

DVESScapades

escapades: interesting, stimulating, exciting activities and adventures



DELAWARE VALLEY EARTH SCIENCE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



February 2026



This Meeting: Wednesday, February 11th. Al Falster will give a presentation on “Crystallography” or “Everything You Wanted to Know About Crystallography but Were Afraid to Ask”

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 11th

Meeting location: Atco Senior Center, 474 E. Atlantic Ave, Waterford, NJ.

President's Message

Well, is it cold enough for everyone? Everything is iced over and the temperature is staying below freezing for the most part. I find myself going outside and shoveling snow and ice every day since the Sunday Winter Storm “Fern.” No rock salt to be found anywhere. And Punxsutawney Phil says six more weeks of winter. I can’t wait until spring.

Unless we get a significant warm-up over the next 2 months, we will continue visiting museums, going to lectures and mineral/fossil sales and having some neat experiences that are in the planning stages.

We held a vote and it was decided that we would try to set up a meeting or trip to the Edelman Fossil Museum on a Sunday. I now need to nail down the details and agree on the time and date with the museum. Then, I could pursue getting final approval and details. Can we have a guest speaker? Do we need to purchase tickets? What type of group discount can we get?

Programs:

Wednesday, January 14th: Our guest speaker was Joe Deckhut who presented some of his fieldwork on Cretaceous birds from the Arctic region by measuring various long bones trying and comparing them to similar modern birds to better understand how/why the fossilized animals lived & moved. Joe hopes to apply this model to future work with turtles. Great presentation Joe!

Wednesday, February 11th: Our guest speaker will be Al Falster and his presentation will be on “Crystallography” or “Everything You Wanted to Know About Crystallography but Were Afraid to Ask”.

Al works as an experimental chemist and researcher, specializing in the analysis of pegmatite minerals. He is a staff member at the Maine Mineral & Gem Museum and serves on the board of directors for the Rice NW Museum of Rocks & Minerals. Al conducts workshops on pegmatite origins and chemistry, and has been involved in documenting minerals from various locations. He is actively involved in a pegmatite quarry for fun on Sundays.

Field Trips and Happenings:

Monday, January 12th program at the Delaware Museum of Nature & Science:

Delaware Mineralogical Society (DMS) sponsored a talk on “Current Research and Discoveries at the Edelman Fossil Park and Museum” by Dr. Zach Boles. Go to the DMS YouTube page:

etyphhttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wb_7M236WfA

Rutgers' University Geology Museum Open House, Saturday, January 31st:

There were 8 to 10 DVESS members up there for the mineral/fossil sales. The quality seemed quite a bit better than the past few years. I took in the first lecture on the fantastic mineral specimens donated to the Geology Museum. It was a very nice presentation and the specimens looked amazing, but most of them were micromounts. Fred and I went to lunch at the Student Center. During that time I received a text from my wife saying my daughter was in the ER at Jefferson Hospital. Fred and I immediately went home. So, if anyone stayed for the next two lectures on Sterling Hill/Franklin and the Geology of Mars please share your thoughts.

Monmouth Amateur Paleontologist Society (MAPS): Saturday, February 21st

We have made arrangements with Ralph Johnson of MAPS to visit his museum at 10:00 am. Ralph has a very detailed and one of the most complete fossil collections of New Jersey Cretaceous Fossils. Depending on the number of people interested in going we may need to split the group into two. The facility can only handle 10 people at a time. First come first to get signed up. If we get more than 10 people to sign up we will stagger the starting time for the second group. Don't wait until the meeting to sign up. Contact me via email, call or text.

Wagner Free Institute tour: Date TBD. This tour would have to happen during the weekdays, Monday thru Friday. We can possibly accommodate a group as large as 15. Please sign up at the meeting if you're interested in attending.

Waterford Township Library has planned a summer reading program with a theme called “**Unearth a Story**” - **Dinosaurs, Paleontology and Archaeology**. They would love to have our club go to the library and do a presentation or program for either kids or adults. It's to take place between mid-June to August. I'll be looking for a few volunteers once I get more details.

Delaware Mineralogical Society, 62nd Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show: March 7th & 8th, 2026, Double Tree by Hilton, 4727 Concord Pike, Wilmington, DE 19803, Saturday 10 am - 5:00 pm, Sunday 11 am – 5:00 pm, Seniors \$6.00, Adults \$7.00, Juniors \$4.00, Scouts and children under 12 Free.

Cape Atlantic Rockhounds, 2026 Spring Gem & Mineral Show: May 16th & 17th, 10 am – 4:00 pm, Atlantic County 4H Fairgrounds, 3210 Route 50 Mays Landing, NJ 08330, Free Admission & Parking, Rain or Shine.

