TC ROCKHOUNDS

November 2026 issue

The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the VFW Post at 3400 Veterans Drive in Traverse City.

Join us for “Christmas In November”! Some club members will be presenting items for sale to help with finding some presents for your family and friends, or for yourself. Contact Bob White to reserve table space.

The Pebble Pups’ next meeting of the school year will be held on November 19 at 5:30 pm, just before our regular meeting. The program will be “Climate Change and Tree Rings”.

October Highlights

The short program was Brody Dymond sharing, “Wetumpka Impact Crater Petrified Wood”. Steven Veatch presented the main program “In the Shadow of the Betsie River: The Serendipitous Recovery of an Early Archaic Artifact.

Food Pantry Donations

Linda Keely oversees the food pantry supplies collection and Donna Kukla, the clothing donations. The program has been seeing declining participation. A decision will be made soon on whether to continue at every meeting. Non-perishable food items, ***(Please no expired dates on food items),*** personal hygiene products, children’s new underwear, for elementary to teens, toothbrushes and toothpaste are desired.

Facebook Page

Visit the club’s Facebook page at this web address. There is also a link on our club website. https://www.facebook.com/TCRockhounds

Upcoming Field Trips

Please forward ideas for field trips to Dave Regalbuto at:

Dave Regalbuto
GTARMC Field Trip Coordinator
517-256-4716
E-mail: dregs9727@yahoo.com

Membership Information

From Cathy Kowaleski, Membership Chair:

You must be a paid member to continue to receive club benefits (participation in classes, outings and receiving club newsletters.) Dues are $20 per Adult, Students (8-17) $5, and those under 8 are free with an adult membership. Name badges are $8 per badge.
Thank you!

Make checks out to GTARMC.

Membership dues may be mailed to:

Cathy Kowaleski, Membership Chair
801 S. Garfield Avenue #241
Traverse City, MI 49686

Club Email Addresses

gtarmc@tcrockhounds.com (is our main club email address)

To send a request for classes or workroom time, please send an email request to our club scheduler.

scheduling@tcrockhounds.com

If you have any photos that you would like to share of club events or members, those can be sent to:

noonanjohntc@gmail.com

To view club photos on Flicker, enter the following web address:
GT Rock & Mineral | Flickr

Upcoming Events

December Dinner Potluck Meeting – Sunday, December 6

An additional email will be coming out soon with the details and a sign-up form.

The meeting will also feature voting for officers for 2027. President Eric Hallman has said that he is not wanting to continue as President in 2027. If you are interested in being on the ballot for this position, please let Eric know.

Club T-Shirts

Contact Cathy Prieto-Smith if you are interested in ordering a club T-Shirt. Two colors of shirts and different logo location choices are available.

Pebble Pups News

For more information about the Pebble Pups, check out their website.

https://traversepebblepups.blogspot.com/





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The above contact list will be included in each newsletter so that you know who to contact for various items.

