



Figure 1. James G. "Jim" Honey in Wyoming, Summer of 2011. Photo credit: Lou Taylor

JAMES GILBERT HONEY

Louis H. Taylor¹, Lawrence J. Flynn², Louis L. Jacobs³, and Jon A. Baskin⁴

¹ 4931 W. Rowland Ave., Littleton, CO 80128, taylorlh@aol.com

² Department of Human Evolutionary Biology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138, ljflynn@fas.harvard.edu

³ Roy M. Huffington Department of Earth Sciences, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX 75275,
jacobs@smu.edu

⁴ Department of Biological and Health Sciences, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363,
kfjab02@tamuk.edu

The papers in this issue of *Paludicola* were respectfully contributed to honor the memory of James Gilbert Honey. Jim was an individual of great endurance who was not only an exemplary vertebrate paleontologist and stratigrapher, he was our friend and colleague. His career passions were the paleontology and evolution of camels and the geology and paleontology of the Paleocene Fort Union Formation. But Jim engaged in many more topics related particularly to Cenozoic paleontology. Jim often spent months in the field alone, collecting vertebrate fossils, measuring stratigraphic sections, and correlating strata. The incredible number of stratigraphic sections Jim measured form a lasting tribute to his dedication. Occasionally his wife Jeannine, or interested colleagues, would join him for a week or two, enduring his daily treks of 20 miles or more or his long, long days prospecting or working a quarry.

Jim was born in April 1951, in Denver, Colorado, and lived most of his life in Lakewood, Colorado. He graduated the Colorado Academy, a private K-12 school in Denver, Colorado. He began his postsecondary academic career by earning a B.S. degree in anthropology from the University of Arizona. He completed a Master of Science degree in geology at Arizona in 1977, after which he returned to Colorado. There he enrolled in the University of Colorado Boulder doctoral program under the mentorship of Dr. Peter Robinson.

Our associations with Jim were staggered but were overlapping along his early path. We knew him as a fellow graduate student in vertebrate paleontology at Arizona. Jim was a student of Everett H. Lindsay, our common mentor. As a graduate student, Jim participated in the luncheons and informal seminars of the vertebrate paleontology group that included not only the graduate students, but also the eminent vertebrate paleontologist and evolutionist George Gaylord Simpson. Laurence McKinley Gould, the first geologist on Antarctica and second in command of the first Byrd Expedition, was an honorary member of the group, which became known among friends as the “Red Fireballs.”

Among our favorite memories of Jim are the times we spent in the field together in the Walnut Grove Basin and 111 Ranch, Arizona, and the San Juan Basin, New Mexico, among many others. His interest in fossil camels was piqued through his fieldwork in Arizona and his work in the Browns Park Formation of Colorado with Glen Izett of the US Geological Survey. The Browns Park Formation and its fossils became the subject of his Master’s thesis.

Jim often worked alone, in his home in Lakewood, Colorado, surrounded by his extensive library. However, in his beginning years he spent weeks at a time at the American Museum of Natural History studying the fossil camels in the Frick Collection, establishing himself as a leading expert on that group, and forming lasting collaborations with Beryl Taylor, Richard H. Tedford, and Malcolm C. McKenna. His publications on fossil camels culminated in lead authorship of the widely cited Camelidae chapter in the *Evolution of Tertiary Mammal of North Americas* (1998, see bibliography below). His field work with Lindsay in the San Juan Basin, his association with McKenna, and collaborating with Bob Hettinger of the U.S. Geological Survey led him into the field of Paleogene mammals, particularly in Wyoming, but also in Colorado and California. As a geologist in the coal branch of the Geological Survey, he and Hettinger mapped large areas of Wyoming and identified – and named – new members of the Paleocene Fort Union Formation.

In his later years Jim was employed as a geologist and paleontologist in McKenna’s eastern Greater Green River Basin project, contributing many new fossil specimens to the collections of the University of Wyoming, the University of Colorado, and the American Museum of Natural History. In the years prior to his death he worked with Robert Martin investigating the Pliocene stratigraphy and fossil mammals of Meade County, Kansas. Some of this work was published in *Paludicola* and we thank the journal editors for supporting this special tribute.

James Gilbert Honey left his legacy to others in March 2012. Indeed, his legacy continues. Jim is a co-author of a paper to be published in 2020. The paper describes a new Paleocene fauna that resulted from Jim's work in the Great Divide and Washakie Basins of Wyoming.

His friends from his University of Arizona days can still see him sitting in a room in the original U of A geology building, intensely writing his thesis. He would look up as one of us passed by and give us his standard greeting of "How's it going?" To which we now reply, thank you for being our friend and colleague.

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