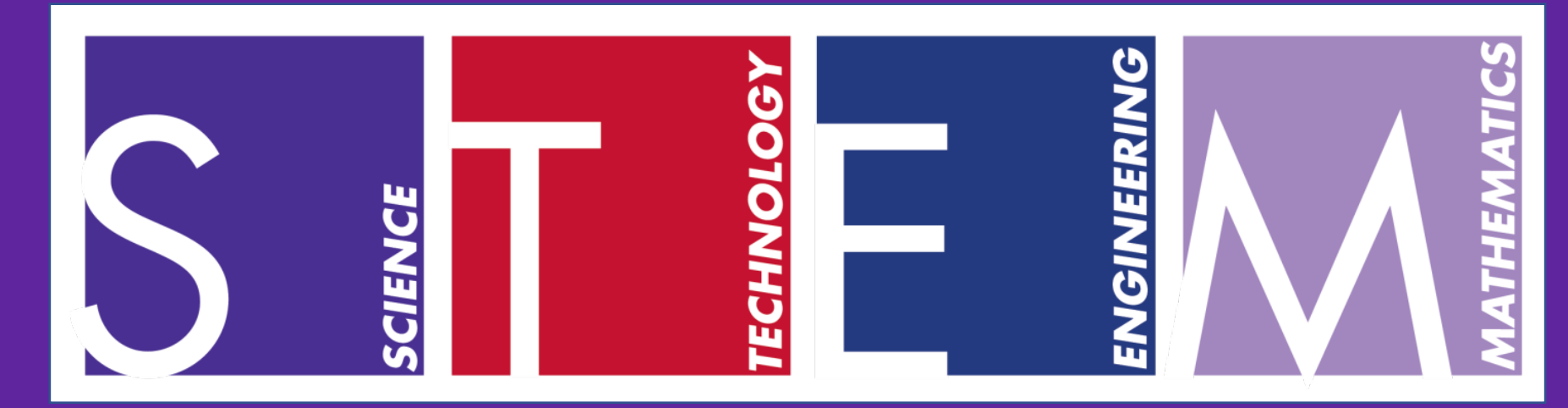




# A Walk Through Geologic Time: The SFA Rock Garden



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## Introduction

Over many years, professors in the Department of Earth Sciences and Geologic Resources have been collecting large rock specimens from places of geologic interest associated with field trips and field camp. These rocks have been deposited at the west entrance of the Miller Science Building on the SFA Campus to create a Rock Garden. These rocks serve as teaching tools for our students, but also an archival record of the places we have traveled and the interesting geologic phenomena we have experienced. Up until this point, no signage has been put in place to identify any of these rocks to SFA students or the general public.

Creating small plaques with a QR code leading to a webpage would allow students, faculty, parents, and visitors to quickly and easily access facts about individual rocks and key geological concepts. The Rock Garden could be used to inspire future SFA students to learn more about geologic materials and the Department of Earth Sciences and Geologic Resources.

## Methods and Materials

This project involved taking photographs of individual rocks in the Rock Garden and collecting information on a selection of these rocks. The images were taken in the Spring 2023 semester using a smart phone camera. The images were then organized, and the authors collaborated to select the best rocks to include in the first pages of the website. In Summer 2023, we created a website showcasing the images and compiled information on the selected rocks. To support the educational aspect of the website, the authors added essential information about basic geologic concepts.

The website was created using Google Sites. This software was selected due to its easily navigable interface and competitive fees (free). QR codes for each plaque were generated as soon as the pages were created. The website information was gathered primarily from the faculty of SFA's Department of Earth Sciences and Geologic Resources, with supplemental information gathered from online sources and textbooks.

## Future of the Project

Having an online archive of the SFA Rock Garden affords a lot of flexibility when it comes to updating entries on the website and creating new entries. It would be very simple to expand the webpages to include additional notable information about each rock. Some of this additional information could include maps of the area where the specimens originated, further information about structures visible in the rocks, and images of the sample location.

This project can be expanded to include more rocks on campus. Only ten of the dozens of rocks in the SFA Rock Garden have pages on the website. In the future, rocks in our garden and across campus can be added to the website and assigned their own QR link. These displays could be used by students, visiting parents, alumni, scout troops, STEM day activities, and other campus visitors.



