



CAVEPS 2025 3rd Circular

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Call for Registration

You are invited to register for the **19th Conference on Australasian Vertebrate Evolution, Palaeontology and Systematics (CAVEPS)** being held from **24th - 28th of Nov 2025** on Kaurua Yarta at the Flinders University Tonsley Campus in Adelaide, South Australia.

CAVEPS 2025 is a multidisciplinary forum for vertebrate palaeontologists, earth scientists, evolutionary biologists, and fossil enthusiasts from Australasia and beyond. The conference will feature the latest research in vertebrate palaeontology, including morphology, phylogeny, systematics, evolution, taphonomy, development, zooarchaeology and palaeoecology.

We tried extremely hard to avoid increasing registration prices, but given the ever-increasing costs of running a conference, it was just not possible. All prices are inclusive of GST.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION COSTS

Early Bird (until August 31st):

General \$375

Student/Concession \$175

Regular Registration (until October 31st):

General \$450

Student/Concession \$250

Late registration (beyond November 1st):

General \$600

Student/Concession \$300

Please note that to qualify for student/concession price you must be prepared to provide proof of current enrolment.

REGISTRATION payments must be made via the Flinders University payment gateway at:

<https://pay.flinders.edu.au/SAE039>

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Abstract Submission

NOTE: Just one more week to get your abstract submitted!

Abstract submission is open on the website and will close at 5pm ACST on August 31st.

Prepare your abstract using the following format:

Title

- Maximum of 150 characters
- The title of the paper should be in upper and lower case (so-called Sentence capitalization), centred and not bold.
- Names of genus- or species-group taxa or equivalent must be in italics.

Author names

- The presenting author should be listed first
- Authors should be separated by commas, except the last author who should be preceded by the word 'and'
- Author names should be lower case (excepting first letters) and first names should be listed in full (not abbreviated)
- Email address and affiliation should be provided for the presenting author only

Abstract body

- Abstracts should be 200-300 words in length
- Should be formatted in Times New Roman, 12 point font
- Should not include references or footnotes
- Should not include figures
- Should be written in clear, concise English
- Should be left-aligned
- Should be structured to provide background, clearly state the aim/s of the study and include relevant information on specimens and taxa examined, the methods used, results of the study, and any implications or significance of the results.

Abstracts should represent work on aspects of vertebrate evolution, palaeontology and systematics, including:

- taxonomy and phylogenetics
- reports on key fossils/fossil assemblages/fossil deposits
- molecular biology and evolution
- palaeoecology
- biogeography
- taphonomy
- ichnology
- stratigraphy and biochronology relating to vertebrate palaeontology
- comparative and functional morphology
- evolutionary developmental biology
- conservation palaeobiology
- palaeoanthropology

CAVEPS 2025

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- zooarchaeology
- sedimentary geology, palaeoclimatology and palaeobotany relating to vertebrate palaeontology/evolution

Research specimens mentioned in your abstract and included in your presentation should be deposited, or scheduled for deposition, in an appropriate, publicly accessible collection (we encourage all authors to ensure that their studies adhere to the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology's ethics statement <https://vertpaleo.org/member-bylaw-on-ethics-statement/>).

If you require an abstract acceptance to conform with your institution or funding body, please tick the 'Abstract Pre-approval' option in your submission.

Conference Program (subject to tweaking)

Friday 21st – Saturday 22nd November:

- Pre-Conference **field trip** (Naracoorte Caves)

Monday 24th November:

- A full day of various **workshop** offerings, to be held at the Flinders University Bedford Park Campus.
- **Welcome Function & smoking ceremony 5pm**

Tuesday 25th – Friday 29th November

- The **main conference** will consist of spoken presentations and poster sessions and will run for four full days. Rather than specific symposia, the spoken presentations will be combined into general sessions. The main conference sessions will be taking place in the 160-seat Theatre 1 at the Flinders University Tonsley Campus
- Thursday 27th November evening will be the **conference dinner**.

Saturday 29th November - ~5th December:

- Post-Conference **field trip** (Lake Pinpa and Ikara-Flinders Ranges)

Welcome Function, Monday 24th November

We will start outside the Flinders Tonsley building with a Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country by Senior Kaurna Man Mickey Kumpati O'Brien at 5pm. At around 5:30 pm, we will move across the road to the Mantra Tonsley Hotel where we will enjoy beverages and native-food themed canapes. Vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free options will be available.

