

**EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
of Vertebrate Palaeontologists (EAVP)**

3rd ANNUAL MEETING

Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, Germany

July 18-23, 2005



First Circular

**Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Friends and Colleagues,**

it is a pleasure to invite you to the 3rd EAVP meeting. This will continue a series of international workshops and conferences which were organised by the Department of Geology, Palaeontology and Mineralogy of Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt. It started with a colloquium on “Wirbeltiere und Taphonomie -- quer durch die Erdgeschichte” (Vertebrates and Taphonomy -- Across Earth History) in honour of Prof. Frank WESTPHAL in 1989, and was followed by the conference on “Microorganisms, Facies Analysis and Fossil Diagenesis” in June 1991. Subsequently, it was firstly highlighted by the international meeting “Monument Grube Messel -- Perspectives and Relationships”, which was attended by more than 150 distinguished palaeontologist from 23 countries. All of these conference shared one main theme: Fossils, especially vertebrates, from the world famous fossil site Grube Messel (Messel Pit), which is located in the immediate vicinity, only about 8 km NE of Darmstadt. Therefore, it is not only an honour but rather a consequence that in 2005, which is the 10th anniversary of the inscription of Messel Pit on the World Heritage List of UNESCO and the 675th anniversary of Darmstadt’s bestowal with town character as well, a fourth international meeting on fossil vertebrates will take place here. And --aside all other interesting talks-- we will especially welcome and encourage any contribution which will focus on Messel vertebrates and other topics which are closely correlated with this fossil site.

*Gabriele Gruber, Norbert Micklich, Oliver Sandrock, Torsten Wappler
(Organisation Committee)*

Darmstadt – General informations

Darmstadt is a mid-sized town which is located in the South of Germany, about 28 km S of Frankfurt. It covers an area of little more than 12.000 ha and has almost 140.000 inhabitants. It is easily accessible by an excellent Rhine-Main Airport connection (“Airliner” shuttle bus), an elaborate highway network, as well as by good railway connections (S- and Intercity trains).

It originated from a small settlement, which was firstly mentioned in an official document as “Darmundestat” towards the end of the 11th century. In the mid of the 13th century, in the same place, a castle built in water was established by the Dukes of Katzenelnbogen, which was soon surrounded by a small village. In 1330, this village was awarded with town charac-

ter by Emperor Ludwig IV, the Bavarian (1313-47). It continued as a residence of Hessian Landgraves and Grand Dukes, and developed into the capital city of the German state of Hessen. Following nearly complete destruction of the inner city in the Second World War, Darmstadt had to be re-established from the ground up, and did not stay as the capital of Hessen any longer. Revived civic activities centred around the Technical University, which nowadays has about almost 20.000 students, and the Mathildenhöhe artists' colony with the famous Art Nouveau buildings. Being a centre of printing and publishing industries at first, new computer technologies became a main economic factor in more recent times. Large and small software companies established themselves around the Technical University, a number of which are now known worldwide. International institutes, such as the space research organizations ESOC and EUMETSAT, the Heavy Ion Research Association (GSI), the GMD Research Centre Information Technology GmbH and the Fraunhofer Institute for Graphic Data Processing, were established here as well. In addition, there also are some firms of international format (Merck, Röhm, Schenck, Wella).

Present day's Darmstadt calls itself the city of science, and as a city in which the arts are alive. For visitors, all year, a large variety of different programs, events and activities are offered by various institutions which guarantee high-level entertainment for most kinds of personal interests. During July, the climate is usually warm and dry (monthly average temperature between 18° and 20°), except for few thunderstorms and rain showers towards the afternoon and evenings. Around the centre of town, there are lots of shops, street cafes, bars and also some local mini-breweries, which are well suited to relax from the conference stress and duties. In the closer vicinity of the town there are also several nice places which are worth-while for a short sightseeing trip and recreation.

The Venue

The conference will take place at Hessisches Landesmuseum, Friedensplatz 1, 64283 Darmstadt, Germany (Hessian State Museum Darmstadt, subsequently HLMD). This is located in the centre of the city, close to the central part of the Technical University, in the immediate neighbourhood of the historic castle as well as the characteristic building of the former Royal Theatre, which was planned and constructed by Georg Moller ("Moller Building"), and now houses the State Archive. The main exhibit and lecture room is in the basement floor of the museum's building and provides room for an audience up to 200 people. It is directly located aside and also accessible from the entrance hall in which houses a cafeteria where coffee, tea, and other drinks as well as small snacks are available during the conference.

HLMD is one of the oldest public museums in Germany and unique because of its interdisciplinary collections and exhibits of natural history, history of civilisation and archaeology, in combination with medieval and modern arts. The collections date back into the 17th century, when they were donated to the state by Grand Duke Ludewig I. The present day building was designed by Alfred Messel and opened in 1906. It was partially destroyed in the Second World War and reopened after renovation in 1955. In 1984, a new building was added for the 20th century art.