Mineral Treasures and Fossil Fair 2026, Philadelphia Mineralogical Society and The Delaware Valley Earth Science Society: Saturday, March 28th 10 am to 5:00 pm and Sunday, March 29th 10 am to 4:00 pm, Adults \$7.00, \$2.00 kids 12 and under, LuLu Temple, 5140 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting, PA

Mark Leipert - President



50th Annual Leidy Microscopical Society Micromount Symposium, March 13-14, 2026 , Advent Lutheran Church, 45 Worthington Mill Rd, Richboro, Pa. 18954. Friday 12:00 Noon to 6:00 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Table Space for Two Days: \$35.00 for ½ of 6 Foot Table, \$45.00 for Full 6 Foot Table. Lunch to be Provided on Saturday with Paid Admission. Visitor's Fee: \$5.00 for Friday, \$10.00 for Saturday (Includes Lunch). RESERVATIONS & ADMISSIONS: Make Checks Payable to: The Leidy Microscopical Society Mail to: Don McAlarnen, Treasurer, 916 Senator Road, East Norriton, PA 19403 For Questions: Contact Don at (610) 247-5097 Email: donmcalarnen@outlook.com

Condensed Minutes for 1/14/2026 Meeting

Attendance: 28 in person / 5 online =33 total

Rock Raffle brought in \$46

Mark acknowledged Edna Day's passing and thanked John Arsenault for his service as past President of our club. He introduced the new board members and their positions. There was discussion about possible indoor activities due to the winter weather. There was also a discussion about the possibility of holding a meeting at The Edelman Fossil Museum. Mark introduced Joe Deckhut as the evening's speaker. His interesting presentation was on the topic "Recent Fieldwork with Fossil Birds, Fish and Turtles in Australia." He also talked about his future research plans.

Karen Sweeten

Secretary

PHOTOS

January Meeting

by Karen Sweeten



Turtle Bloat and Float

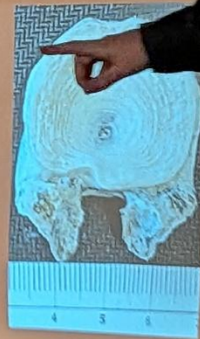
- Goal is to record the typical patterns of decay for turtles in an ideal aquatic environment
- Looking for differences in the degree of articulation between treatments
- Helps to better understand the preservation of turtles