The Welcome Function is included in the cost of your conference registration. **However, you must indicate your attendance when completing your conference registration and payment.**

An illustration of four extinct animals. From left to right: a quagga (a zebra-like animal with black and white stripes), a dodo (a large, flightless bird with a red face and a large, hooked beak), a thylacine (a marsupial with a long, striped body and a powerful jaw), and a giant short-tailed shearwater (a large, dark-colored bird with a long, curved beak). The background is a solid light blue.

Conference Dinner & Auction Fundraiser, Thursday 27th Nov.

The conference dinner starts at 6:30 pm, Thursday 27th November in the Secret Garden and Glasshouse at the Marion Hotel, 849 Marion Road, Mitchell Park. All food and drinks inclusive. Limited to 140 places.

COST:

- General/Guest: \$175
- Students \$125.

The Conference Dinner is not included in your registration fee and must be selected and paid for when completing your conference registration via this link: <https://pay.flinders.edu.au/SAE039>

The dinner will feature the famous **CAVEPS auction**, where you can snag something useful or cool while contributing to lower registration costs and student travel scholarships. We'd like to see the CAVEPS 2025 auction be the biggest and best ever (despite some serious past competition). The [auction relies on donations](#), and we'd encourage everyone to think about items that they could donate. Suggestions include reprints, monographs or textbooks, artwork, fossil casts or really anything (legal) with a palaeontology theme! If you have items you'd like to donate, please contact us at caveps.palaeo@gmail.com.

Workshops, Monday 24th November

We are very fortunate to be able to offer a wide variety of workshops for CAVEPS 2025, all of which will be held on Monday 24th November. You can check which workshops overlap using the below schedule.

Workshops will be filled on a first come basis. **Please register your interest in attending [here](#).** If you register for a workshop that is full, you will be notified and placed on a wait-list. Note that Workshop 5 (Moulding and Casting with Carey Burke) will be held at the Flinders Bedford Park Campus, all others to be held on the Tonsley campus.

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Workshop 1: Submitting to high-profile scientific journals – how to increase your chances in the lottery. (Professor Mike Lee, Flinders University & South Australian Museum)

Duration: 90 mins. Places: 30. Cost: Free.

Some of the most prestigious scientific journals have acceptance rates of <0.05 , which (to a frequentist) means your paper is certain to be rejected. Mike Lee www.michaelsylee.wordpress.com/ will share his 20+ years of experience of publishing in top journals and provide advice on how to increase your chances in this competitive environment. We'll discuss how to write and pitch the paper for maximum impact, how to survive editorial filtering (desk rejections), navigating the reviewer process (e.g. how to avoid your enemies), and how to deal with tricky reviewer comments. This will be an interactive workshop, so please come with questions and problems!

Workshop 2: Media training workshop (Adele Pentland and Sally Hurst)

Duration: 120 mins. Places: 60. Cost: Free

Effective science communication is an essential skill that helps researchers connect with the public, funding bodies, and decision-makers — but it's rarely taught during formal academic training. This interactive workshop will provide practical guidance on how to craft compelling messages for the media, write engaging press releases, and prepare for live and pre-recorded interviews. Participants will also learn how to collaborate with institutional media teams, pitch articles to platforms like The Conversation, and use social media to boost the visibility of their research. The workshop is suitable for students, early-career researchers and senior academics alike. The workshop will be facilitated by Adele Pentland (Curtin University) and Sally Hurst (Macquarie University), both Superstars of STEM with extensive experience in public engagement and media communication."

Workshop 3: Where do you stand? Benchmarking research impact in Australasian vert palaeo

(A/Prof Gilbert J. Price School of the Environment, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland 4072, Australia. g.price1@uq.edu.au)

Duration 120 mins. Places: 30. Cost: Free.

