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Trace Fossils from the Shawangunk Formation in the Hudson Valley Indicate an Estuarine Depositional Environment

Howard R. Feldman

Touro College, howard.feldman@touro.edu

Alex Bartholemew

Carlton E. Brett

Matthew B. Vrazo

Marcelo Rosensaft

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TRACE FOSSILS FROM THE SHAWANGUNK FORMATION IN THE HUDSON VALLEY INDICATE AN ESTUARINE DEPOSITIONAL ENVIRONMENT

FELDMAN, Howard R.¹, BARTHOLOMEW, Alex², BRETT, Carlton E.³, VRAZO, Matthew B.³ and ROSENSAFT, Marcelo⁴, (1)Department of Paleontology (Invertebrates), American Museum of Natural History, 79th Street at Central Park West, New York, NY 10024-5192, (2)Geology Department, SUNY New Paltz, 1 Hawk Drive, New Paltz, NY 12561, (3)Department of Geology, Univ of Cincinnati, 500 Geology/Physics Bldg, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0013, (4)Department of Paleontology (Invertebrates), American Museum of Natural History, 79th Street at Central Park West, New York, NY 10024, feldspar4@optonline.net

The Middle Silurian Shawangunk Formation crops out in the lower Hudson Valley and extends toward the southwest into New Jersey and Pennsylvania. It reaches a maximum thickness around Guymard (1,400 ft.; 400m) and gradually thins toward the northeast, pinching out near Binnewater, New York. The formation consists of gray conglomerate, quartz arenite, and minor shale. Worm burrows, *Arthropycus*, *Skolithos*, *Planolites?*, and a bilobed resting trace have been found at different stratigraphic horizons in the Shawangunk Formation. All traces are associated with a finer, sandy matrix and/or hematite-rich interval rather than a coarse, pebbly quartz sandstone lithology dominant in the bulk of the unit, indicating a marine influence as well an environment with less energy than the braided stream environment inferred for most of the formation. Rivers and streams moving away from the eastern Taconic Mountains flowed into a westerly situated shallow marine basin. Eurypterids have previously been found on approximately the same stratigraphic levels as the traces and may be useful for constraining the depositional environment of these beds. Silurian eurypterids, now largely considered euryhaline, suggest that the environment of deposition was a marine-influenced estuary based on recent work documenting autochthonous assemblages of similar taxa in marginal marine settings. Association of eurypterids with *Arthropycus*-dominated ichnofacies has been noted elsewhere in the Lower Silurian Tuscarora Formation in central Pennsylvania, suggesting a recurrent nearshore benthic assemblage.

Session No. 61--Booth# 36

Paleontology, Paleoecology, and Taphonomy (Posters)

Wednesday, 23 March 2016: 8:00 AM-12:00 PM

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