

Corrigendum

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Death on “live broadcast”—fish mortichnia from the Upper Cretaceous plattenkalk of Lebanon—CORRIGENDUM

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This article (Pokorný et al. 2024) was published with the following errors:

The wrong version of the technical abstract was published. The correct version is reproduced below:

The trace fossils presented in the following belong to the category of animal behavior that Seilacher had defined and named as “mortichnia.” Subsequently, Vallon and colleagues recommended in their review of behavioral categories to desist from its usage because its recognition does not only depend on trace fossil morphology, but also on the tracemaker’s physiology and environmental interpretation. The two latter assumptions in particular cannot always be deduced correctly, rendering the whole interpretation false (especially when modern analogues of such environments or closely related organismal groups do not exist). However, with recently recovered material from Lebanon, a redefinition and partial reinstatement is attempted.

The Lebanese trace fossil specimens were all made by dying fish. At the beginning, the traces show the greatest physical strengths of the tracemakers, as their body movements were still relatively powerful. Over the course of each mortichnion, the traces reflect increasing exhaustion. The undulating movements of the tail fin decrease, and the resulting trail becomes more and more asymmetrical. Its depth becomes shallower. During the last moments of each tracemaker’s life, movements were more and more reduced until they became barely discernible. Finally, the trail ends with the death and the preserved corpse of the tracemaker.

In our redefinition of mortichnia, we argue that trace fossils included in this ethological group must contain the fossilized corpse of the tracemaker. The corpse must ideally show signs of illness or predation (the tracemaker’s body fossil, however, is neither part of the trace fossil nor is it to be regarded as the actual trace fossil). Other trails or trackways, especially from non-fish tracemakers, e.g. from the bivalve *Solemya* at the Solnhofen Lagerstätte (Kimmeridgian–Tithonian; Germany), may show signs of loss of orientation, or the tracemakers might try to avoid certain areas that impose hostile living conditions (e.g., ripple crests) if the environment is drying out and the tracemakers breathe via gills.

On page 9, the final sentence of the penultimate full paragraph should read: “In the above-described specimens that would be the caudal fin, in land vertebrates feet or hands, mollusks will use a muscular foot, etc.”

The Literature Cited section omitted the following reference:

Uchman, A., and Wetzel, A. 2024. Sequestrichnia—an ethological category of marine trace fossils recording the collection and stowage of nutritional material within burrows. *Comptes Rendus Palevol* 22:325–338.

The authors apologize for these errors.

Literature Cited

Pokorný, R., R. Nohra, P. A. Saad, and L. H. Vallon. Death on “live broadcast”—fish mortichnia from the Upper Cretaceous plattenkalk of Lebanon. *Paleobiology*. 2024;50(4):627–640. <https://doi.org/10.1017/pab.2024.28>.