Dr. Liam Norris

Burpee Museum of Natural History liam.norris@burpee.org

737 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103 (815) 965-3433

Research Interests

Paleoecology of Mesozoic terrestrial ecosystems. Dinosaur paleobiology, dietary ecology, species diversity, evolution and extinction.

Method development and applications of stable isotope geochemistry and elemental analysis as proxies for paleoecology.

Education

Ph.D. Geosciences, The University of Texas at Austin May 2025

- Research Focus: Paleontology, Paleoecology, Stable Isotope Geochemistry
- Dissertation Title: Using Calcium Isotopes to Determine Trophic Structure and Ecological Shifts in Diverse Mesozoic Dinosaur Ecosystems
- Advisor: Rowan Martindale, Ph.D.

B.S. Geology (GPA: 3.8, Magna Cum Laude), Texas A&M University May 2020

Appointments

Research Associate, Texas Vertebrate Paleontology Collections, Jackson School of Geosciences

Experience

Director of Collections and Research November 2026 – Present
Burpee Museum of Natural History

- Provides experienced and professional oversight of the Museum's paleontology and biology collections, ensuring specimens are managed and preserved according to museum best practices and federal regulations.
- Develops and pursues an active, externally funded research program in vertebrate paleontology or a related discipline.
- Publish in peer-reviewed journals and foster collaborative research projects that leverage Burpee's collections and established field programs.
- Coordinate with other associated researchers to maintain ongoing projects and develop new project directions that integrate professional development of students at every level.
- Direct operations of the Jay and Barbara Brost Paleontology Lab, supervising staff, students, interns, and a large volunteer corps engaged in fossil preparation, collections management, and research support.
- Lead annual field expeditions to major fossil localities and continues Burpee's legacy of discovery associated with specimens.

- Serve as a public ambassador for Burpee's scientific work through lectures, media engagement, and signature programs such as the Museum's annual PaleoFest.
- Contribute to exhibition development and public interpretation that connects research with public engagement.
- Secures external funding through competitive grants and philanthropic partnerships to support collections care, field research, and laboratory operations.

Exhibition and Outreach Associate May 2025 – October 2026
Texas Science & Natural History Museum, The University of Texas at Austin

- Consulted on and helped to design, edit, and construct new exhibits at Texas Science & Natural History Museum, including Epic Encounters, Coral Connections, Follow the Monarchs, and the Dinosaur Trackhouse building
- Consulted on *Featured Creatures*, eight digital animations of fossils species brought to life in *Epic Encounters*: https://www.instagram.com/p/DWEYw1cETwR/
- Helped create *Texas Long, Long Ago*, a choose-your-own-adventure game in *Epic Encounters*
- Represented the museum as an outreach educator at both internal and external educational events at Public Libraries, Schools, and other venues throughout central Texas (see "**Media and Outreach**" for details)
- Performed regular exhibit repair and maintenance, including the cleaning and repair of fossils on exhibit and in museum education collections
- Wrote scripts and performed for educational Instagram videos for the museum's Instagram page (see "**Media and Outreach**" for details)
- Assisted with the removal and conservation of scientifically and historically important dinosaur tracks during the renovation of the Dinosaur Trackhouse Building
- Facilitated collaboration with Texas Science & Natural History Museum and other institutions for outreach events, including the Bullock Texas State History Museum
- Facilitated collaboration with local artist Clare Wuellner on the creation and installation of a community art exhibition called "Follow the Monarchs"
- Cataloged and organized the de-accession and return of a multi-hundred item fossil collection to the Non-vertebrate Paleontology Lab
- Coordinated the installation and deinstallation of multiple exhibits at the museum including Coral Connections, Masters of the Night: The True Story of Bats, and Particles of Color
- Created training documents for museum educators and volunteers

Graduate Research Assistant, The University of Texas at Austin September 2024 – May 2025
Texas Science & Natural History Museum, College of Natural Sciences

- Consulted on and helped to design, edit, and construct new exhibits at Texas Science & Natural History Museum, including their Discovery Center
- Represented the museum as an educator at both internal and external educational events
- Exhibit repair and maintenance

- Wrote scripts and performed for educational Instagram videos for the museum's Instagram page (see "**Media and Outreach**" for details)

Curatorial Assistant, Nonvertebrate Paleontology Lab May 2021 – August 2021
Jackson School of Geosciences

- Worked with Dr. Lisa Boucher to catalogue and transfer UT non-vertebrate paleontology collections into new, climate-controlled storage.
- Mentored and managed a senior high school student during the transfer project.

