanka, Madagascar. One cave contained impressive but bizarre cave art, so JPH made scaled drawings of the entire sequence. These are presently being studied, and a return trip is planned for September 2015 to collect charcoal samples for dating. In 2014 and 2015, JPH led a team of cavers, museum staff and palaeontologists to Tasmania, King Island and Flinders Island. The trip to King was following in the footsteps of two pioneers, W. B. Spencer and J. A. Kershaw, who had discovered the bones of the now-extinct King Island Emu *Dromaius novaehollandiae* minor and other species in 1906. Their paper included a single photograph of the locality. We not only found the exact spot where the photograph was taken, but also found more emu bones and egg shell. The trip to Flinders was to ascertain if emu ever occurred on the island. Fossil bones were not found, but egg shell was discovered in an old museum collection that reputedly had been collected there. Tasmanian caves were also visited, of which some harboured emu material. This is an ongoing project and will result in a comprehensive paper. The Naracoorte Caves World Heritage site in South Australia was also visited. Steve Bourne, the ex-cave manager gave an impressive tour, which included hard core caving as well as less frenetic visits to the tourist caves. Fossil bird and mammal bones were discovered, which gave a good excuse to visit Adelaide and take them to Trevor Worthy at Flinders University. The facilities there are really outstanding and Trevor discussed his impressive palaeo work in progress. JPH continues to work on the Mascarene avifauna, and is presently writing up a monograph on the Mascarene Rallidae with one new species. A recent visit to Mauritius resulted in the discovery of hitherto undescribed rallid material, which will appear in the above mentioned monograph. The passerine work is progressing, but besieged with the problems due to the lack of comparative material – most Mascarene passerines are unknown as skeletons in collections – and a mismatch of unassociated material. However, new species are clearly awaiting identification; a new

fossil starling *Cryptopsar ischyrrhynchus* from Mauritius was described in 2014 and the latest is a new fossil *Hypsipetes* bulbul from Rodrigues.

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### Connecticut

DANIEL KSEPKA recently joined the Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Connecticut, where he serves as Curator. Before departing NESCent in 2014, he worked with Amy Balanoff and Adam Smith to lead a Catalysis Meeting on the evolution of the avian brain. Attendees have contributed to an upcoming edited volume in *Journal of Anatomy*. Dan continues to work on the evolution of penguins and on North American fossil birds from the Chandler Bridge Formation of South Carolina, Green River Formation of Wyoming and Truckee Formation of Nevada.

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### Los Angeles

For the past few years, LUIS CHIAPPE's research has been primarily focused on the Jehol avifauna from the Early Cretaceous of China. A book entitled "Birds of Stone" (co-authored by Meng Qingjing, Director of the Beijing Museum of Natural History) is being produced by the Johns Hopkins University Press, and several papers have been published with various co-authors from China and elsewhere. These papers deal with the taxonomy, systematics, paleoecology, and paleobiology (e.g., aerodynamics, life histories, polymorphisms, etc) of the Jehol birds. Additionally, Luis continues to study (in collaboration with Spanish colleagues from the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid) the Early Cretaceous birds from the Las Hoyas fossil site in central Spain (a book on this site including a chapter on birds will soon be published). Luis and postdoctoral fellow Alyssa Bell (Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County) have produced several papers (one published and two in press) on hesperornithiforms, the result of Alyssa's doctoral dissertation at the University of Southern California. Luis is helming projects on Cretaceous birds from Brazil and Australia as well, and co-leading (with Sara Bertelli, CONICET, Argentina) a project designed to study the avifaunal turnover at the K-P boundary in northern Argentina. Luis is also in the final stages of assembling the chapters (by various authors) for a volume he's editing for the University of California Press (Berkeley) titled "Paleobiology of Early Birds".

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