Figure 1: An image of the SFASU Rock Garden at the west entrance of the Miller Science Building. This image depicts a portion of the garden, which extends to the other side of the doors. Also pictured is the small pumpjack on display in the Garden.

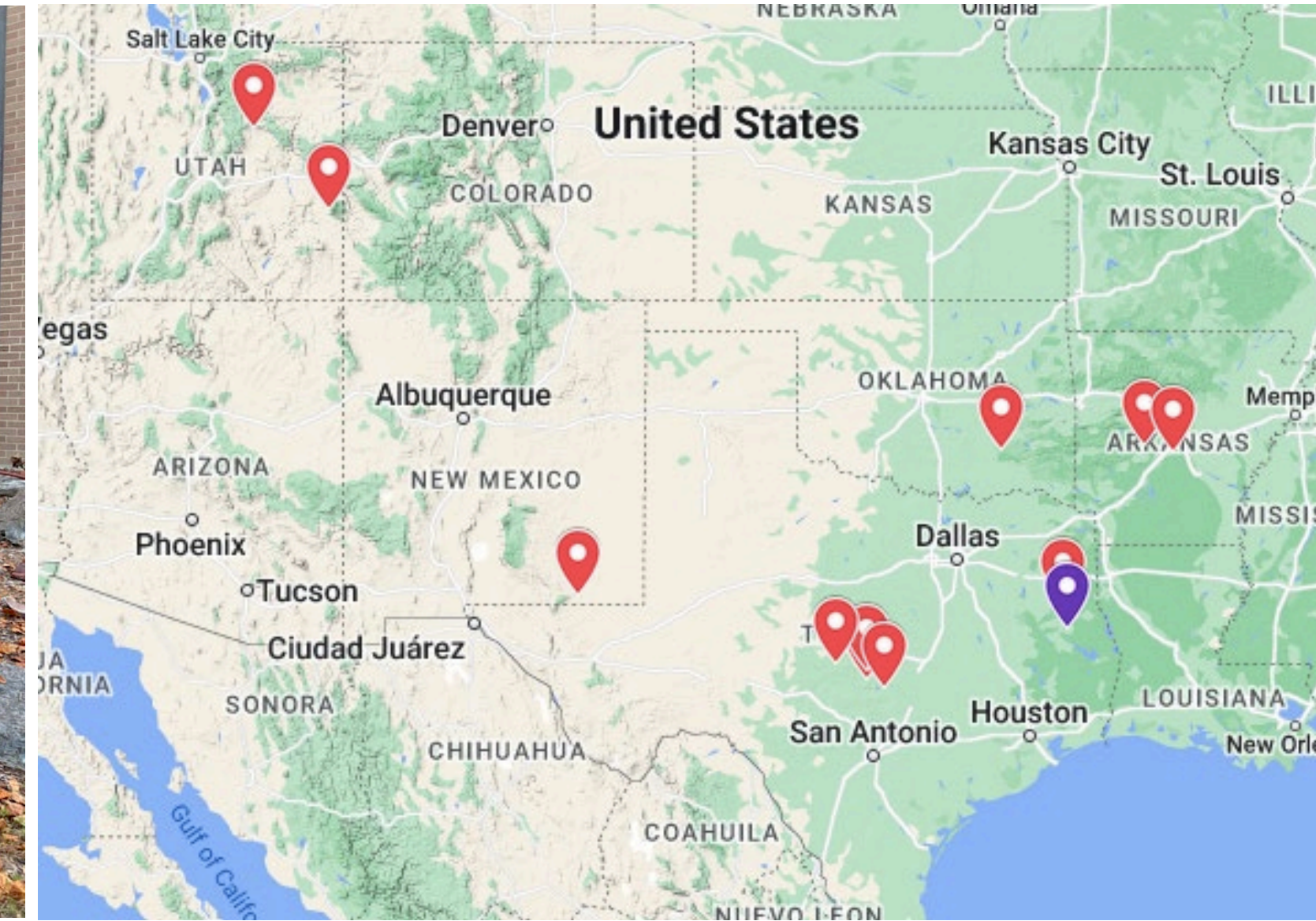
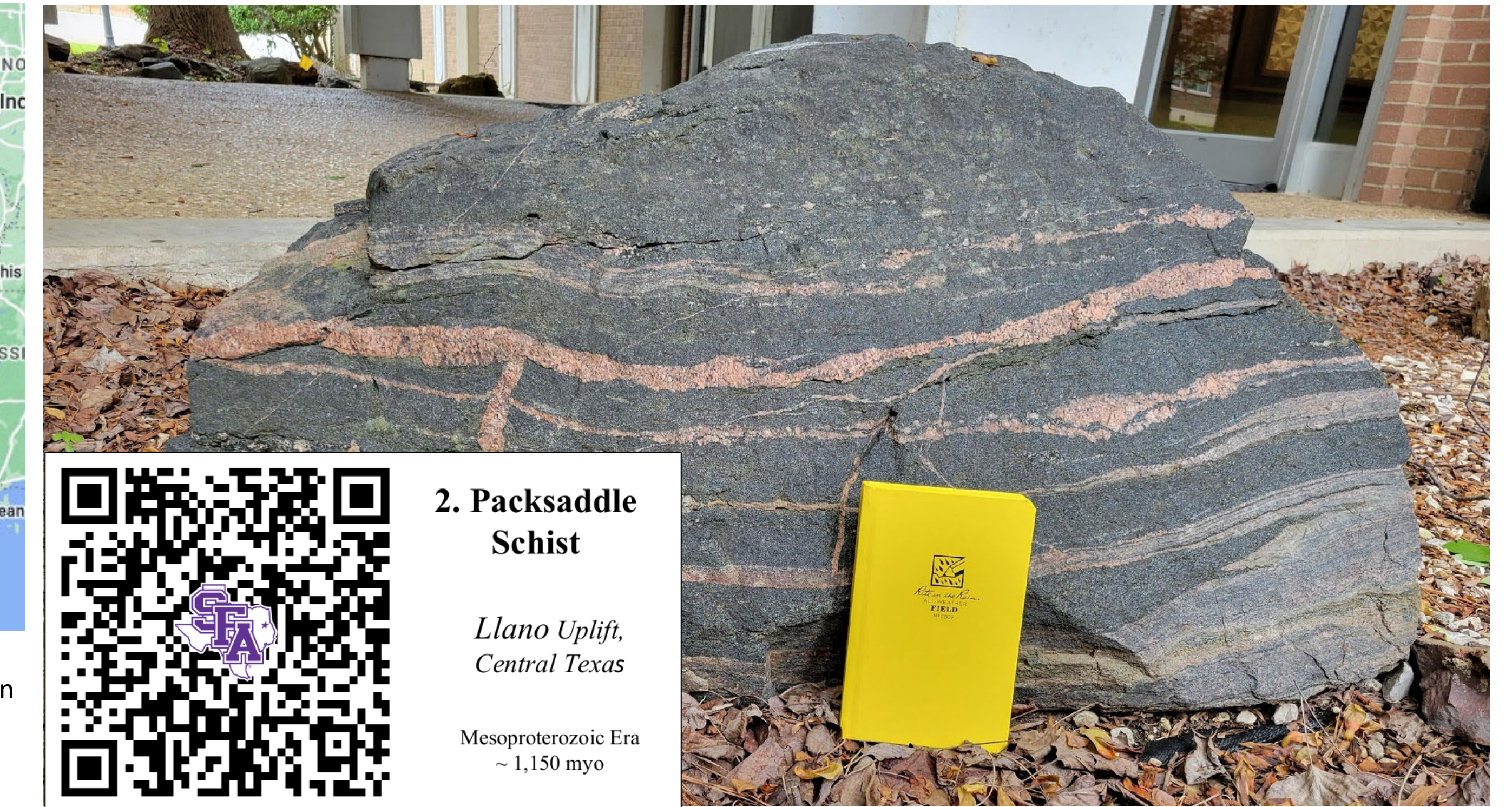


