



**The 66<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Vertebrate  
Palaeontology and Comparative  
Anatomy**

**Universities of Manchester**

**September 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>**

**Second Circular**

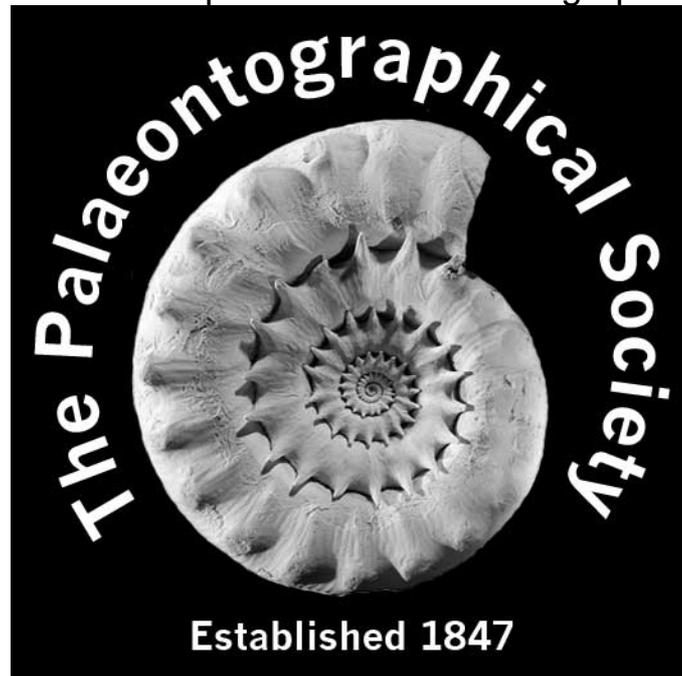
We are delighted to invite you to join us in Manchester in September 2017 for the 66th SVPCA and 27th SPPC. This second circular provides information on venues, registration, workshops, fieldtrip, the scientific programme, and other practicalities.

### **Updates**

A good way to keep up to date is to join our facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SVPCA/>), follow us on twitter (@SVPCA\_Manc) and look for updates on [www.svpca.org](http://www.svpca.org).

### **Sponsorship**

Many thanks to our sponsor the Palaeontographical Society



### **Registration**

Will open shortly via the University of Manchester online shop. Details to follow. Registration costs are as follows:

SVPCA full price £80

SVPCA student £40

SPPC only £20

Registration for SVPCA includes SPPC registration

Other supplementary costs include the annual dinner (TBC), the workshop (£10), and field-trip (£30), details for both below.

### **Abstracts**

Authors should register first then submit abstracts as a word document to [SVPCAMAN2018@listserv.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:SVPCAMAN2018@listserv.manchester.ac.uk) (including your registration confirmation number). Registration and abstract submission will close

midnight July 18<sup>th</sup>. Abstracts are limited to 250 words in length and should not include references. Please indicate whether your preferred presentation format is poster or oral presentation, and to be part of SVPCA or SPPC. All submitted abstracts for scientific presentations will be blind peer-reviewed by the host committee. This committee will consider scientific quality, originality and interest, as well as evidence of clear hypotheses or questions. Abstracts should provide evidence of results and conclusions, demonstrating that work has already been completed. While we will endeavour to offer meeting attendees their preferred presentation format, this may not be possible in all cases, and decisions on the programme content will be based solely on the review process.

## **Venues**

Platform presentations will take place at the University of Manchester, Oxford Road (Samuel Alexander Building). Workshops and SPPC will be held at the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences (Williamson Building). We will be having our ice-breaker reception at the fossil galleries of the Manchester Museum (evening of Wednesday September 5<sup>th</sup>). The annual dinner will be taking place on Friday September 7<sup>th</sup> (venue TBC).



*Manchester Museum*

## **Special Symposium: “*Advances in the Vertebrate Tree of Life*”**

The first day of the meeting will feature a special symposium on “Advances in the Vertebrate Tree of Life” with invited speakers from the UK and abroad giving extended talks (30 minutes) that highlight the cutting edge advances that fossils have made in understanding vertebrate phylogeny. Scheduled speakers include:

Robert Asher (Cambridge)

Michael Coates (Chicago)

Katie Davis (York)

Sam Giles (Oxford)

Emma Randle (Bath)

Oliver Rauhut (Munich).

