

COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (CAS)  
DENVER CHAPTER

# ALL POINTS BULLETIN

Vol. 63, No.2

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*"...in the future, as in the past, the gathering of information will depend to a great extent on the cooperation between avocational and professional archaeologists."*

*~ H.M. Worminton, 1978*



Welcome to the CAS-Denver Newsletter!  
We're excited to share the latest updates, events, and stories from our CAS community. Inside you'll find highlights from recent activities, upcoming opportunities to connect and contribute, and interesting finds from the world of archaeology.

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## ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE NEWS

**Denver Archaeologist Helps  
Discover Ancient Peruvian Throne  
Room of Female Ruler**

[Article Link](#)

**Archaeologists and Indigenous  
Scholars Call for Better Care of  
Animals Remains**

[Article Link](#)

**12 Must-See Colorado Historical  
Sites**

[Article Link](#)

# CAS Denver Board Announcements



## A MESSAGE FROM DENVER CAS PRESIDENT BETH FISHER

### ***Community with a Purpose***

When I joined CAS, I was looking for a community built around a passion for archaeology. I'm a science nerd, and I like science best when I'm part of a group. When I joined the Board, that was what I continued to work on.

I hope you have been able to take part in some of our archaeology offerings. Besides the monthly meetings, we were invited to join Dr. Jade Luiz in Central City on her brothel dig in the month of June. Some of us are working with JeffCo Open Space on Survey or with the Douglas County repository. Some of us have found a home at History Colorado in the Emery Archaeology Lab (they are taking volunteers). Representatives of CAS, including in-person support from Tetra Tech, visited Aurora West College Prep Academy for a college/job fair. We got to speak with dozens of bright high schoolers and introduce them to archaeology. Very importantly, the long-awaited Swallow Site report was posted to Orca for all to read. In October, we are hosting the CAS Statewide Annual Meeting, and Community Connections is hosting International Archaeology Day and Denver CAS will be there.

We've got a list of activities and lectures on our website, and work to keep you informed of activities through emails, and now this newsletter. Tie on your hiking boots, get in the car and go out into the world. Whatever way works for you, come join us and meet your people. Ultimately, a community fosters social connections and collaboration, enabling individuals to support one another and work towards common objectives.

If you'd like to get involved, or just have questions, please send an email to [dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com](mailto:dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com). We'll respond promptly.

## UPDATES FROM THE BOARD

**The Communications Committee** is working to create more opportunities for members to connect outside our monthly general meetings. We are planning casual meetups to make it easier for members to engage, share ideas, and build community. In addition to events, we are also exploring other ways to engage with the membership and would love your input. Have an idea for a future meetup or suggestion for member engagement?

Let us know at [dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com](mailto:dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com).

**The Swallow Site Report** has been referenced a few times throughout this issue, and now the full report is available online. Published as Memoir No. 7 of the Colorado Archaeological Society, Denver Chapter, the report documents the significance of this prehistoric site on Ken-Caryl Ranch. Access it via the ORCA Distributed Reports page: [Swallow Site Report on ORCA](#)

## Denver Chapter Officers

*Beth Fisher*  
**President**

*Craig Dengel*  
**Vice President**

*David Woods*  
**Secretary**

*Michelle Giometti*  
**Treasurer**

*Alix Douglas*  
**Membership Secretary**

*Lauren Trujillo*  
**CAS Rep/PAAC Coordinator**

*Stacy Greenwood*  
**Media Coordinator**

*Michelle Hart*  
**Newsletter Editor**

*Amy Gillaspie*  
*Jade Luiz*  
*Josef Garrett*  
*Deb Bollig*  
**Directors**

Contact Denver Chapter Officers via message through  
[www.cas-denver.org/contact](http://www.cas-denver.org/contact)



# CAS Denver Board Announcements (cont.)



## Call for 2026 Board and Committee Nominations

The Denver Chapter is accepting nominations for 2026 leadership roles! We are seeking passionate members to serve in the following Board Officer positions:

- President
- Vice President
- Membership Chair
- Two Directors

In addition, we invite members to join our Committees for:

- Activities
- Communication
- Education & Outreach

You may serve on both the Board and a committee. A nominating committee will be formed to support the election process.