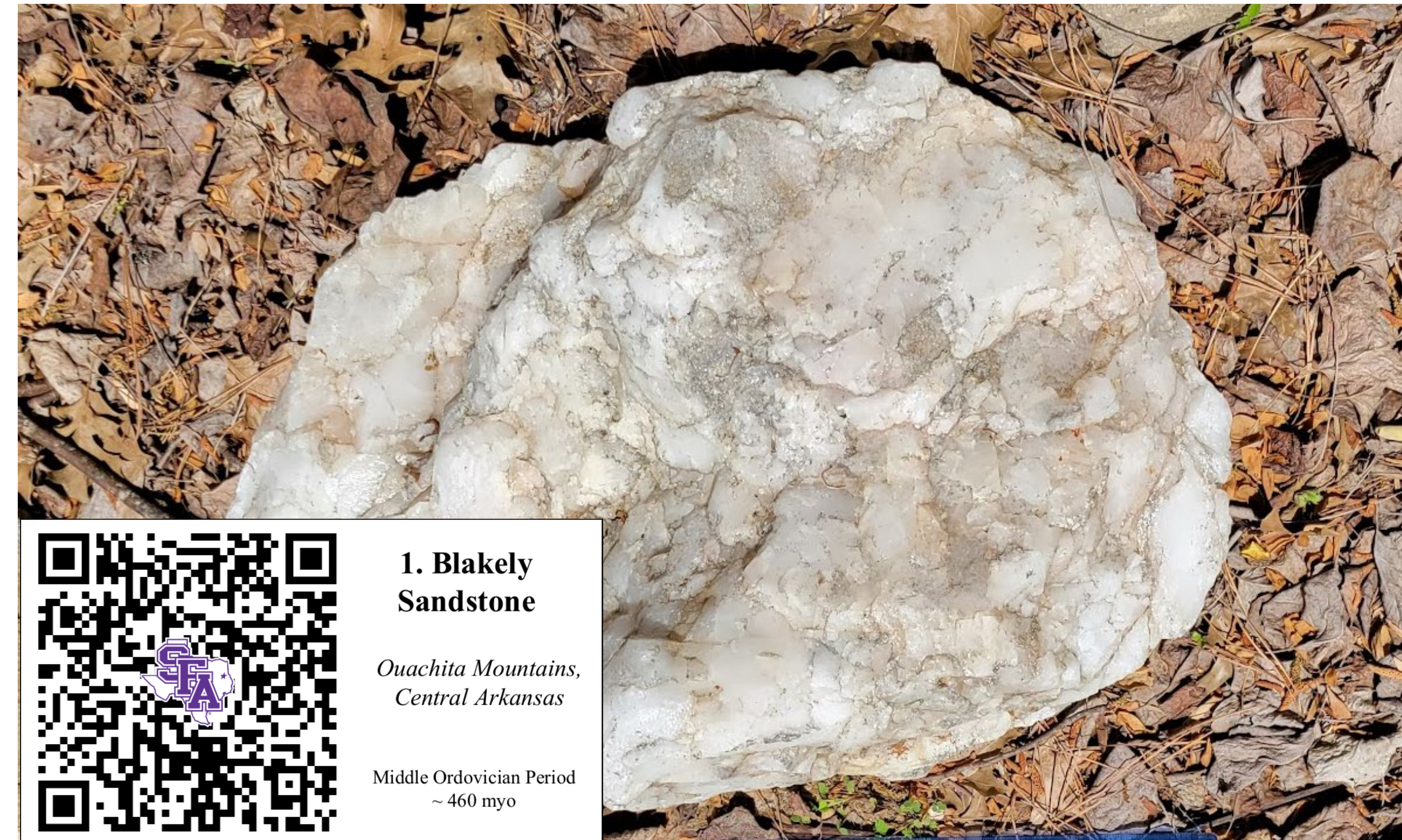
Figure 2: Each red pin on the map indicates a location where the rocks featured on the website were collected. The purple pin marks the location of the Rock Garden. The map was created using Google Maps, the software that was most compatible with Google Sites.



