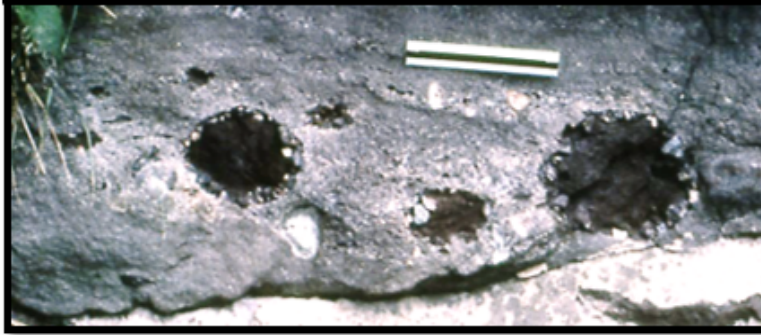


"SAVE THE RARE & UNIQUE MASSACHUSETTS ARMORED MUD BALLS" PROJECT



Quarried block, Jurassic age Turners Falls Sandstone, now located at the Greenfield Community College Geology Path. 6 inch ruler for scale.

PROJECT GOAL: Promote the rare Massachusetts Jurassic age armored mud balls (AMBs) to become a State "Sedimentary Structure".* This official State Symbol designation would preserve, protect, educate the public, and celebrate these unique geologic features. (They are more important compared to other State Symbols such as the Corn Muffin and Boston Cream Donut!)

**["Sedimentary structures" are features preserved during deposition of sediment, such as fossils, mud cracks, ripple marks, and rarely, armored mud balls.]*

WHAT ARE ARMORED MUD BALLS? Hard mud pieces fall into a stream, get tumbled, rounded, and coated ("armored") with streambed pebbles. Quick burial and lithification (hardened to rock) preserves these delicate "sedimentary structures," much rarer than dinosaur fossils. Eventually, over geologic time, erosion of the enclosing rock may reveal them for discovery.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND THEM? The formation, preservation, and discovery of lithified armored mud balls is so rare that only a handful of examples have been found. Except for our Massachusetts examples, all are in remote areas and perhaps not currently visible due to weathering, erosion, or soil cover. The Massachusetts lithified AMBs illustrate a variety of sizes, from golf ball to basketball and have distinct pebble armor. They have been found in 200 million-year-old sedimentary rock (late Triassic – early Jurassic) near the Connecticut River in Turners Falls, Deerfield, and Greenfield. Quarried blocks from a now-dismantled bridge foundation in Turners Falls, preserve excellent AMBs now displayed along the Greenfield Community College Geology Path. Specimens have also been contributed to local colleges and museums.

WHY ARE ARMORED MUD BALLS IMPORTANT? These are unique specimens! There are no locations in the world where lithified AMBs can be easily seen and sampled except for the Massachusetts examples and these display a variety of sizes plus distinctive pebble armor. Many examples are in quarried blocks so AMBs are quite visible within the stream-deposited conglomerate rock. The amusingly named "armored mud balls" preserves rare, interesting events from the Connecticut River Valley's "Age of Dinosaurs" which excites students, the public, as well as geologists. Everyone smiles when they see and learn about AMBs!

HOW CAN THEY BE SAVED? Designate them official Massachusetts "Sedimentary Structures"! Otherwise, they will be neglected and their significance forgotten. That will be a loss to science as well as to Massachusetts.

WHO IS ORGANIZING THIS EFFORT? Prof. Richard D. Little, Greenfield Community College, discovered these rare features & documented them in a Journal of Geology article (1982). His volunteer preservation efforts are supported and assisted by many geologists, lay people, conservation / education organizations and Franklin County towns. Over a thousand people have viewed the AMB video ** or visited the web site and hundreds have signed the petition (see web site).

MORE INFORMATION: <https://ArmoredMudBalls.rocks>

5 min. video <https://youtu.be/P38Qa0mYpLk>

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Thanks for reading. Consider helping with publicity expenses! (Prof. Little works for free.)

Donate: <https://www.gofundme.com/save-the-armored-mud-balls>