What's a good H-index? How many citations should you have? How do I sell my publication record? This workshop tackles those questions head-on. The core problem? We're constantly measured against benchmarks that don't truly exist, especially in our field. I've done the heavy lifting so you don't have to: compiling new bibliometric data tailored specifically to Australasian vertebrate palaeontology and mapping out what 'excellence' really looks like in our region and geographic setting. In this workshop I'll unpack actual citation trends, H-index trajectories, authorship patterns, and publication volume. But more importantly, I'll focus on how to use those data strategically to write stronger grant applications, craft smarter promotion cases, build your CV, and advocate for the impact of your work. This isn't a generic 'how-to' metrics session. It's purpose-built for researchers working in or around vertebrate palaeontology across Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and our regional neighbours, from students to ECRs, mid-career to seasoned pros, whatever your current track record.

This workshop will provide you with:

- *Field-specific benchmarks for citation and authorship metrics*
- *Practical tips for using metrics in funding and promotion contexts*
- *A sharper understanding of how metrics behave in our field, and how to make them work for you*

Bring your curiosity. This isn't just about numbers: it's about visibility, credibility, and getting the recognition your work deserves.

CAVEPS 2025

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Workshop 4: Musculoskeletal modelling and simulation (Peter Bishop)

Duration: 240 mins. Places: 20. Cost: Free.

This workshop will introduce key concepts and components of rigid-body modelling of musculoskeletal systems. You will learn about: what a musculoskeletal model is; what are the elements that make a model; the basic steps and inputs in creating a model; the inputs required to run a simulation; what kinds of analyses and simulations are possible; strengths and limitations; and validation and sensitivity analysis. The workshop will be framed around the widely used open-source software OpenSim and will be broken into two parts. Part 1 will involve a series of short seminars on the theory and concepts underpinning musculoskeletal modelling and simulation. Part 2 will involve a series of practicals and worked examples, showcasing the OpenSim interface, how to modify a model, and how to run a basic simulation. The workshop is designed to give participants a taste of what kind of questions musculoskeletal modelling may be useful for (and what ones it may not be), and what it takes to get there. Ideally, participants will register as and attend in pairs or small teams, rather than each person working on their own separate model. Please reach out to Peter (pbishop@fas.harvard.edu) if you have questions regarding the workshop. Windows laptop and software downloads will be required.

Workshop 5: Moulding and Casting. (Carey Burke)

Duration: 240 mins. Places: 20. Cost: \$33.

This is an introductory workshop intended for those folk who have little or no experience with replicating fossil material. During the workshop we will create two different styles of small silicon moulds and discuss the pros and cons of each style. We will then cast these in polyurethane resin and the attendees will be able to take both mould and cast items home. During the workshop there will be ample opportunity to discuss when and why to cast fossils and to explore other materials and methods of replicating specimens.

Workshop 6: Best Practices in Collaborating with Indigenous Peoples for Palaeontologists.

(Decolonising Palaeontology Working Group)

Duration: 180 mins. Places: 60. Cost: Free.

The focus of this workshop is the process of building genuine collaborations with Traditional Owners and Tangata Whenua. Come and join us for a yarning circle (a safe space to share and exchanging ideas and experiences) featuring a wide range of researchers, from those with decades of experience in working alongside First Nations communities through to those navigating their first steps on this journey. Listen to other researchers' stories, contribute your own, ask questions and join in exchanging ideas and information. Yarning will be based on areas of interest of the attendees and potential topics include: understanding other ways of being, knowing and doing and how it can apply to palaeontology; determining the best points of contact when first proposing a partnership; free, prior and informed consent; different options for documenting agreements; engaging in truth-telling discussions; Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and cultural knowledge; Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP); and ways on how to include support for Traditional Owner/Tangata Whenua in grant applications. Learn about the draft CAVEPS 'Code of Ethics' and 'Best Practices' guidelines and contribute your ideas. Hear about the newly created Community of Practice and find out how to get involved. This workshop will be presented in an informal yarning circle style where everyone is welcome to ask questions, share knowledge and ideas and participate in reflection.

CAVEPS 2025

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Workshop 7: Science in a Blender: 3D Reconstruction and Animation (Astrid O'Connor)

Duration: 120 mins. Places: 80. Cost: Free.