Undergraduate Research Assistant, Texas A&M University May 2017 – May 2020
Department of Geosciences

- Worked with Dr. Anne Raymond to describe a new species of Pennsylvanian alethopterid seed fern preserved in coal balls.
- Presented my findings with colleague Charlie Bruce at the annual Geological Society of America meeting in 2019.
- Digitized a collection of coal ball peels for research and categorization.

Publications

Norris, L., Martindale, R., Satkoski, A., Fricke, H., Lassiter, J.C. 2025. Calcium Isotopes Reveal Niche Partitioning within the Dinosaur Fauna of the Carnegie Quarry, Morrison Formation. Palaeontology, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology. 675, 113103

Presentations

Norris, L., 2025. Implications for feeding behavior in Upper Cretaceous albertosaurines based on stable calcium isotopes ($\delta^{44/40}$Ca) from tooth enamel. Presentation, Geological Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Annual Meeting 2025, Birmingham, UK

Norris, L., Martindale, R., Satkoski, A., Fricke, H., Lassiter, J.C., 2024. Intra-Tooth Variability in Calcium Isotope Ratios Complicates Dinosaur Paleoecological Interpretations. Presentation, North American Paleontological Convention, Ann Arbor MI, USA

Norris, L., Martindale, R., Satkoski, A., Fricke, H., 2023. Inter-Tooth Variability in Ca Stable Isotopes Complicates Dinosaur Paleoecological Reconstructions. Presentation, Geological Society of America Annual Meeting 2023, Pittsburgh PA, USA

Norris, L., Martindale, R., Satkoski, A., Fricke, H., 2022. Reconstructing Dinosaur Ecology and Niche Utilization in the Jurassic Using Ca Stable Isotopes in Teeth. Poster, 6th International Palaeontological Congress, Khon Kaen, Thailand

Norris, L., Martindale, R., Satkoski, A., Fricke, H., 2022. Reconstructing Dinosaur Ecology and Niche Utilization in the Jurassic Using C, O, and Ca Stable Isotopes in Teeth. Poster, Geological Society of America Annual Meeting 2022, Denver CO, USA

Norris, L. Bruce, C. Raymond, A. 2019. Size, Lamina Thickness and Vein Density of the Early Pennsylvanian *Alethopteris* Pinnule from Lewis Creek Suggest a Productive Plant with Short-Lived Leaves. Poster, Geological Society of America Annual Meeting 2019, Phoenix AZ, USA

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, The University of Texas at Austin January 2024 – May 2024
Life Through Time (GEO 405)

- Life Through Time is a class designed to teach geoscience majors the basics of paleontology and how life has changed through Earth history.

Lead Teaching Assistant, The University of Texas at Austin January 2023 – December 2023
Age of Dinosaurs (GEO 322J)

- Age of Dinosaurs is a class designed to introduce non-geology/science majors to concepts in paleontology including evolution, cladistics, and taphonomy, as well as basic geology.

Teaching Assistant, The University of Texas at Austin May 2023 – June 2023
Field Camp (GEO 660A)

- Field Camp is a field-based class which teaches students how to perform geological studies in the field.
- Along with teaching, my responsibilities included setting up campsites, cooking, and supervision of field activities to ensure student safety.

Lead Teaching Assistant, The University of Texas at Austin January 2022 – May 2022
Introduction to Geology (GEO 303)

- Introduction to Geology is the first geology class that geoscience majors take at UT Austin and gets students familiar with foundational geological concepts.
- As Lead Teaching Assistant, I was tasked with sourcing lab materials and managing other teaching assistants to ensure that labs were being taught and graded fairly, as well as meeting with course professors to ensure that lab and lecture materials matched up.

Teaching Assistant, The University of Texas at Austin August 2021 – December 2022
Introduction to Geology (GEO 303)

- Introduction to Geology is the first geology class that geoscience majors take at UT Austin and gets students familiar with foundational geological concepts.

