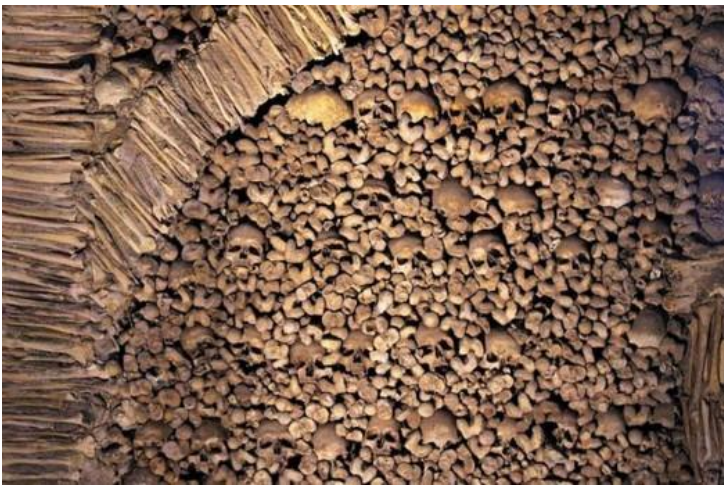


SOUTH SUBURBAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
PRESENTS A *FREE* ILLUSTRATED LECTURE

Roy Plotnick, PhD

Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois at Chicago

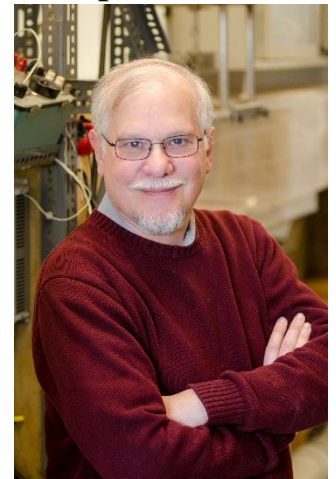
WHEN WE BECOME THE FOSSIL RECORD:
Looking Back at the Anthropocene and the Sixth Extinction



Paleontologists record five major extinctions in the fossil record; the one 66 million years ago is just the most recent. These extinctions had a variety of causes, including volcanic eruptions and asteroid impacts, but all led to huge disruptions in the global climate. More recently human activities have caused a decline in biodiversity. This probably began at the end of the last Ice Age, but has accelerated since then. It has come to be known as the “Sixth Extinction.”

To compare the Sixth Extinction with the first five we can ask: what will be there when we are the fossil record? For one, most mammals going extinct, including primates, will leave no trace as fossils, and be known only by what humans leave on their own.

What *will* be in the future fossil record? A world dominated by human activities, including the replacement of wild mammals by humans and their domesticates, will leave a fossil record full of pigs, cattle, chickens, and us. There is a reason our era is informally termed the Anthropocene.



Dr. Roy Plotnick

Thursday, Apr. 20, 2023, at 7:30 PM

Marie Irwin Community Center* • 18120 Highland Avenue, Homewood, Illinois

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*ADA-accessible

All are invited to attend this free lecture