Have you ever wanted to elevate a presentation with 3D models or simple animations? Or, have you ever seen a skeleton laid out on a table and wondered what it would look like walking, swimming, or flying around? Wonder no longer! This workshop will run you through the basics of the free, open-source 3D modelling program Blender and how to apply it in zoological and paleontological visual communications. We'll explore the controls of Blender, show some of its potential, detail why it isn't too overwhelming, and then use a couple of example fossil scans to showcase reconstruction and animation rigging processes. Then, we'll expand on the usability of these models by rendering and displaying them in Sketchfab (see Astrid's animated examples here: <https://skfb.ly/oWl8z>) and PowerPoint. If you would like to follow along with the worked examples, it would be most useful to bring your laptop along and download the latest version of Blender (free at blender.org) beforehand.

Field trips

NOTE: Please register your interest in attending field trips [here](#).

Places are limited and submitting an EOI does not guarantee you a place on a trip. You will be contacted by the field trip organisers to confirm your place and advise payment information.

Pre-Conference field trip to Naracoorte Caves

Duration: Fri 21st Nov – Sat 22nd Nov 2025.

Places: 45. Cost: Approx \$400 pp*

The pre-conference field trip will take delegates to the Naracoorte Caves World Heritage Area, home to Australia's most complete Pleistocene fossil record. The journey to Naracoorte will take us through the historically and geologically significant south-east. At Naracoorte, we will receive guided tours of Victoria Fossil Cave, Alexandra Cave, and Blanche Cave, where we will hear about ongoing work from researchers at the University of Adelaide, as well as the Bat Observation Centre. Those wishing to will also have the option to go adventure caving. Accessibility information here:

<https://www.naracoortecaves.sa.gov.au/plan-your-visit/facilities>

Adventure caving

During the field trip, adventure caving will provide the opportunity to explore beyond public access. This will involve some crawling through unlit areas, so moderate fitness is required. Those wishing to go adventure caving will be supplied with overalls, helmets, and lights.

Accommodation

Dormitory-style accommodation in the Wirreanda Bunkhouse will be available for up to 30 people with priority given to student delegates; you will need to supply your own pillow, sleeping bag, towel. Other delegates will be required to organise their own accommodation at Naracoorte on the night of 21 November.

***Cost expectation**

Costs are predicted to be in the region of \$440. This will cover transportation, lunch on the 21st and 22nd, and tours of the caves. There will be an additional \$29 cost for those staying in the Wirreanda



Bunkhouse. Those not staying in the bunkhouse will be required to organise and pay for their own accommodation.

Expression of interest

Numbers are limited to 45 participants, so express your interest [here](#). Places will be filled on a first in basis, and the organisers will be in touch to confirm your spot and provide payment information. Please also indicate if you would be interested in participating in adventure caving as part of the trip.

Post-conference field trip to Lake Pinpa and Ikara-Flinders Ranges

Duration: Sat 29th November – Thurs 4th December 2025

Places: 15, Cost: Approx \$1540 pp*

The post-conference field trip will take delegates into arid country of northern South Australia to visit late Oligocene Namba Formation sites. Fossils found at these sites include lungfish, turtles, crocodylians, birds, numerous mammals including early relatives of possums, kangaroos, wombats and koalas, platypuses, and even dolphins. We will then head to Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary before travelling back more than half a billion years to experience the Ediacaran biota of Nilpena Ediacara National Park and Brachina Gorge.



Image by J. Blokland



Itinerary

- Saturday 29th – Depart Adelaide (am), arrive at Lake Pinpa on Frome Downs Station
- Sunday 30th – Fossiling around Lake Pinpa (Namba Formation, late Oligocene)
- Monday 1st December – Visiting other sites in Namba Formation on Frome Downs Station
- Tuesday 2nd December – Depart Lake Pinpa, drive to Arkaroola, free afternoon, but there are possibilities of doing personal trips like a Ridgetop Tour (via the resort), an Astronomy Tour, or bush-walking and bird watching. You can find out more about Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary [here](#).
- Wednesday 3rd December – Depart Arkaroola, tour of fossil site in Nilpena Ediacara National Park, camp Brachina Gorge in Flinders Ranges NP
- Thursday 4th December – Visit sites in Brachina Gorge, then drive back to Adelaide (pm).

Accommodation

We will be camping each night except Tuesday 2nd, so a tent or swag will be needed. If you are unable to bring your own, a tent may be possible to provide on request. The team will provide and be cooking meals on those days. Drinking water will be provided throughout the trip. On the 2nd Dec, at Arkaroola, dinner and breakfast will be provided via their restaurant and we will be in motel style accommodation – 2 people to a room. Here you can get a shower and/or a swim.