If you're interested in serving or nominating someone, please contact us at

**[dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com](mailto:dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com)**

***Help shape the future of our chapter!***

## QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

### April 2025

- Southwestern Lore is included with all memberships, but there may be a glitch. Notify [dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com](mailto:dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com) if you do not have access on your account page on the website.
- The final payment for the Swallow Site report has been made.
- The field school at the Central City Brothel dig is set for June 5-22. The Hell Gap excavation, including the Wyoming Archaeological Society annual meeting, will be held June 20-29.
- The Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 3-5, 2025, with a keynote by Mark Mitchell on the tribes Lewis and Clark encountered on their expedition.
- The Board also reviewed long-range planning, focusing on adapting to the current environment, education and outreach efforts, and future projects such as work based on the Swallow site report.

### May 2025

- CAS leadership announced that meetings will move from History Colorado to the Auraria campus, which will also host the Annual Board meeting.
- The Annual Meeting keynote speaker is confirmed; Volunteers are needed to help (October 4 and 5).
- Our joint meeting with the Egyptian Study Society will be in August and a field trip to the Swallow Site is being explored.
- Denver CAS is taking a close look at the budget and rising storage costs that may prompt a move or downsizing of our storage unit.
- Membership trends show the Colorado Rock Art Chapter surpassing Denver in popularity, and new social events are being considered to boost engagement.
- Website updates include 2025 Lamb Springs tours and a clearer link to the Swallow Site report.
- A plan to capture our institutional knowledge and history is being developed.

### June 2025

- The Denver CAS Board reviewed budget challenges tied to the Annual Meeting and Swallow Site report, with generous member support helping offset a projected shortfall.
- Membership remains steady, and the Communications team is planning chapter meetups.
- Member Engagement shared updates on outreach events and upcoming opportunities, including MSU field school lab work, PAAC Field School, and International Archaeology Day (October 18).



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# Denver Chapter Spotlight



## CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

The Denver Chapter has had an eventful spring. Members were invited in May to an open house at Daniel's Park, hosted by Denver Mountain Parks, Community Connections, and Dr. Bonnie Clark. The event showcased the early 20th-century garden built by Florence Martin, perched on a plateau with views of the Front Range. Still home to irises and yellow roses, the garden is part of an ongoing project that trains future archaeologists while restoring a historic landscape. It was a day filled with shared learning, great company, and even a glimpse of the local bison herd.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Deb Bollig**

*Member since '21*

In May 2025, Deb embarked on a meaningful trip to northern France to explore the villages of her maternal ancestors, dating back over four centuries. With the help of a distant cousin found on Geneanet, she traced roots in the Hauts de France region. An unexpected highlight came when she discovered the Forum Antique de Bavay, a major Roman archaeological site near the French Belgian border. Once known as Bagacum, Bavay served as the chief town for the Nervii in Roman Gaul and sat at the crossroads of seven major roads leading to Britain, Germania, and beyond. The site features the largest Roman forum excavated in France, with ongoing research dating back to the early 20th century. A recent renovation project completed in 2022 added walkable paths and multilingual signage, along with a museum housing a fascinating bronze hoard from the 1st to 3rd centuries CE.

Inspired by this discovery and its proximity to her ancestral towns, Deb dreams of organizing a future trip focused on French archaeology, with a side stop in Paris, of course!

## UPCOMING CAS EVENTS AND MEETINGS

**Board Meetings** are held virtually via Zoom at 7:00 PM on the first Monday of each month. Board meetings are open to all members to attend. Please contact [dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com](mailto:dcasmemberengagement@gmail.com) for the meeting link.

- **CAS August Board Meeting:** Mon, Aug. 11\*
- **CAS September Board Meeting:** Tues. Sept 2

**General Meetings** take place at 7:00 PM on the second Monday of each month in-person or via Zoom. Location and meeting details will be shared to members via email.

