



**SVPCA**

**BIRMINGHAM**

**2017**

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

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

**FIRST CIRCULAR  
DECEMBER 2016**

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 will be the first time in its long history that SVPCA has visited Birmingham. This circular provides initial information on dates, venues and other practicalities: more information, including details and dates for registration, abstract submission and bookings will follow in subsequent circulars in early 2017.

### ***Host Committee***

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

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

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

### ***Venue***

Platform and poster sessions will take place at the campus of the University of Birmingham (UoB), in Edgbaston, south Birmingham. Evening events will include an evening icebreaker event at the Lapworth Museum of Geology at UoB, and the annual auction and annual dinner, both of which are provisionally planned to take place in central Birmingham. As is traditional, a fieldtrip will be offered for the day following the meeting, although the destination is still to be confirmed.

### ***Provisional Schedule***

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***Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September:*** SPPC presentations (AM)  
Half day workshops (AM)  
Special symposium (PM)  
Icebreaker, Lapworth Museum (PM)

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***Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September:*** SVPCA platform presentations (AM & PM)  
Poster presentations (PM)  
Annual auction (PM)

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***Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September:*** SVPCA platform presentation (AM & PM)  
Annual dinner (PM)

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***Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September:*** Fieldtrip

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### ***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.

For the first time, we intend to organise a special symposium for the first afternoon of SVPCA (Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>). The provisional topic is ‘Macroevolution and Macroecology in the Vertebrate Fossil Record’, and invited speakers will include leading researchers from the UK and overseas. We also plan to offer 2–3 half-day methodological workshops on the morning of Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>. Each of these will be organised by leading experts and will be open to a small number of participants (c. 5–10) for a nominal cost. Topics and final details will be confirmed in subsequent circulars.

### ***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, where there is 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. From this year, the SVPCA Steering Committee has agreed that it will also be used to support annual prizes for ‘best student talk’ and ‘best student poster’ at the meeting, which will take the form of a £250 bursary to cover costs of attending the SVPCA meeting in the following year.

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>). Applications are due by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017.

### ***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)).

### ***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 all proceeds going to the Jones-Fenleigh Memorial Fund. 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

### ***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***

Any questions, please contact the host committee chair Richard Butler [r.butler.1@bham.ac.uk](mailto:r.butler.1@bham.ac.uk) or [svpcabirmingham2017@gmail.com](mailto:svpcabirmingham2017@gmail.com).