

MUSEUM OF PALEONTOLOGY

Research collections that fuel the university's long tradition of interdisciplinary, groundbreaking work and inspire future generations to understand links between life and the planet

Paleontology at the University of Michigan has a distinguished tradition dating to the university's early days in Ann Arbor. Today, Michigan's acclaimed paleontology program is regularly recognized as one of the nation's best. Centered on the University of Michigan Museum of Paleontology (UMMP) and its internationally significant collection of over 4 million fossil specimens, our dynamic community is devoted to studying the history of life, interpreting its meaning, and sharing these experiences in the university and beyond.

Students are an essential part of the UMMP community. Undergraduates can pursue a paleontology minor through the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, and benefit from working with the museum faculty and staff using UMMP facilities to conduct their own research. Students can gain hands-on experience in paleontology as undergraduate assistants working in fossil preparation laboratories and collections, or take part in fieldwork locally or in remote areas. This diversity of student opportunities sets the University of Michigan and the UMMP apart, with many of our undergrad alumni pursuing professional careers at the world's top universities and museums. Providing support for these paleontologists-in-training is essential to our mission.

To retain world-class ranking, the UMMP must also have resources to offer graduate fellowships to outstanding students who apply to our program, as well as to provide field support for their research. Graduate students are an important part of our program, and their teaching, research, and mentoring enhances our ability to attract talented undergraduates as well as leading faculty. In addition, gifts for equipment, both hardware and software, will enable us to keep current with ever-changing technology that is critical to our research and teaching mission. Investment in museum infrastructure will ensure that the UMMP's world-class collections remain accessible to future generations.

STUDENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: STOCKER-NESBITT FUND

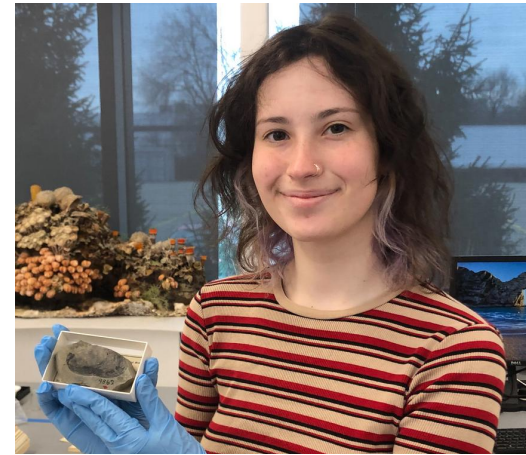
Attendance at a professional meeting helps introduce students to the wider paleontological community, giving them a chance to share their ideas with colleagues from around the nation and world. They meet others in their field, both peers and potential mentors. They often experience such a deluge of ideas that it catalyzes both personal growth and professional development. Graduate students typically have access to funding resources that permit these experiences, but undergraduates often do not. Gifts to the Stocker-Nesbitt Student Professional Fund help undergraduate students considering further study in paleontology attend a scientific meeting by covering costs of registration, travel, and accommodation. Contributions of \$2,000 annually would help us provide this opportunity to additional students.

STUDENT FIELDWORK OPPORTUNITIES: GEORGE JUNNE FUND

Fieldwork represents one of the most exciting aspects of paleontological research, and many undergraduate students are eager to participate in digs with our faculty. Interested undergraduates often add substantially to what we can accomplish, while at the same time discovering their own new directions for personal growth. Donations to the George Junne Internship Fieldwork Fund support undergraduates working in the field with our faculty, placing a priority on students who have had fewer opportunities to take on this kind of research. Gifts of \$2,000 annually would help us send more undergraduates into the field each year.

UMMP STRATEGIC FUND

Expendable, undesignated gifts of all sizes are extraordinarily important to the continuing maintenance and growth of UMMP collections. Contributions to the strategic fund make it possible to upgrade research equipment, train our undergraduate students, and support the care and sharing of our exceptional collections. The strategic fund provides resources for emerging needs and exciting new opportunities. Overall, this fund is an excellent way to make an investment in the future of the museum.



“I’m currently working on a Geo Referencing project where I’m geo-referencing fossil locality data. It’s interesting working with the specimens, but since I’m a math major, this project has really helped my understanding of working with GIS. I plan to use this experience and knowledge I gained working in the collections using GIS, and even google maps, to forge a path to a future career.”

—Anna Kaplan, LSA Class of '24



FIELD RESEARCH SUPPORT

New insights into the history of life can emerge from examining existing specimens in innovative ways. But the collection of new fossil material, often in remote areas, provides essential new data that can test and revise earlier ideas, or suggest entirely new directions of study. A gift of \$50,000 – \$100,000 annually that provides seed money for starting new investigations would help generate early results and would support both faculty and student research and training.

GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP SUPPORT

U-M's program of graduate education in paleontology, centered in the UMMP, is recognized as one of the top five in this field. We can admit fewer than 10 percent of our applicants and must turn away students that could excel in our program. We would like to support excellent students by offering three fellowships per year, to be used on a rotating basis in conjunction with other funding sources. Our students enroll in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences or the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, and we combine sources of support to enable students to establish themselves as educators (Graduate Student Instructors) and researchers (Graduate Student Research Assistants), but current sources of support are inadequate for the number of excellent students we would like to train. An endowed investment of \$1M per student or \$50,000 annually would allow us to offer greater access to a world-class program.

COLLECTIONS SUPPORT

Our internationally significant holding of fossils lie at the heart of everything UMMP does. Safeguarding specimens to ensure that they remain accessible both now and in the future is foundational to our mission. Paleontology collections are dynamic spaces, changing in response to the latest research, new acquisitions, and best practices in fossil conservation. But accommodating these changes often requires new resources including drawers, cabinets, and archival materials, as well as personnel time to incorporate and reorganize fossil material. Gifts of all sizes to this fund provide UMMP with the support necessary for its invaluable collections to remain available to future generations of students and researchers.

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your partnership connects the college's rich past to a boundless and bright future. You can change lives with gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities, and create a meaningful legacy through your bequest, trusts, gift annuities, and other planned gifts. Your generosity makes an impact on what's next, for a better tomorrow.

for what's next ▶
Look to Michigan

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