

Barstow Project

Written by Andrew Farke

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Since 1936, the Raymond M. Alf Museum of Paleontology has maintained a virtually continuous research and collection program in the Barstow Formation of southern California. These rocks preserve an important record of life in what is now the Mojave Desert, from a period between approximately 20 and 13 million years ago. The Alf Museum, under permit from the United States Bureau of Land Management, has assembled a broad and scientifically important collection from the Barstow Formation. Highlights include:

- The largest and most comprehensive collection of fossil footprints from the Barstow Formation, including the oldest proboscidean (elephant) trackway from North America and the only amphicyonid (bear-dog) trackway from North America.
- The holotype (first named) skull of the large Miocene horse, *Megahippus mckennai*.
- The most complete skull of the proboscidean (elephant) *Zygodon* yet found in North America.
- A large and comprehensive collection of gastropods (snails).

Key Publications

Lofgren, D. L., A. Hess, D. Silver, and P. Liskanich. 2012. Review of proboscideans from the Middle Miocene Barstow Formation of California, in Reynolds, R. E., Searching for the Pliocene: Southern Exposures: Fullerton, California State University Desert Studies Center, pp. 125-134. [[view the article \(PDF\)](#)]

Lofgren, D. L., and R. S. Anand. 2011. Partial skull of *Zygodon* (Mammalia, Proboscidea)

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from the Barstow Formation of California. *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology* 31:1392-1396.

Lofgren, D. L., J. A. Greening, C. F. Johnson, S. J. Lewis, and M. A. Torres. 2006. Fossil tracks at the Raymond Alf Museum of Paleontology and management of tracks on public lands. *New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science Bulletin* 34: 109-118.

Sarjeant, W. A. S., and R. E. Reynolds. 1999. Camel and horse footprints from the Miocene of California. *San Bernadino County Museum Association Quarterly* 46:3-19.

Sarjeant, W. A. S., R. E. Reynolds, and M. M. Kissell-Jones. 2002. Fossil creodont and carnivore footprints from California, Nevada, and Wyoming, in Reynolds, R. E., *Between the Basins: Exploring the western Mojave and southern Basin and Range Province*: Fullerton, California State University, Desert Studies Consortium, pp. 37-50.

Stock, C. 1937. A peccary skull from the Barstow Miocene, California. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 23:398-404.

Tedford, R. H., and R. M. Alf. 1962. A new *Megahippus* from the Barstow Formation, San Bernardino County, California. *Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Science* 61:113-122.