- **CAS August General Meeting:** Sat. Aug. 16\*
  - Location: TBD
  - Speaker: Gordon Tucker Shares Updates on his Tell Site in Israel
- **CAS September General Meeting:** Mon. Sept. 8
  - Location: Auraria Campus, Central Classroom Room 101
  - Speaker: TBD

**CAS Annual Conference** will be hosted this year by the CAS Denver chapter from October 3 to 5. The weekend will feature archaeological presentations, poster sessions, a silent auction, and site tours. Saturday includes breakfast and lunch with registration, followed by dinner and a keynote by Dr. Mark Mitchell, who will speak on Native American tribes during the Lewis and Clark era. Sunday will offer field trips to archaeological sites around the metro area. Attend in person at Auraria Campus or online. Stay tuned for full details on our website and upcoming emails!

- **2025 CAS Annual Conference:** Fri. Oct. 3 - Sun. Oct. 5

*\*\*Please note: August Board and General meetings have been rescheduled.*

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Whether you're new to archaeology or building on your experience, there are plenty of ways to get involved. Field projects, PAAC classes, and volunteer opportunities offer hands-on learning and community connection. Stay up to date through our Monday (statewide) and Friday (Denver Chapter) emails, or visit [cas-denver.org/upcoming-activities](https://cas-denver.org/upcoming-activities) for the latest events.

## WHAT AM I? RIDDLE

*"I have no voice, yet I tell a tale, of ancient lives and where they dwelled. Beneath the soil I've long been laid, In hearths and homes, my mark was made. I'm chipped or fired, old yet bold... What am I?"*

# Ancient Food Fires: Archaeological Insights from Northern Arizona

New Study Reveals How Prehistoric Fire Shaped Indigenous Foodways in the Grand Canyon Region

A groundbreaking new study, published in *Frontiers in Environmental Archaeology* (2025), uncovers compelling archaeological evidence that prehistoric Indigenous communities in the Grand Canyon region deliberately used fire as a tool for food production. Rather than relying exclusively on cultivated crops like maize, the study suggests that people living in northern Arizona's Upper Basin between AD 500–1500 ignited low-intensity, controlled burns to promote the growth of nutrient-rich wild plants such as amaranth and chenopodium.

## A “Fire Foodway” in the Southwest

Led by archaeologist Alan P. Sullivan III and an interdisciplinary team of researchers, the study examined pollen, seeds, and charcoal from archaeological features across a fire-prone woodland area just south of the Grand Canyon. These findings support what the authors call a “fire foodway” model: a system in which people relied on intentionally burned landscapes to cultivate the natural growth of edible wild plants.

By creating these low-intensity understory fires similar to cultural burns still practiced in some Indigenous communities today, residents of the Upper Basin encouraged the regrowth of disturbance-adapted “ruderal” plants. These fast-growing species flourish after fire and provide abundant, nutritious seeds and leaves that could be gathered, ground, and consumed.

## Seeds in the Ashes

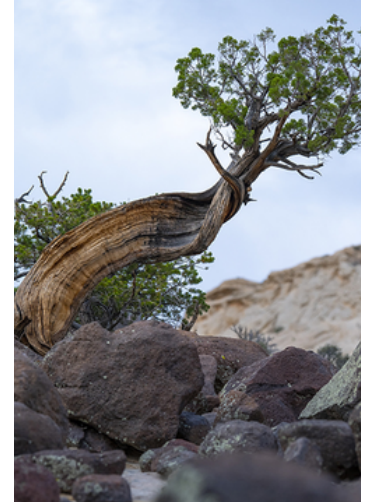
The study's researchers analyzed macrobotanical and palynological (pollen) evidence from over a dozen archaeological sites, terraces, and auger cores. They discovered:

- High concentrations of fire-responsive seeds like chenopodium and amaranth; and
- A striking absence of domesticated maize in the same contexts.



***“Anthropogenic fire in the service of ruderal production made pinyon-juniper woodlands widely habitable.”***

***– Sullivan et. al. 2025***



*Pinyon-juniper woodland in the Upper Basin, home to sustained prehistoric cultural burning*

This strongly suggests that intentional landscape burning created long-lasting “seed beds” of edible plants. These beds could be reactivated by future fires, even decades or centuries later.