New Pebble Pup Artwork by Hunter Maeder

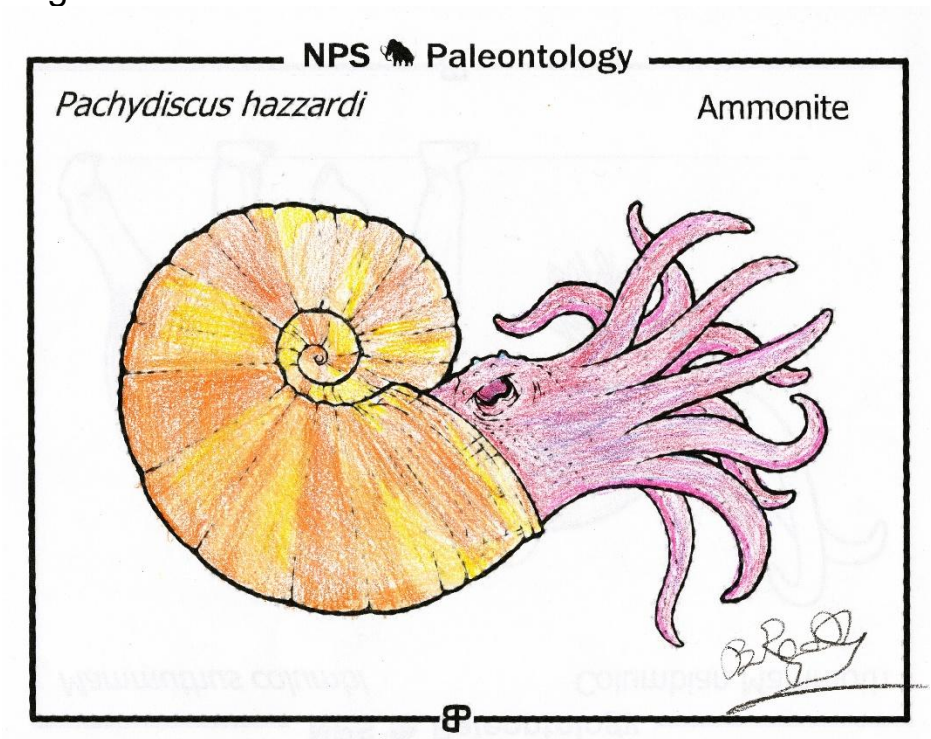


Page 5

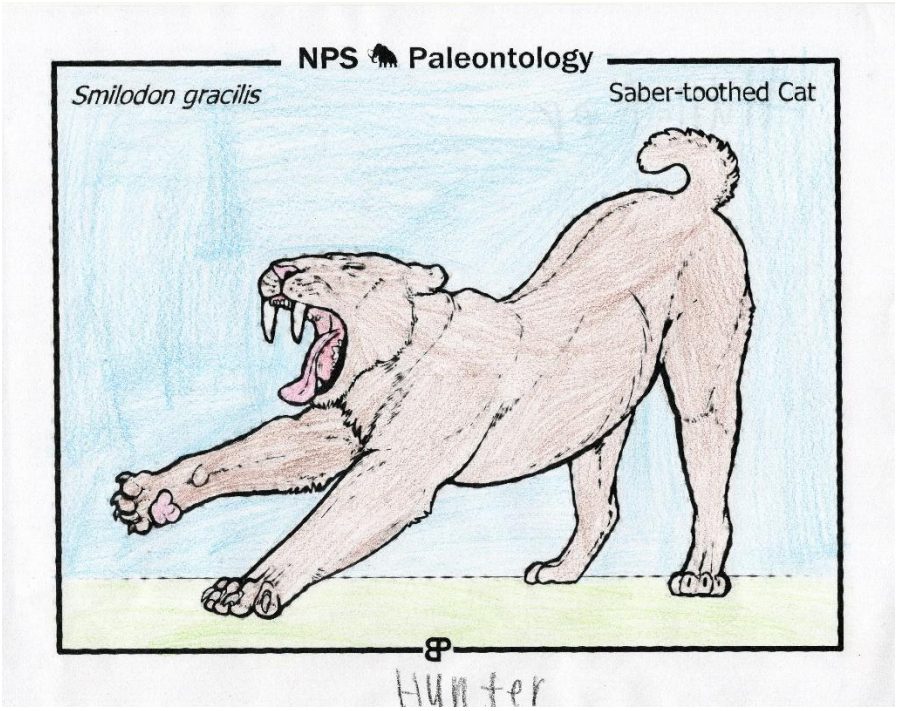




Page 6



Brody Dymond top / Hunter Maeder bottom



LOCAL YOUTH ROCKHOUND CLAIMS NATIONAL HONORS FOR PREHISTORIC CRAYFISH ARTWORK



Up-and-coming rockhound and artist Riley Newman has officially captured second place in a prestigious national youth art competition hosted by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS). Newman, a dedicated "Pebble Pup" member of the Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club, was recognized for his striking artwork depicting a prehistoric crayfish, competing against young earth science enthusiasts from across the country.

Because Newman's active commitment to the Boy Scouts prevents him from attending the club's regularly scheduled Pebble Pup meetings, a special ceremony was arranged at the Traverse City District Library. Pebble Pup Leader Steven Veatch met Newman at the library to personally present him with his official AFMS national certificate and trophy.

