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## Fossil Plants of a Des Moines Sandstone Cave Deposit near Robins, Linn County, Iowa

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FOSSIL PLANTS OF A DES MOINES SANDSTONE  
CAVE DEPOSIT NEAR ROBINS, LINN  
COUNTY, IOWA

L. R. WILSON AND A. T. CROSS

A Des Moines sandstone cave deposit in Lower Davenport limestone was, until recently, exposed in a quarry one-half mile northeast of Robins, Linn County, Iowa. The quarry is in the Northeast Quarter of Section 22, Township 48 North, Range 7 West. The rock containing the plant fossils is a medium to fine grained, buff sandstone that was about 32 feet wide with a maximum thickness of 18 inches when examined in January, 1938. Since then, recent quarrying operations have completely removed the deposit.

Plant material was abundant through the deposit but very fragmental. The larger fragments are highly ferruginated or pyritized and the remainder are either impressions or carbonized leaves.

Because of the difficulty in the identification of small and fragmentary specimens only a few can be classified with certainty. These are: *Alethopteris serlii* (Brongn.) Goepfert, *Eremopteris missouriensis* Lesqx., *Mariopteris muricata* (Schloth.) Zeill., *Taeniopteris missouriensis* White, *Calamites suckowii* Brongn., *Lepidodendron veltheimianum* Sternb., *Selaginites crassus* Lesqx. and a pith cast of *Cordaites (artisia)* sp.

Some of the fragments of which the identification is more uncertain are *Sphenophyllum thoni* Mahr., *Sphenopteris affinis* Lindley and Hutton, or possibly *Sphenophyllum saxifragaefolium* (Sternb.) Goepfert, *Pseudopecopteris obtusiloba* (Brongn.) Lesqx., and another *Pseudopecopteris* which closely resembles *P. obtusiloba* (Brongn.) Lesqx., *P. trifoliata* (Artis) Lesqx., or *P. nummularia* (Gulb.) Lesqx. A three-lobed pinna was found which corresponds closely with *Sphenopteris hoeninghausii* Brongn. One of the largest and most perfect specimens found was a fragment tentatively identified as *Omphalophlois cyclostigma* Lesqx. Several leaves are possibly *Annularia stellata* (Schloth.) Wood, or *A. longifolia* Brongn. Pinna of *Neuropteris* are common, but are not complete enough to be identified to species. A number of leaves similar to the cyclopteroids of *Neuropteris decipiens* Lesqx. were

also found. Many fragments of wood were recovered, but are too poorly preserved to identify.

The most interesting plant materials from the deposit are the fossil fruits. Seventy-five or more nut-like structures have been gathered and several of them are in a fair state of preservation. Some are fully extended with ribs and long tapering points still intact. Others have been flattened, broken, or partially destroyed. The two principal genera represented are *Triginocarpon* and the form genus *Carpolithus*. One or two other genera may be present, but their identity can not be established without additional and more perfect specimens. There appears to be two species of the genus *Triginocarpon* and these have been tentatively identified as *T. juglans* Lesqx., and *T. rostellatum* Lesqx.

Dr. David White examined some plant fossils from a Carboniferous outlier near Marion, Linn County, Iowa, and reported to Dr. Wm. Norton (1895) seven species with certainty and an additional list of seven species of doubtful identification. Of these fourteen species *Alethopteris serlii* and *Annularia longifolia* also occurred in the Robins deposit. Adams (1926) has investigated an outlier of Carboniferous sandstone near Butler's Landing, north of Iowa City in Johnson County, Iowa, and reports several species of fossil plants. The two identified species listed have not been found in the Robins specimens, but material of *Triginocarpon*, *Cordaites*, and *Lepidodendron* was found at Butler's Landing as well as at Robins.

NORTON, WM. H., 1895, Certain Devonian and Carboniferous outliers in Eastern Iowa, *Ia. Geol. Surv.* 3: 127-128.

ADAMS, JOHN E., 1926, Butler's Landing outlier and its fossil flora, *Ia. Acad. Sci. Proc.* 33: 177-178.

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