### 2. Packsaddle Schist

Llano Uplift, Central Texas

Mesoproterozoic Era ~ 1,150 myo



### 1. Blakely Sandstone

Ouachita Mountains, Central Arkansas

Middle Ordovician Period ~ 460 myo



### 3. Llano Rhyolite "Llanite"

Llano Uplift, Central Texas

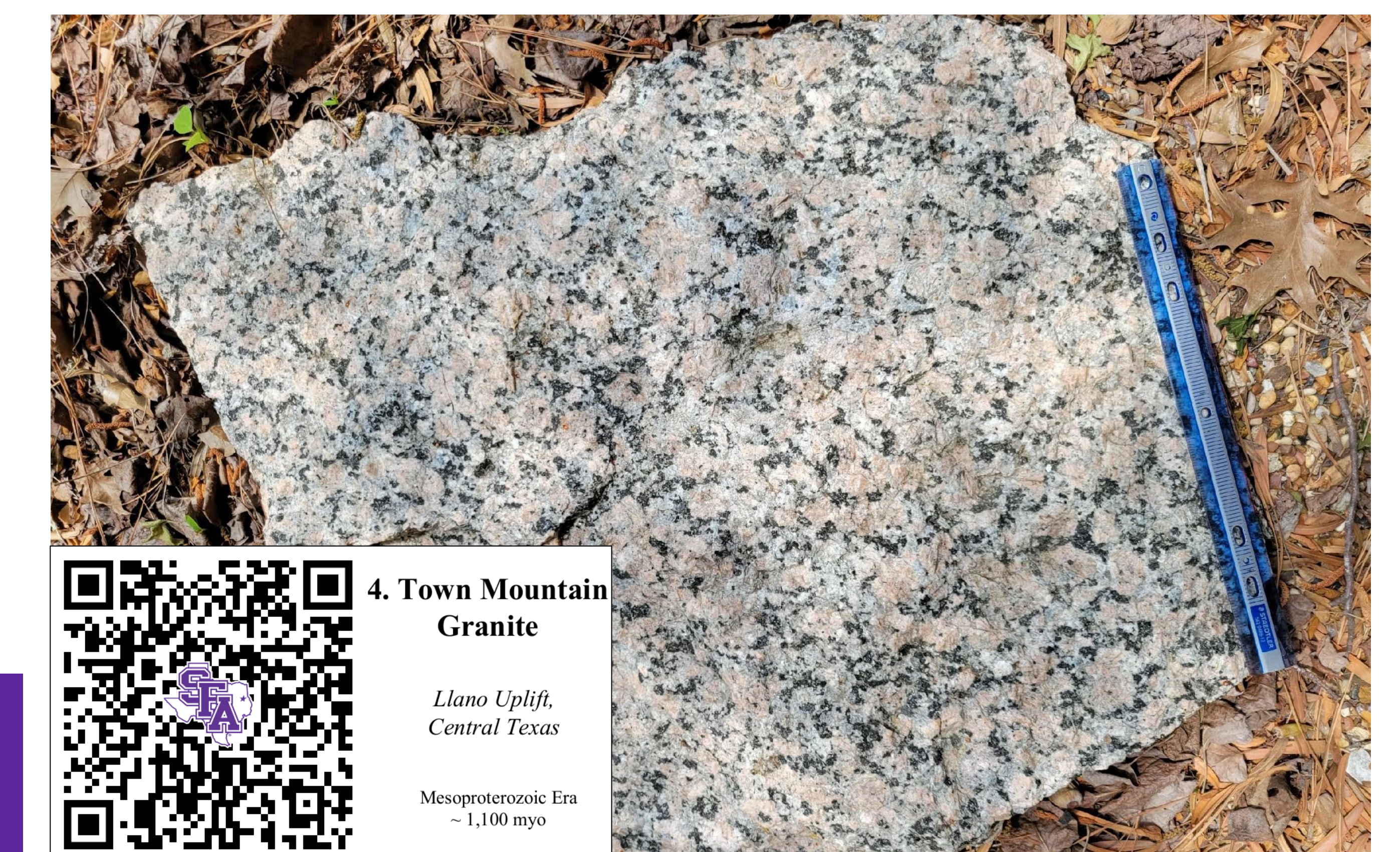
Mesoproterozoic Era ~ 1,100 myo



### 8. Calvert Bluff Formation

Rusk County, East Texas

Early Eocene Epoch ~ 48 myo



### 4. Town Mountain Granite

Llano Uplift, Central Texas

Mesoproterozoic Era ~ 1,100 myo

Scan the QR codes above to see the website and learn about the rocks in SFA Rock Garden

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