Bloated Turtle Float

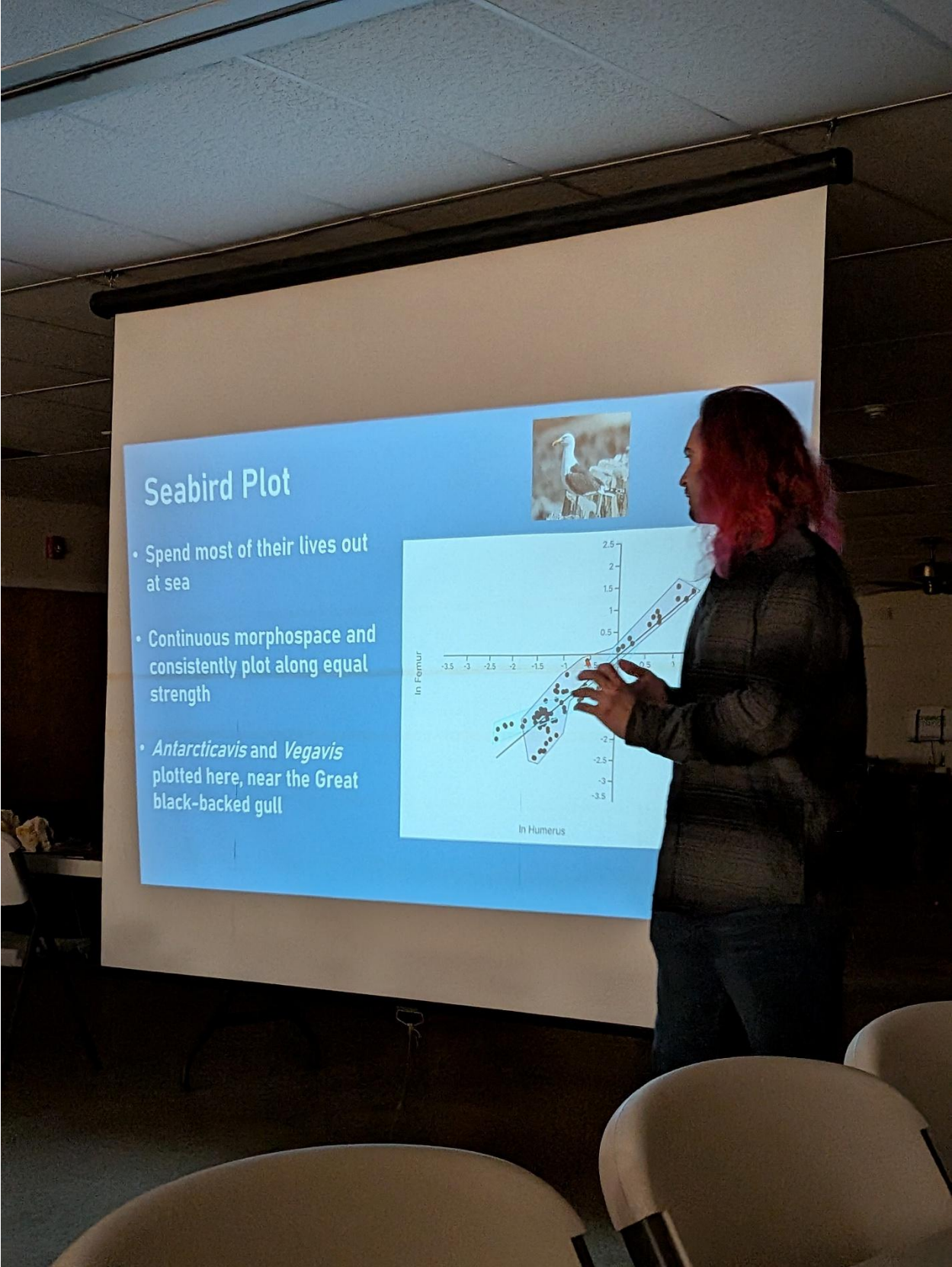
The New Fish

- Found by Joseph Carr
- 2 cm long premaxillary fragment with 3 alveoli (tooth sockets)
- The bone is thick and cancellous (spongy)
- Durophagous (shell-crushing) diet, likely feeding on yabbies and snails
- First evidence of a durophagous lifestyle in the Etadunna Fm.



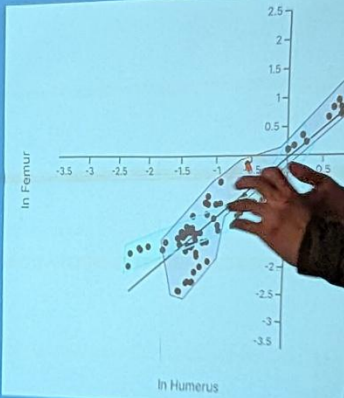
Similarities Between the Modern and Fossil Avians

Common merganser	Great black-backed gull	<i>Antarcticavis</i> and <i>Vegavis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flight = running start takeoff and gliding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flight = running start takeoff and both gliding and soaring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flight = likely running start takeoff and gliding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diving = slight leap from water surface to 6 m depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diving = from water surface, or slightly above, down to 2 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diving = likely near or on water surface to relatively shallow depths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diet = fish, mammals, invertebrates, frogs, plants, other birds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diet = fish, mammals, invertebrates, other birds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diet = likely fish, mammals, invertebrates, and other birds



Seabird Plot

- Spend most of their lives out at sea
- Continuous morphospace and consistently plot along equal strength
- *Antarcticavis* and *Vegavis* plotted here, near the Great black-backed gull



DVESS Directory for 2026

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Committee Chairs</u>
President: Mark Leipert 856-524-2103 mark.leipert@yahoo.com Vice President: Cathy Eskew ceskew.5@gmail.com Secretary: Karen Sweeten Treasurer: James Brennan 610-322-1540 brenimage@hotmail.com	Junior Rockhounds Chair: Mark Leipert Field Trips: Mark Leipert Co-Field Trips: Fred Hochkile Membership: James Brennan
<u>Newsletter</u> Editor: Susan Moore aquamarinepaisleyorchid@yahoo.com	<u>Other Information:</u> <u>Website: www.DVESS.org</u> <u>Facebook: <i>DVESSNJ – Amy Simpson</i></u>



Membership Information

Regular memberships are entitled to participate in all DVESS activities.

Regular Membership:

\$20.00 for the 1st family member + \$15.00 for each family member

\$10.00 for the 1st Senior (65+) member + \$5.00 for each family member

Delaware Valley Earth Science Society Information

The Delaware Valley Earth Science Society, Inc. (DVESS), a non-profit organization, was founded in 1956 and incorporated in the state of New Jersey in 1957. The Society:

- promotes interest in, knowledge of, and the development of skills in the “earth sciences.” These interests include mineralogy, paleontology, lapidary arts, archeology, and local preservation.
- supports the conservation of natural resources, advocates the availability of collecting sites, and maintains close contact with those in the academic field.
- is a member club of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (<http://www.AmFed.org/EFMLS>)

Delaware Valley Earth Science Society Inc. (DVESS)

DVESS Website: <http://www.DVESS.org>



To submit an article or photos for publication in the DVESScapades, contact the Newsletter Editor at aquamarinepaisleyorchid@yahoo.com.

