



The 65<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Vertebrate  
Palaeontology and Comparative Anatomy  
&  
The 26<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Palaeontological  
Preparation and Conservation

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM:  
12<sup>TH</sup>–15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017

SECOND CIRCULAR  
MARCH 2017

We are delighted to invite you to join us in Birmingham in September 2017 for the 65<sup>th</sup> SVPCA and 26<sup>th</sup> SPPC. This second circular provides further information on venues, the scientific programme, workshops and other practicalities. The third circular, including information on registration, abstract submission and the field trip, will follow in April to early May.

### ***Host Committee***

Richard Butler (chair), Ivan Sansom, Jon Clatworthy, Susannah Thorpe, Stephan Lautenschlager, Roger Close, Plamen Andreev, Daniel Cashmore, Emma Dunne, Pedro Godoy, Andy Jones, Juan Benito Moreno.

The SPPC meeting is organised in collaboration with the Geological Curators' Group

### ***SVPCA Steering Committee***

Richard Butler (chair), Susannah Maidment (secretary), Peter Falkingham, Rob Sansom, Richard Forrest, Cindy Howells, Liz Martin, Paul Upchurch.

### ***Venue***

SPPC and SVPCA platform and poster sessions will take place at the campus of the University of Birmingham (UoB), in Edgbaston, south Birmingham. Specifically, these will be hosted in the Avon Room, within University Centre. Workshops will be held in the Earth Sciences department on the UoB campus. The evening icebreaker event will be held at the Lapworth Museum of Geology, also on the UoB campus. The annual auction will be held in the theatre of [The Old Joint Stock](#) pub, in the city centre close to New Street station. The annual dinner will be held at [Celebrity Indian Restaurant](#), which is located on Broad Street in the popular Westside district of the city where a number of accommodation options and transport links are located. A full set of maps and instructions on how to reach all of these venues will be provided in subsequent circulars.

### ***Key dates***

*May* – Abstract submission and registration open

*Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June* – Jones-Fenlegh Memorial Fund applications due

*Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July* – Abstract submission deadline

*Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July* – Registration deadline

*Friday 4<sup>th</sup> August* – Programme and abstract decisions circulated

## ***Schedule***

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| <i>Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September:</i>   | SPPC presentations (AM), Avon Room, UoB<br>Half day workshops (AM), Earth Sciences, UoB<br>Special symposium (PM), Avon Room<br>Icebreaker (PM), Lapworth Museum, UoB |
| <i>Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September:</i> | SVPCA platform presentations (AM & PM), Avon Room<br>Poster presentations (PM), Avon Room<br>Annual auction (PM), Old Joint Stock Theatre                             |
| <i>Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September:</i>  | SVPCA platform presentations (AM & PM), Avon Room<br>Annual dinner (PM), Celebrity Indian Restaurant  |
| <i>Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September:</i>    | Fieldtrip, TBC  |

## ***Scientific Programme***

For the open SVPCA sessions (Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>), there will be three options for those who wish to present original scientific research: (1) Platform presentations, of 15 minutes length; (2) Posters; (3) Lightning talks. Full details on the format for each of these options will be provided in subsequent circulars. All submitted abstracts for scientific presentations will be blind peer-reviewed by the host committee.

The afternoon of Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> will feature a special symposium on ‘Macroevolution in the Vertebrate Fossil Record’, with invited speakers from the UK and overseas giving extended length (30 minute) talks that highlight the cutting edge of research in this area. Speakers will include Natalie Cooper (NHM), Daniel Field (Bath), Anjali Goswami (UCL), Jason Head (Cambridge), Tom Kemp (Oxford), Graeme Lloyd (Leeds), Jonathan Mitchell (Michigan), and Lauren Sallan (Penn).

## ***SPPC***

SPPC will take place on the morning of Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>. Platform presentations will take place in the Avon Room. These will be followed by guided tours of the recently redeveloped exhibitions, collections and archives of the Lapworth Museum.

## ***SVPCA Workshops:***

### *Historical biogeography using BioGeoBears*

Led by Paul Upchurch (UCL), this workshop will provide a practical introduction to this popular R package. Participants should bring their own laptop, and should ensure that it has R (and, if preferred, RStudio) installed, as well as the

packages BioGeoBears, optimx, FD, snow and parallel. Participants should have at least basic familiarity with R.

