

The fossil locality of Persac (Vienne, France): a unique window on a 100 million years old continental ecosystem

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Abundant and diverse fossil assemblages were recently collected from Albian-Cenomanian (mid-Cretaceous) cross-stratified beds filling a Bajocian (Middle Jurassic) paleokarst exposed near the town of Persac, Vienne, western France. They include well-preserved fossils of bivalves, gastropods, charophytes, plant leaves and wood, bony fishes, lissamphibians, turtles, lizards, crocodyliforms, dinosaurs, pterosaurs, and mammals. During the last three years 12 m³ of sediments were screen-washed. More than 200,000 micro-remains have already been sorted out, ranging from a few mm to a 10 cm in size. The fauna consists of both freshwater and terrestrial organisms. It offers, thus, an inestimable milestone of scientific and patrimonial value for the mid-Cretaceous European continental ecosystems.

Mots-Clés : Albian - Cenomanian, continental deposit, freshwater, plants, vertebrates, palaeoenvironment