Docent, Houston Museum of Natural Science August 2015 – November 2020

Teaching Assistant, Houston Museum of Natural Science May 2015 – August 2017

Media and Outreach

Select Media Appearances

"Dr. Liam Norris wraps up "I Didn't Know That!? with a game show farewell", We are Austin, CBS Austin 7/2/2026

- https://cbsaustin.com/features/we-are-austin/dr-liam-norris-wraps-up-i-didnt-know-that-with-a-game-show-farewell

"I Didn't Know That!? with Dr. Liam: Celebrating America's dino history", We are Austin, CBS Austin 7/2/2026

- https://cbsaustin.com/features/we-are-austin/i-didnt-know-that-with-dr-liam-celebrating-americas-dino-history

"Exploring the Texas Ice Age in the latest "I Didn't Know That!" with Dr. Liam", We are Austin, CBS Austin 6/2/2026

- https://cbsaustin.com/features/we-are-austin/exploring-the-texas-ice-age-in-the-latest-i-didnt-know-that-with-dr-liam

"I Didn't Know That!" with Dr. Liam: Exploring the Science of Powered Flight", We are Austin, CBS Austin 5/7/2026

- https://cbsaustin.com/features/we-are-austin/i-didnt-know-that-with-dr-liam-exploring-the-science-of-powered-flight

"New segment '*I Didn't Know That! with Dr. Liam'* kicks off with Texas dinos and more!", We are Austin, CBS Austin 4/3/2025

- https://cbsaustin.com/features/we-are-austin/new-segment-i-didnt-know-that-with-dr-liam-kicks-off-with-texas-dinos-and-more

"Owl-Bert the Owl Soars Into We Are Austin Ahead of Texas Wildlife Day!" We are Austin, CBS Austin 3/3/2025

- https://cbsaustin.com/features/we-are-austin/owl-bert-the-owl-soars-into-we-are-austin-ahead-of-texas-wildlife-day

Henrikson, Eric. "Austin museum unveils immersive prehistoric exhibit with fossils found in the area", KXAN Austin 2/3/2026

- https://www.kxan.com/news/science/austin-museum-unveils-immersive-prehistoric-exhibit-with-fossils-found-in-the-area/

Henrikson, Eric. "Dinosaur teeth reveal secrets to Earth's past, UT study finds." KXAN Austin 8/22/2025

- https://www.kxan.com/news/science/dinosaur-teeth-reveal-secrets-to-earths-past-ut-study-finds/

Select Social Media

Texas Science & Natural History Museum Instagram Reels June 2024 – Present

- Featured Creatures: https://www.instagram.com/reel/DWEYw1cETwR/
- Barn Owl: https://www.instagram.com/reel/DUgBJwtkQnH/
- Fossil Friday, *Agujaceratops*: https://www.instagram.com/p/DUI1-0QEV_e/
- Crested Caracara: https://www.instagram.com/p/DQems_UCWZV/
- Fun Facts About Corals: https://www.instagram.com/p/DQMrn1JgUp7/
- Fossil Friday, Texas tyrannosaur: https://www.instagram.com/p/DP6fBDIAaoj/
- Fossil Friday, *Postosuchus*: https://www.instagram.com/p/DOgmxJPClQw/
- *Quetzalcoatlus* Fact vs. Fiction: https://www.instagram.com/p/DMOOl6uuycU/
- Fossil Friday, *Brontosaurus* vs. *Apatosaurus*: https://www.instagram.com/reel/DKNg4mXN1co/

Select Press Coverage

Nowlin, Samantha. "'Epic Encounters' features reimagined paleontology exhibit, immersive hands-on experience" The Daily Texan, February 4, 2025

- https://thedailytexan.com/2025/10/16/paleontologists-educate-identify-specimens-for-national-fossil-day/

Metcalfe, Tom. "Dinosaur teeth reveal some were picky eaters." Science News, August 11, 2025

- https://www.sciencenews.org/article/dinosaur-teeth-picky-eaters-diet-plants

Sames, Julia G. "Clues for Dinosaurs' Diets Found in the Chemistry of Their Fossil Teeth." July 24, 2025

