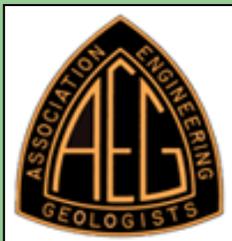




HAGS/AEG – Meeting Announcement

Thursday, April 13, 2017 6:30 p.m.

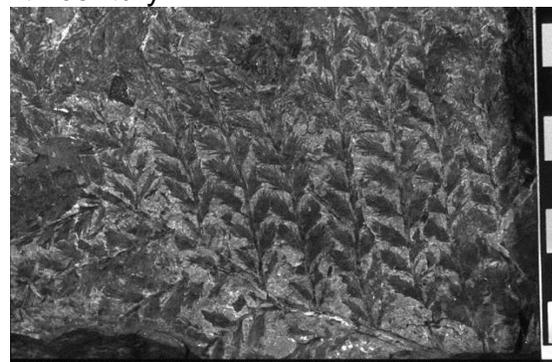


Seeing the Forest for the Fossil Trees: Uncovering a 365 million-year-old Landscape in Pennsylvania, or, Rendezvous at Red Hill: Encounters in the Late Devonian

Presented by: Dr. Walter Cressler, PhD – West Chester University

Abstract: Red Hill is a kilometer-long road cut in Clinton County, north-central Pennsylvania. Its layers of siltstone and sandstone are part of the Duncannon Member of the Late Devonian Catskill Formation. They were laid down as river deposits 365-million-years ago. Buried in the deposits are the remains of an ancient forest of spore-bearing Archaeopteris trees and associated vegetation that was growing in the floodplain landscape. These include some of the earliest seed-bearing plants, strange ferns from now-extinct groups, and small swamp trees that were ancestral to the coal-forming species of the subsequent Carboniferous Period. Charcoal was found at Red Hill, and represents evidence of some of the earliest known forest fires. Red Hill provides the most vivid picture of the type of landscape into which vertebrates first emerged from the water. It is the locality where Ted Daeschler discovered the earliest tetrapod from North America. Numerous fish species and terrestrial invertebrates have also been identified there. Red Hill is the fossil locality that provides the most thorough information for reconstructing a terrestrial ecosystem from the critical transition period of the Late Devonian.

Speaker Bio: Walt Cressler is a paleobotanist and science librarian based at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. He received his Ph.D. in geology from the University of Pennsylvania. As a librarian and geologist, he likes to read the landscape like a book and tell the stories that he finds there. His own family story is deeply rooted in the Pennsylvania landscape. While doing research at Red Hill on Late Devonian forests, he discovered that one of his great-great-grandfathers operated a sawmill just a few miles away during the great lumber boom of the late nineteenth century.



Meeting Location:

AEG Offices
441 Friendship Road
Harrisburg, PA
(not far from Bass Pro Shops)

Dinner at 4:45 – 6:15
Fiesta Mexico
3957 Paxton Street
(between Ruby Tuesday
and Nissan dealership)

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RSVP for dinner & meeting by no later than noon Tuesday, April 11, 2017.

RSVP Amy Randolph at secretaryhags@gmail.com or 717.395.3181.

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