General notes

Early December is likely to be warm to hot in the outback of South Australia. We will be travelling in air-conditioned vehicles, but while camping we will experience the ambient temperatures that are likely to be well over 25°C during the day possibly reaching 35°C. Nights are also likely to be fairly warm. Expect to encounter flies! Tents are recommended, mainly to keep dirt and bugs/ants out of your gear and give you somewhere private. We recommend that people wear suitable clothes (long trousers, long-sleeved loose-fitting shirt, good walking boots [there are sharp things on the ground, so bare feet is a no no, even around camp]). A wind proof jacket may be needed in the evening. Personal protective gear such as a good sunhat and sunglasses are essential. Any fossils collected will be held in the Flinders University collection, pending accession into the South Australian Museum.

***Cost expectation.**

While costs are not finalised, the predicted cost to participants is \$1540 per head. This will cover all transport during the trip, accommodation at Arkaroola, all food costs, and some Park fees (Nilpena and Flinders Ranges NPs).

Expressions of interest

Because numbers are limited to 15 participants, we are inviting those interested in joining this fieldtrip to register their interest [here](#). We invite you to provide the main reason why you would like to come and brave flies and heat. The best reasons might fly.

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Conference Merch

Dr Jonathan Cramb (Head Grinner and friendly neighbourhood palaeontologist) who designed our fabulous conference logo is providing you the chance to get some seriously good conference swag featuring the plesiosaur *Umoonasaurus desmoscyllus*, the lungfish *Metaceratodus wollastoni*, the echidna *Megalibgwilia owenii*, and the flamingo *Phoeniconotus eyrensis* (and more!)

Purchase your own conference t-shirts and other merchandise via:

<http://caveps2025.toothygrin.com.au>



Do you want to sell your own merch at CAVEPS 2025?

We have two options for those wanting to sell their own merch or art at CAVEPS.

1) Add your merch to a shared table to be sold by Flinders Palaeontology Society. A good option for those who do not need much space and want to see all the conference talks. You will pay 5% commission.

2) Half-table. For those wanting to run their own stall. Limited number, allocated via expression of interest. Flat rate per day: \$35 students, \$50 others.

To express your interest, please email caveps.palaeo@gmail.com with MARKET TABLE in the subject before September 15th. Tell us what option you'd like to be considered for, what days, and a brief description of what you are planning on selling.

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Conference Venue

CAVEPS will be held at the Flinders University Tonsley campus, part of the Tonsley Innovation District. The main conference talks will be held in Lecture Theatre 1 on the ground floor. The site is easily accessed by public transport, with a direct rail and road link to the CBD. Visit <https://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/> for timetables and real-time service information.

The Tonsley Train Station is located on the western side of Tonsley and provides transport between the Flinders campuses at Bedford Park and Tonsley, and the CBD. It operates 7am to 7pm, Mon–Fri.

Buses 719, 721, 721F, 722 and 722F offer regular transport options to and from Tonsley from Stop 23 on South Road.

For more information on transport and parking options, visit: <https://tonsley.com.au/getting-to-and-from-tonsley/>



Accommodation

There are several close-by accommodation options available, and the Tonsley campus is on the Adelaide-Tonsley railway line so is easily accessible from the CBD in less than 22 mins.

- The Mantra Tonsley Adelaide (<https://www.mhtonsley.com.au>) is only 100m from the conference venue. Use code **TONS15** when booking to secure a %15 discount for CAVEPS attendees.
- Marion Hotel (<https://www.marionhotel.com.au>) is a 15-minute walk from the conference venue and is the location of the conference dinner. Use code **FLINDERSUNI** for a 10% discount when booking.
- Marion Holiday Park (<https://marionhp.com.au/>) are only a 15-minute walk from the venue. 10% discount if you mention that you are attending CAVEPS 2025 when you book.
- Bluinn Shortstay Apartments (<https://www.nearflinders.com.au/>). Located opposite the Flinders Medical Centre, a short bus or train ride to Tonsley.

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Sponsors

We are very pleased to welcome the following sponsors to CAVEPS 2025 and thank them for their generous support.



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