### **Schedule of events**

|      |                      |   |
|------|----------------------|---|
| Wed  | Sept 5 <sup>th</sup> | SPPC workshop (morning), Williamson Building<br>Half-day workshop (morning), Williamson Building<br>Special Symposium (afternoon), Samuel Alexander Building<br>Icebreaker reception (evening), Manchester Museum |
| Thur | Sept 6 <sup>th</sup> | SVPCA platform presentations (all day), Samuel Alexander<br>SVPCA poster presentations (afternoon), Williamson<br>Annual auction (evening), TBC   |
| Fri  | Sept 7 <sup>th</sup> | SVPCA platform presentations (all day), Samuel Alexander<br>Annual dinner (evening) TBC   |
| Sat  | Sept 8 <sup>th</sup> | Buxton Museum (morning)<br>Pub lunch<br>Poole’s Cavern (afternoon)  |

### **SPPC**

The Symposium on Palaeontological Preparation, a forum for discussion of fossil preparation, conservation and related topics, will be held on the first morning of the meeting (5<sup>th</sup>). Platform presentations will be welcome, but attendees are also welcome to bring specimens of interest that they wish to present or discuss in an interactive forum.

### **Workshop – Introduction to Bayesian phylogenetic analysis for palaeontologists**

Led by Robin Beck (Salford), with assistance from Graeme Lloyd (Leeds), this workshop will provide an introduction to the principles underlying Bayesian phylogenetic analysis of palaeontological (morphological) data, and how such analyses can be implemented using the widely-used program MrBayes. Topics covered will include the Lewis model for morphology and its

variants, model fit/comparison with Bayes factors, MCMC and how to determine stationarity and convergence between chains, and tip-dating for inferring divergence times. Participants should bring their own laptops, and should have downloaded MrBayes 3.2.6 (available here: <https://github.com/NBISweden/MrBayes/tree/v3.2.6>). They will also need a simple text editor for editing input files (e.g. Notepad in Windows, TextEdit in macOS). Example datasets will be provided, but participants are encouraged to bring their own: ideally, these should be in NEXUS format, with an estimated age (either a point estimate or age range) for each taxon, and for the age of the root node.

A small supplement of £10 per attendee is requested to support the workshop.

### **Fieldtrip – Saturday September 8th**

The ‘field’ trip this year will begin with a morning visit to the recently refurbished Buxton Museum and Art Gallery. Here we will have an opportunity to view the new galleries, including the ‘Wonders of the Peak’, and will also be given a guided tour of the palaeontology stores, housing the important archive and collections of the Victorian ‘Cave Hunters’ Sir William Boyd Dawkins and Dr J. Wilfred Jackson. Lunch will be taken at a local pub after which we will walk the short distance to Poole’s Cavern, where will have a guided tour underground into the spectacular caves and caverns. This natural cave in Carboniferous Limestone, was occupied from the late Neolithic Period, and was opened as a showcave in 1853. Return to Manchester for 5.00pm.

The cost of the field trip (£30) will cover coach travel to and from Manchester, as well as admission to the Museum and Cavern. Field trip attendees will need to cover their own lunch costs. Numbers are limited to a maximum of 35 participants.

### **Accommodation and Travel**

The University of Manchester is a short walking distance (about 1 mile) from the city centre and Manchester’s main railway station (Manchester Piccadilly); it is well connected to both by bus routes. The city centre has diverse accommodations available, and three hotels are very close to the venues and the station (Hotel Ibis, Princess Street; Holiday Inn Express, Oxford Road; Pendulum Hotel, Sackville Street). There are a large number of bars and restaurants in the area and we will recommend certain locations as unofficial SVPCA drinking spots closer to the time. Manchester airport is the UK’s third busiest airport and is well connected to international destinations. Rapid train connections are available between the airport and the train station.

## **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/jonesfenleigh.php>). Application deadline is June 20<sup>th</sup> (midnight).

## **Auction**

As usual, the auction will be a key part of the meeting, and will take place on the evening of Thursday 6<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 Robert Sansom, University of Manchester, M13 9PT.

## **Logo**

Our logo is the lower mandible of 'Stan', Manchester Museum's own *Tyrannosaurus*, with toothy landmarks from the City of Manchester's skyline (Manchester Museum, Principal Hotel, Beetham Tower, Manchester Town Hall, and industrial chimneys).

## **Contact**

If you have questions, you can email [Robert.sansom@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Robert.sansom@manchester.ac.uk) and [SVPCAMAN2018@listserv.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:SVPCAMAN2018@listserv.manchester.ac.uk).

## **Host Committee**

Robert Sansom (Chair, UoM), Robin Beck (UoS), Charlotte Brassey (MMU), Robert Brocklehurst (UoM), Leah Callender-Crowe (UoM), Joe Keating (UoM), John Nudds (UoM), Elseph Wallace (UoM)  
University of Manchester (UoM), University of Salford, and Manchester Metropolitan Museum (MMU).

## **SVPCA Steering Committee**

Richard Butler, Susannah Maidment, Robert Sansom, Richard Forrest, Cindy Howells, Emma Dunne, Graeme Lloyd, Jeff Liston.