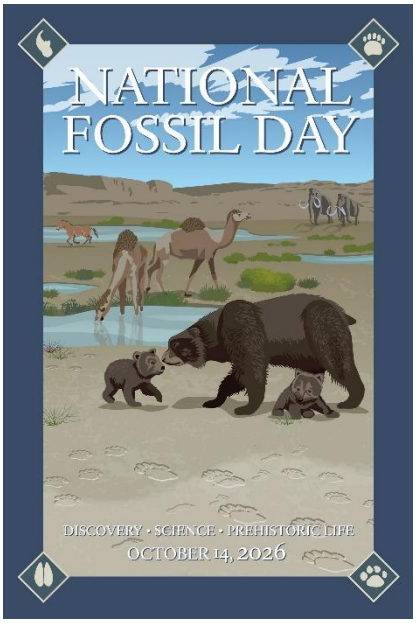
"Riley's achievement on the national stage highlights the remarkable passion and talent within our local youth," said Veatch." It's inspiring to see his dedication to combining scientific curiosity with creative expression."

Winning second place nationally is just the beginning for the local artist. Looking ahead, Newman plans to share his passion for earth sciences by participating in upcoming Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club outreach programs and heading out on future geological field trips.

Pebble Pups and Boardman River Nature Center Celebrate Earth Science Week and National Fossil Day

Families gathered at the Boardman River Nature Center on Wednesday, October 14, to celebrate Earth Science Week and National Fossil Day with the Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club's Pebble Pups. The exciting event brought together children, parents, and Earth science enthusiasts for an evening of discovery, exploration, and hands-on learning.

Held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., the celebration highlighted the fascinating stories that rocks, minerals, and fossils tell about our planet. With many families attending, the event offered an engaging opportunity for young learners to explore Earth's geological history and discover how Earth science helps us understand the world around us.



"Events like this give children and families an opportunity to experience the excitement of Earth science firsthand," said Eric Hallman, president of the Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club. "When children can examine a fossil, explore a mineral, or ask questions about how the Earth works, they begin to see the natural world in a whole new way. We're proud to help inspire that curiosity through our Pebble Pups program."

Earth Science Week, observed October 11–17, celebrates the many ways people from diverse backgrounds and professions study the Earth and work together to address challenges facing our planet and communities. This year's theme, *"Critical*

Minerals for a Thriving Society," highlights the minerals essential to modern life and the importance of sourcing these resources responsibly.

The celebration also recognized National Fossil Day, inviting families to marvel at an impressive collection of fossils and uncover clues about ancient life and Earth's distant past. Participants explored the stories preserved in these remarkable specimens, connecting prehistoric organisms with the geological processes that have shaped our planet over millions of years. Young participants could even take home a fossil of their own to begin a personal collection.



The Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club's Pebble Pups program encourages children to investigate the natural world through geology, mineralogy, and paleontology. By making Earth science accessible and fun, the program nurtures curiosity, encourages scientific thinking, and inspires the next generation of Earth science enthusiasts.

The strong family turnout demonstrated the value of community partnerships in bringing science education to life. By combining the expertise and resources of the Boardman River Nature Center and the Pebble Pups, the celebration helped families discover that Earth science is more

than the study of rocks and fossils—it is a way to understand our planet, its resources, and our shared responsibility for its future.








EARTH SCIENCE WEEK
Join the Pebble Pups
ROCK





About the Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club

The Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club brings together individuals who share an interest in rocks, minerals, fossils, and Earth science. Through educational programs and activities, the club encourages scientific discovery and an appreciation for Earth's geological history.



About the Boardman River Nature Center

The Boardman River Nature Center provides opportunities for people to connect with nature and learn about the region's natural resources through environmental education and community programming.

Young Geologists at Work: Nine Pebble Pups Dive Deep into Rocks, Minerals, and Real Field Science

Hands-on workshop at Northwestern Michigan College transforms GTARMC Pebble Pups into junior geologists armed with tools, techniques, and treasure.