In fact, some of the same fire-following plants observed in ancient contexts have spontaneously reappeared on archaeological sites after recent wildfires, lending modern ecological support to ancient practices. This continuity across centuries highlights the effectiveness and resilience of Indigenous fire-based food strategies in arid, fire-prone environments.



### Rethinking Subsistence in the Upland Southwest

Traditional archaeological narratives in the Southwest often center on maize agriculture as the core of subsistence. However, this study challenges that assumption in upland regions with thin soils, little water, and unpredictable growing conditions.

In these marginal environments, “fire farming” using wild plants may have offered a more reliable and sustainable strategy. It required no formal irrigation or tilling, just knowledge of fire’s ecological effects and careful seasonal timing.

The authors argue that understanding this practice sheds new light on Indigenous ecological stewardship and offers an overlooked perspective on resilience in dryland settings.

### The Legacy of Indigenous Fire

This research adds meaningful depth to ongoing conversations about Indigenous knowledge systems and their long-standing role in shaping ecosystems across the Southwest. Far from being passive occupants of the land, ancestral communities actively managed their environments through intentional and informed practices. The study’s proposed “ruderal seed-bed hypothesis” illustrates how fire was not merely a tool of survival but a sophisticated ecological strategy. Through repeated, low-intensity burning, Indigenous peoples created landscapes that supported a continuous supply of fire-adapted, nutritionally valuable wild plants.

Rather than degrading the land, these controlled burns enhanced biodiversity, increased the availability of food resources, and contributed to a balanced and resilient ecosystem.

Today, as wildfire risk and climate change intensify across the American West, this research invites a re-examination of how prehistoric fire was used with precision and purpose. Indigenous fire knowledge, long overlooked or dismissed in mainstream land management, is increasingly being recognized as a viable, science-supported approach to restoring ecological health. Cultural burning practices offer not only historical insight but practical solutions for the present: reintroducing fire in a controlled, respectful manner can reduce fuel loads, restore native plant communities, and help revitalize culturally important landscapes.

**This summary was written by Michelle Hart.  
Read the full article at**

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fearc.2024.1302604>



## REFERENCES

### Article:

Sullivan, A. P. III et al. (2025). Archaeological evidence of anthropogenic burning for food production in northern Arizona. *Frontiers in Environmental Archaeology*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fearc.2024.1302604>

### Images:

Grand Canyon landscape: Public Domain Pictures

Pinyon–juniper woodland: National Park Service, via Wikimedia Commons

Old-growth trees: Grand Canyon Trust (educational use)

Fire-following plants: USDA NRCS (public domain)



# Archaeology in Academia

*Archaeology in Academia is a section devoted to opportunities, resources, and updates for students, early-career professionals, and those pursuing a formal academic path in archaeology*



Image Courtesy of Science Direct

## Journal of Archaeological Science Reports

The Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports accepts research articles that apply scientific methods to archaeological questions. Other formats like short communications and reviews may be considered with editor approval. Submissions are accepted year round, with peer review typically completed within six weeks. For more information, visit:

[:https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-archaeological-science-reports/publish/guide-for-authors](https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-archaeological-science-reports/publish/guide-for-authors)

## AIA Outstanding Work in Digital Archaeology

The AIA's Award for Outstanding Work in Digital Archaeology recognizes individuals or teams using innovative digital technologies in excavation, research, teaching, or outreach. Nominations are due September 15, 2025, and may include self-nominations; at least one nominee must be an AIA member. This year's winner, the International Digital Dura-Europos Archive (IDEA), was honored for reuniting fragmented Syrian site archives into a multilingual, open-access web archive co-curated with Syrian heritage professionals. Learn more or nominate at [www.archaeological.org/grant/digital-archaeology-award/](http://www.archaeological.org/grant/digital-archaeology-award/)



Image Courtesy of Archaeological.org



Image Courtesy of Explorers.org

## Explorers Club Student Grants

The Explorers Club Impact Grants provide \$10,000–\$25,000 in funding to support original field research and exploration projects around the world in areas such as archaeology, ecology, anthropology, and environmental science. Open to individuals 18 and older, these grants are ideal for students, early-career researchers, and lifelong explorers. Proposals should include a research plan, timeline, budget, and letters of recommendation. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and should be submitted at least six months before fieldwork begins. Learn more and apply at [explorers.org/grants/explorers-club-impact-grants](http://explorers.org/grants/explorers-club-impact-grants).

