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## **Summary Write Up of the DGAG Talk Tuesday 09 Dec 2025**

**Title:** How the famous fish beds of Lebanon have informed on life and evolution in the Cretaceous

**Speaker: Hady George** - PhD student in the Palaeobiology Research Group at the University of Bristol.

The talk was thoroughly enjoyed by an audience of 19 people. Unfortunately, we cannot reproduce exactly the talk without the author to explain the slides, their context and answers to questions.

However, the speaker has kindly allowed us a PDF version of his slides. This is on the DGAG website to assist in education and future reference. Below is my (Editor) talk highlights from some rapidly scribbled notes. Hopefully, this whets an appetite for field trip(s) to this fantastic and unique fossil preservation site. However, for those wishing a literature based “deep dive” the additional references/links below are a good start (Editor) and or contact the speaker.

### **Talk Summary Highlights**

Hady treated the audience to a wonderful review of a range of exquisitely preserved fossils from the Cretaceous age. Much dedication is demonstrated by the two Lebanese families that own and in effect act as custodians to two of the key sites and collections. Much more modern geological mapping, study and collaborative support is justified for these truly world class sites.

- The famous fossil “fish” beds of Lebanon are part of the exclusive worldwide club of Lagerstätten (club members include e.g. Burgess Shale, Solnhofen and Messel Pit). These are all sites with exceptional fossil preservation.
- There are 4 Lagerstätten sites in Lebanon: Haqel, Hjoula, Nammoura, Sahel Aalma (the last one no longer accessible) exposed in strata of Upper Cretaceous age (84 to 100 million years old).
- The marine environment of carbonate rich deposition ranges from inner shelf to outer continental and seems to have had a stratified water column that led to anoxic seabed conditions leading to exceptional fossil preservation. There is much work to be done on detailed mapping of the stratigraphy and lithologies to better constrain and put into a wider context the depositional environment on this apparent southern margin of a closing Tethyan sea.
- The speaker described some exotic fossil finds such as the incredibly rare (unique) fossil of an Octopus *Keuppia*! Also, the weird, undescribed and unclassified *Thylacocephalans*, an Arthropod? - (looks alien to me! -Editor).
- There are just hundreds of examples of exquisite soft tissue preservation in these fossil beds. Certainly, enough to justify a special field trip for those interested in further exploration and study- watch this space!

Next DGAG talk is scheduled for Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January, speaker Alan Frampton : Managing Coastal Risk in Dorset – details in the events section of DGAG website.

More speakers are required for talk slots in Feb, Apr 2026, any topic loosely connected to the Earth (even Solar System!) and science will be considered, we like variety! Please check all your contacts and networks for a speaker and let me know contact details.

Chris Webb

*DGAG Events – Editor*

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### **Additional Links**

1. Speaker as lead-author of 2024 paper in Journal of Geological Society :

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380204734> The famous fish beds of Lebanon the Upper Cretaceous Lagerstätten of Haqel Hjoula Nammoura and Sahel Aalma