*Measuring morphological diversity (disparity) using discrete characters in Claddis*

Led by Graeme Lloyd (Leeds), this workshop will provide an overview of the state-of-the-art of discrete character disparity as well as a practical introduction to the R package Claddis. Participants should bring their own laptop, ideally with R ([cran.r-project.org/](http://cran.r-project.org/)) pre-installed, as well as Claddis (see instructions at: [github.com/graemetlloyd/Claddis](https://github.com/graemetlloyd/Claddis)). Basic familiarity with R is helpful, but not essential.

Workshops will take place 9am–12pm on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>, and will be held in Earth Sciences. Registration for workshops is open to all conference attendees, but numbers are limited to 10 per workshop. A small fee will be charged to participants to cover organisational costs.

***Registration and Abstract Submission***

Full registration and abstract submission details including costs will be provided in the next circular. The deadline for both registration and abstract submission will be 14<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

***Accommodation***

Birmingham offers a diverse range of hotels, youth hostels, and Airbnb options. Further details of options will be provided in later circulars and on the website. Although accommodation is available near the UoB campus, we recommend staying in the city centre or along Broad Street, where there are a greater variety of restaurants, pubs and nightlife. The UoB campus has its own train station (University station), and regular trains connect it to Birmingham New Street (two stops, seven minutes travel time) in the city centre, and Five Ways (one stop, three minutes travel time), which is conveniently located for many hotels. Regular buses also connect the University campus to the city.

***Jones-Fenleigh Memorial Fund***

The Jones-Fenleigh is a fund administered by each year's SVPCA host committee to help pay for delegates with no institutional financial support to attend the SVPCA meeting and present research. Awards from the Fund are competitive and are claimed retrospectively from the Palaeontological Association on the production of receipts. The award pays a maximum of £250 and can be used to pay for travel to the meeting, the conference fee, accommodation, and subsistence, but not optional extras (field trip, conference dinner). Criteria for selecting awardees and details of how to apply are provided on the SVPCA website (<http://svpca.org/jones->

[fenleigh.php](http://fenleigh.php)). **Applications are due by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Note that this date is earlier than indicated in the first circular, in order to bring it ahead of the registration and abstract submission deadline.**

### ***Best Student Talk and Best Student Poster Awards***

We will be awarding prizes to the best talk and best poster presentations made by a student at the meeting. The exact nature and value of these prizes remains to be determined, but please note that they will not be an award from the Jones-Fenleigh Memorial Fund, contra to the information provided in the first circular.

### ***Auction***

As usual, the auction will be a key part of the meeting, and will take place on the evening of Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>, with proceeds going to support the Jones-Fenleigh Memorial Fund and other awards. Please start thinking about potential donations of books, reprints, artwork, t-shirts, casts, models, dinosaur toys, and the weird and wonderful! You can bring donations with you to the meeting, or they can be sent in advance to Dr Richard Butler, School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT.

### ***Social Media and Website***

Further details of the meeting will be distributed via additional email circulars, and via the main SVPCA website ([www.svpca.org](http://www.svpca.org)). We will also provide extended information via a dedicated website ([www.svpca2017.com](http://www.svpca2017.com)), and you can follow meeting updates on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SVPCA/>) and Twitter ([https://twitter.com/SVPCA\\_Bham](https://twitter.com/SVPCA_Bham)).

### ***Logo***

The logo of the 2017 SVPCA meeting features a pterosaur clinging to one of the faces of the clock of the iconic ‘Old Joe’ tower, which lies at the heart of the UoB campus. The logo was designed by Dr Plamen Andreev, a postdoctoral researcher in vertebrate palaeontology at UoB, and the pterosaur was inspired by a reconstruction of *Eudimorphodon* by Todd Marshall.

Old Joe is the tallest free-standing clock tower in the world, a well-known landmark in south Birmingham, home to a breeding pair of peregrine falcons, and much loved by UoB students, even having its [own Twitter account](#). The logo also pays an indirect homage to the work of one of Birmingham’s most famous literary figures, J. R. R. Tolkien, who grew up in what are now the nearby Birmingham suburbs of Kings Heath, Moseley and Edgbaston, and attended the King Edward’s School adjacent to the UoB campus. Tolkien is believed to have drawn inspiration from a number of landmarks in the city when writing his Middle-earth novels, and Old Joe is reputed to have inspired the Eye of Sauron. The fell beast ridden by

Sauron's servant, the Witch-king of Angmar, was acknowledged by Tolkien to be 'pterodactylic', much like the pterosaur shown in the logo.

### ***Contact***

Please contact the host committee chair Richard Butler with any questions:  
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