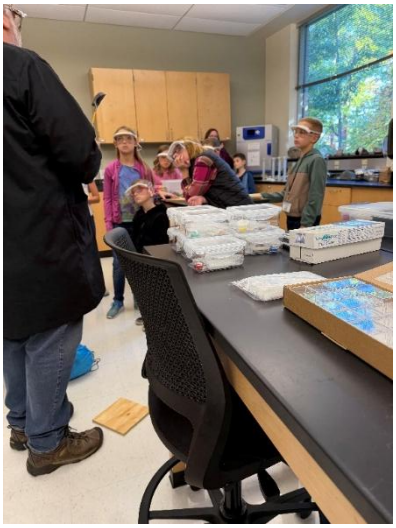
On Saturday, October 17, nine enthusiastic Pebble Pups laced up their field boots and stepped into the role of working geologists at the Northwestern Michigan College Geology Laboratory. From 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., the young explorers unlocked the secrets of Earth's building blocks in an action-packed workshop titled "Young Geologists at Work: Tools, Techniques, and Mineral Identification."

Armed with 10x hand lenses, ultraviolet blacklights, streak plates, magnets, and hardness kits, the Pebble Pups got up close and personal with real mineral specimens. They inspected crystal habits under magnification, watched fluorescent minerals glow under blacklight, tested relative hardness, performed classic streak tests, checked for magnetism, and triggered chemical reactions on limestone that fizzed with excitement.



"These kids weren't just looking at rocks—they were doing science the way professionals do it," said Steven Veatch. "They learned to classify rocks into the three great families—igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic—and then took the next step into real collections management."

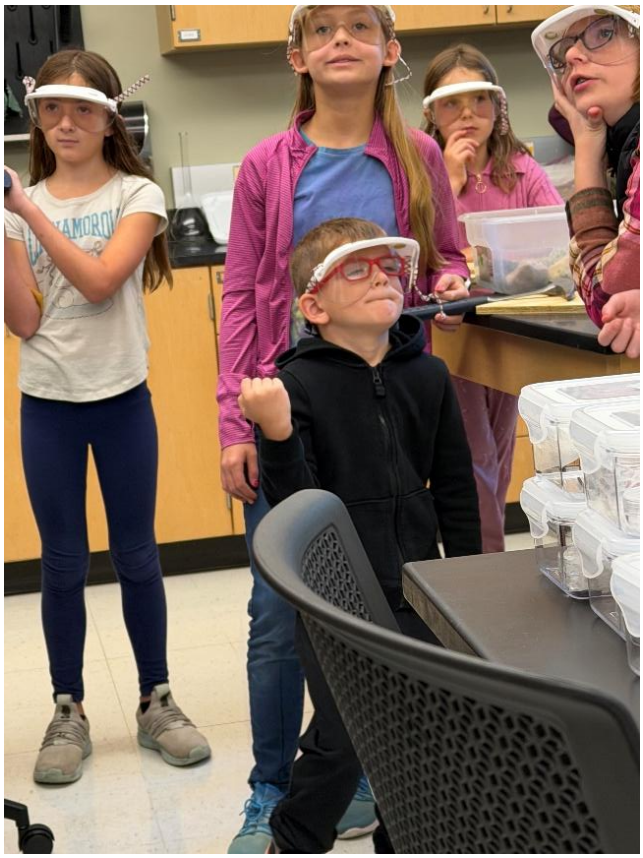




Beyond identification, the young geologists mastered professional techniques for cataloging specimens using whiteout and fine-line markers. They explored display options including sleek Perky boxes, classic Riker mounts, and protective fold-up cardboard collection boxes designed to safeguard and display their growing treasures.

Special thanks go to Kirk Waterstripe for hosting the event, Steven Veatch for teaching collection management, and Michelle Peters for ensuring everything ran smoothly from start to finish. Their dedication made this experience possible, and something the Pebble Pups will remember.

Every participant left the lab richer than when they arrived—carrying home carefully selected specimens and their own hardness test kit, ready to continue exploring the mineral world.
The workshop delivered pure hands-on discovery, turning curiosity into competence and leaving nine new junior geologists eager for the next adventure in the field.