## Book Recommendation



**Sins of the Shovel (2023) by Rachel Morgan** provides an engaging and accessible account of the ethical challenges and historical injustices within American archaeology. Morgan's work examines the legacies of looting, exclusion, and colonialism embedded in the discipline's history, while also highlighting efforts toward inclusivity, collaboration with Indigenous communities, and ethical field practices. The book is particularly great to engage in discussions, prompting important conversations about accountability, public trust, and the future of archaeological practice. [Get your copy on Amazon.](#)

# Road Trip: Explore the Ancient Southwest

## Hit the Road for a Journey Through Time

Looking to combine your love of history, archaeology, and stunning landscapes this summer? Pack your bags for an unforgettable road trip through Colorado and the greater Southwest. This suggested 10-day itinerary, departing from the Denver area, is inspired by a road trip I took and includes some of the most breathtaking and historically rich sites in the region.

**Total Distance:** ~1,600 miles

**Ideal Duration:** 9–10 days

**Best Time to Go:**

Late May to early October

**Start/End:** Denver, CO

### Day 1: Denver to Chimney Rock National Monument

*Distance: 280 miles / ~5.5 hours*

Visit Chimney Rock NM, an ancient astronomical observatory of the Chacoan culture. Take a short hike up to the Great House.

**Stay:** Pagosa Springs

**Eat:** Kip's Grill or Riff Raff Brewing with views of the San Juan River

### Day 2–3: Mesa Verde National Park

*Distance: 100 miles / ~2 hours*

See the park's iconic cliff dwellings and mesa-top villages. Be sure to book a tour through the NPS to visit the iconic Cliff Palace.

**Stay:** Camp or stay at the Far View Lodge in the park

**Eat:** Metate Room, The Farm Bistro in Cortez for farm-to-table options

### Day 4: Hovenweep National Monument

*Distance: 45 miles / ~1 hour*

Visit the towering ruins on canyon rims, an ideal spot for solitude and scenic hikes. Be sure to check out the Square Tower Loop trail.

**Stay:** Bluff, UT

**Eat:** Twin Rocks Café for Navajo tacos and views

### Day 5–6: Chaco Culture National Historical Park

*Distance: 125 miles / ~3.5 hours*

See massive ruins, kivas, and astronomical alignments in Chaco Canyon. Be sure to stock up on water, food and fuel. Services near Chaco are very limited.

**Stay:** Farmington, NM or camp in Chaco Canyon

**Eat:** Three Rivers Brewery, El Bruno's

### Day 7: Aztec Ruins National Monument

*Distance: 70 miles / ~1.5 hours*

Aztec Ruins NM features a great Kiva, intact masonry, and unique ties to Chaco.

**Stay:** Durango, CO

**Eat:** Ska Brewing World HQ (Durango) – Great outdoor space

### Day 8: Canyon de Chelly National Monument (AZ)

*Distance: 150 miles / ~3 hours*

Canyon de Chelly is Navajo-owned lands with ancient cliff dwellings. Looking for some thrills? Book a Navajo-guided jeep or horseback tour into the canyon.

**Stay:** Chinle, AZ

**Eat:** Junction Restaurant serving traditional Navajo fare  
Sacred Canyon Lodge Cafe near the visitor center

### Day 9: Monument Valley

*Distance: 100 miles / ~2 hours*

See the iconic red-rock buttes, ancient stories, and Navajo culture of Monument Valley. End your trip with a sunset photo tour with a local guide.

**Stay:** The View Hotel or Goulding's Lodge

**Eat:** The View Restaurant serving Navajo specialties with unbeatable views, Stagecoach Restaurant

