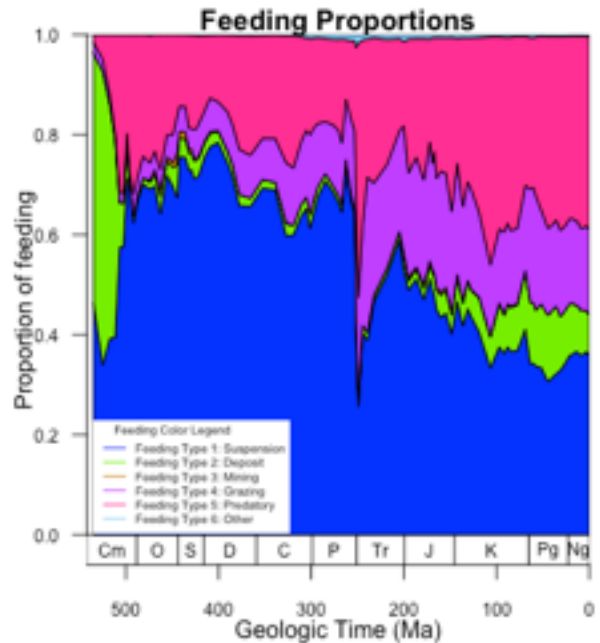


I have loved the biodiversity lab more and more these past few weeks!

We started working on our actual research project for the summer. We got paired up and assigned one feature of all organisms (I am in the *feeding* group!). I got to learn about the 6 different types of feeding, what marine organisms belong to each one, how feeding type relates to body size, and how it relates to extinction rate.

I explored the dataset through various R functions such as 'head,' 'table,' and 'subset' in order to create more interesting graphs. One my favorites is titled 'Proportions of Organisms per Feeding Type' as it allowed me to visually see the large diversification after the Cambrian explosion and the effects of the Permian extinction on Suspension Feeders:

I became familiar with new R libraries such as paleoTS to assess trends in mean size per feeding type which revealed the growing size of predators.



With graphing, the possibilities are endless, and I love to keep finding new similarities/discrepancies in the data. Initially, there was a surge in the mean size of the 'Other' feeding group, but after showing it to Noel it turned out organisms such as eels were mislabeled in terms of feeding type. I hope to keep improving the dataset and making cool graphs.

In the midst of our research, we had the opportunity to go CAMPING!!! We drove the Pinnacles National Park, stopping to collect fossils (both mollusks and brachiopods). It was my first time camping. I was a bit unnerved, but ended up having a very rewarding experience. I was amazed at everything we did: cooking our own, very delicious meal, hiking 3.4 miles in severe heat and high altitude changes, and exploring caves. My favorite part of the camping trip was at night when the biodiversity interns sat outside on a picnic table, bonding, while looking up at the stars. I even saw **4 shooting stars!!!!!!!!** I was so excited I let out a little shriek each time, which unfortunately scared everyone else into thinking raccoons were out to get us. We survived. It was relaxing to take time and look at the stars, putting massive amounts of pollution and busy schedules behind to truly enjoy ourselves.



I can't wait to keep analyzing data and learn more about our Earth!