Messel excavations, Messel research and the presentation of Messel fossils are important obligations of the museum. Since 1874, the oldest collection of Messel fossils, which is also one of the world's most important ones, was established here. The inventory comprises more than 10.000 fossils today. Amongst them there are many type specimens, e.g. the unique, world famous anteater *Eurotamandua joresi*, the primeval tapir *Hyrachyus minimus*, as well as some rare materials from the close-by "Prinz von Hessen" fossil site, which are especially important from an historic point of view, as this locality is not accessible for excavations any longer. Last, but not least, the BEHNKE-Collection must be mentioned, which was

purchased from private owners in 2001 and also comprises many important and unique Messel fossils. Scientific fieldwork is conducted by HLMD in Messel Pit since 1965, and continues with regular excavation periods up to today.

At the HLMD, there always was a tight correlation between Messel research and the collecting activities. The very first scientific descriptions of the famous „Urpferdchen“, were done by Oskar HAUPT in 1911 and in 1925, when he was curator of the palaeontological collection. Other well-known palaeontologists, such as Heinz TOBIEN, also started their career as curators of the HLMD, working with Messel material. Formerly, the scientific interest was mainly with the mammals. More recently, other research projects on invertebrates and fishes were added.

For more details concerning the museum and collections see www.hlmd.de

Preliminary Program

For those who will not participate in the pre-symposium excursion, Monday, July 18th is planned to be the arrival day. In the evening there will be a reception and an icebreaker party in the museum. The official EAVP meeting will be in the evening of Tuesday, July 19th and the conference dinner will take place in the evening of Friday 22nd. Oral presentations and poster sessions are scheduled from Tuesday, 19th to Thursday 21st, with morning and afternoon sessions, and for the morning of Friday 22nd.

Technical Information

For the oral contributions, single or double projection will be available (35 mm slides). There will also be a beamer for Power Point presentations (Mac or IBM PCs). 20 minutes are available for each speaker, including five minutes for discussions. Instructions for preparing the posters will be given in the second circular.

Field Trips

A pre-symposium excursion into the Permo-Carboniferous of Saar-Nahe area will be offered on Monday, July 18th. There are various fossil sites which yielded nicely preserved fishes and amphibians and were intensively studied by Prof. Jürgen BOY and his students from the University of Mainz for the last decades. Dr Karl STAPF, who is a known expert concerning the geology and palaeontology of this area, will lead us to some representative outcrops and a current excavation area of the Pfalzmuseum für Naturkunde, Bad Dürkheim. He will also provide us with all explanations concerning the respective profile sections and fossil assemblages. A field trip to Messel Pit will be organized in the afternoon of Friday, July 22nd. On Saturday July 23rd, there will be a post-symposium excursion to Frauenweiler clay pit, where we will be invited to a “Rauenberger Breakfast” by the lord major of Rauenberg municipality, at first. Dr. Ludwig HILDEBRAND, who is highly familiar with the geology of this area, will be with us to answer questions concerning the stratigraphic peculiarities and the history of the local mining and research activities. There will be an option to have a look for some personal fossil “souvenirs”, too. We will continue to the State Museum of Natural History in Karlsruhe, where we will have a guided tour through the exhibits and are invited to a general reception later on.

Fees

There will be a registration fee of € 50,- , which covers the participation in the scientific sessions, the abstract volume, the evening reception and icebreaker party on Monday 18th and probably some more “touristic” side offers which we are trying to organise in addition. The symposium dinner and the excursion will be charged separately. For payment details, please see second circular.

Abstracts

The abstract volume will be printed and published as a regular issue of “KAUPIA”, which has an I.S.B.N. registration and is the official scientific periodical of HLMD (for details see HLMD homepage). This also means, that the contributors will have the chance to prepare more extended versions of their abstracts (including text figures and a synopsis of literature), which may be cited as an official publication later on. For submission deadline and formatting details see second circular.

Accommodation

There are many hotels in the centre of Darmstadt that are in easy walking distance from the museum. Others with somewhat more moderate rates are in the vicinity and easily accessible by bus or tram. In addition, there is a youth hotel, education centres of local companies and nature-lovers houses. We are trying to find special arrangements and hope to be able to meet all individual requirements and financial possibilities. You will find more details in the second circular.

Deadlines

If you are interested to attend this conference, please fill the attached form and send it to the address indicated on top of the questionnaire. Please return before March 1st, 2005. You will receive a second circular with more detailed information concerning the preparation and submission of the abstracts, formatting the posters and booking of accommodations in April 2005.

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Family Name Title

First Name

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Institution

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Address

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City, ZIP

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Country

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FAX

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E-Mail

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I will attend the symposium yes probably

I intend to give an oral presentation a poster

preliminary title:

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I am interested in the Field Trip to Messel Pit Excursion to Permo-Carboniferous
 vertebrate fossil sites of the Saar-Nahe Area Excursion to Frauenweiler and State Museum
 of Natural History Karlsruhe Permian vertebrate fossil sites of the Saar-Nahe Area

Comments and suggestions, special prerequisites

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Date

Signature