- https://www.jsg.utexas.edu/news/2025/07/clues-for-dinosaurs-diets-found-in-the-chemistry-of-their-fossil-teeth/

Taviera, Ana. "Fossils & Flowers: Texas Science & Natural History Museum throws Valentine's event." The Daily Texan, February 16, 2025

- https://thedailytexan.com/2025/02/16/fossils-flowers-texas-science-natural-history-museum-throws-valentines-event/

Select Outreach Events

Mixer for Science-Minded Geeks, Cosplay for Science, San Diego Comic Con July 2026

- https://www.instagram.com/p/DczAA-uysnX/

Mission Control STEAM Engagement Room, San Diego Comic Con July 2026

Tuneful Tales, Austin Public Library July 2026

Dinosaur Days at Zilker Botanical Garden March 2026

Extracurricular Experience

Chair of the UT Paleontology Seminar, UT Austin — January 2025 – May 2025
The University of Texas at Austin

Co-Chair of the UT Paleontology Seminar, UT Austin — June 2022 – August 2023
The University of Texas at Austin

Chair, MSC Aggie Cinema — December 2019 – May 2020
Texas A&M University

Chair - Student Development, MSC Aggie Cinema — August 2019 – December 2019
Texas A&M University

Fellowships, Honors & Awards

Lundelius Endowment for Vertebrate Paleontology, $4780, Jackson School of Geosciences, 2025

Lundelius Endowment for Vertebrate Paleontology, $3570, Jackson School of Geosciences, 2024

Endowed Presidential Fellowship, $3500, Jackson School of Geosciences, 2024-2025

The Cohen Award for Student Research, $5000, Society of Vertebrate Paleontology, 2023

Graduate Student Research Grant, $2475, The Jurassic Foundation, 2023

Graduate Student Research Grant, $1800, Geological Society of America, 2023

Endowed Presidential Fellowship, $3500, Jackson School of Geosciences, 2022-2023

Lundelius Research Grant, $2000, Jackson School of Geosciences, 2022

Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Grant, $1764, American Museum of Natural History, 2022

Graduate Student Research Grant, $2000, Geological Society of America, 2022

Graduate Student Research Grant, $1200, Paleontological Society of America, 2022

Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mention, National Science Foundation, 2020

Outstanding Senior Award, Texas A&M College of Geosciences 2020

Outstanding Student Award, Texas A&M College of Geosciences 2020

Silver Medallion Scholars Award, Texas A&M College of Geosciences 2020

Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts of America, 2016

Professional Society Memberships

American Alliance of Museums — February 2026 – Present

Society of Vertebrate Paleontology — April 2023 – Present

Geological Society of America — August 2019 – Present

Paleontological Society — August 2019 – Present

Texas Association of Museums — February 2026 – December 2026

Informal Science Educators Association of Texas — February 2026 – December 2026

Invited Lectures

"A History of Dinosaurs in Cartoons and Comics",
Department of Radio, Television and Film, The University of Texas at Austin — October 2026

"A Field Guide to Jurassic Park",
Jurassic Park Movie Party, Alamo Drafthouse, Austin TX — July 2026

- https://calendar.austinchronicle.com/event/jurassic-park-with-a-paleontologist-14191881

"A Field Guide to Jurassic Park",
Jurassic Park: Adaptation and Evolution, Karch Gaming Institute, Austin TX — April 2026

"The diverse lifestyles of tyrannosaurids",
Paleontological Society of Austin. Austin TX — March 2026

"Paleo Perspectives", Texas Science & Natural History Museum, Austin TX — February 2026

"Dinosaur Behavior", Fossil Crates Live: Paleo Portals — October 2025

"Dinosaur Dinner: Your Mesozoic Menu", Bash-Fest Symposium, Austin TX — September 2025

"What calcium isotopes can tell us about diverse Mesozoic dinosaur ecosystems",
American Institute of Professional Geologists, Texas Section, Zoom — June 2025

UT Paleontology Seminar, Ph.D. Talk, Austin TX — March 2025

"T. rex's Table: Geochemistry and Dinosaur Diets",
Lonestar College, Kingwood TX — January 2025

Earth Science Club of Northern Illinois, Zoom — December 2024

Texas Dinosaur Club, Austin TX — February 2024