Finally, a short story and poem by Steven Veatch



Coelophysis, a bipedal dinosaur, was a fierce predator armed with sharp teeth and lethal claws. *Coelophysis* was a 6 to 10 feet (1.8 to 3 meters) long dinosaur and was among the best known of all late Triassic theropods (Colbert, 1989).



The death curve pose of this *Coelophysis* is caused by body tissues and neck tendons stiffening and shortening. This post-mortem action bends the head back. Note the sharp-clawed fingers used to grab small prey. Image © by S. Veatch, May 2006.

he Triassic world, beginning about 230 million years ago, marked the beginning of the Age of Dinosaurs and differed vastly from today. The continents of the Triassic Earth were joined together into one vast continent called Pangaea. The central region of this enormous landmass was a vast and hostile desert with a harsh climate. *Coelophysis* inhabited this super continent during uninviting times.

These slightly built predatory dinosaurs, first named by the renowned paleontologist Edward Drinker Cope, had long jaws with sharp and serrated teeth (Cope, 1889). *Coelophysis* was an agile dinosaur that hunted prey in packs, bringing other animals down with their fearsome three-clawed forefeet (Paul, 1989). They held their long tails high above their backs for balance.

Quick Facts: *Coelophysis*	
Height:	**1.2 meters (4 feet)**
Length	**3 meters (10 feet)**
Weight	**35.5 kg (77 lbs.)**
Period	**Late Triassic**

Scientists base assumptions about *Coelophysis* behavior based on interpretations of the striking accumulation of hundreds of well-preserved skeletons found at Ghost Ranch, New Mexico. George Whitaker first discovered skeletons of *Coelophysis bauri* at Ghost Ranch in the summer of 1947, roughly 38 miles northwest of the town of Española, New Mexico (Colbert, 1995).

The Whittaker quarry preserves the full range of growth of both genders of *Coelophysis*—from juveniles to fully grown adults. When paleontologists found juvenile *Coelophysis* bones in the rib cage of a large *Coelophysis,* they thought that *Coelophysis* was cannibalistic (Colbert, 1995). Why so many died at once at the Ghost Ranch site is a puzzle—predators rarely congregate in the high density seen at Ghost Ranch unless there is an exceptionally rich food source. There is nothing to suggest there was such a prey concentration at the Ghost Ranch locality. Perhaps these dinosaurs were attracted to the only water source in the area.

The *Coelophysis* skeletons at the Whittaker quarry are well-preserved (about 25% are articulated or complete) and show no signs of scavenging. This is consistent with the leading hypothesis that these animals were killed by a flood that washed into a low spot or pond and were then quickly buried (Colbert, 1995).

Scientists continue to make discoveries about *Coelophysis* as their fossil bones at Ghost Ranch continue to yield more information about these remarkable dinosaurs.

References and further reading:

Colbert, E. H., 1989, *The Triassic dinosaur Coelophysis*: Museum of Northern Arizona Bulletin 57.

Colbert, E.H., 1995, *The Little Dinosaurs of Ghost Ranch*: New York, Columbia University Press.

Cope, E. D., 1889, On a new genus of Triassic Dinosauria: American Naturalist xxiii.

Paul, G. S., 1988, Predatory Dinosaurs of the World: A Complete Illustrated Guide, New York, Simon & Schuster.

What the Ice Age Pollen Knows

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

Ice Age pollen, disguised as dust grains—gather below the dry earth. A microscopic spark of Pleistocene time suspended in sediment that once held a mammoth's weight. I lean closer. The specks represent something larger: spores of ancient ferns, pollen of trees and flowers, grass that swayed under skies I will never see. Each grain becomes a beat, a fragment of a living landscape resurrected in my hands. I watch hills moving like slow swells, meadows of mountain grasses, and willows standing along Grape Creek. I hear leaves sighing in wind, scented with damp earth and the coming autumn. I feel the mammoth grazing, a shadow moving through sunlight, alive and slow in the hush of prehistory. Here, hours spent with storied sediment conjure a life that sleeps only to wake in me. The past is not behind me. It is here, in the pulse of pollen, in the rustle of leaves, in the slow, sacred grazing of a creature that still walks these hills in my imagination.

By Steven Wade Veatch

