Orin Lole Durbin

**Research Interests: Evolution and Radiation of Animal Life**

*Palaeobiology | Earth History | Metazoan Origins | Cambrian Explosion*

Address: Department of Geosciences, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia, 24061, USA

Email: [orinloledurbin@vt.edu](mailto:orinloledurbin@vt.edu)

# EDUCATION

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PhD in Geosciences  *Supervised by Shuhai Xiao* | Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | 2024–Current |
| MEarthSci Earth Sciences  *Master’s supervised by Ross Anderson*  *Achieved First Class Honours* | University of Oxford | 2020–2024 |

# EXPERIENCE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Exceptional Fossilisation Environments Internship | University of Oxford Museum of Natural History | 06/2024–07/2024 |
| At the Feet of Dinosaurs Internship | University of Bristol Palaeobiology Research Group | 07/2023–10/2023 |
| Mongolian Microfossil Internship | University of Oxford Earth Sciences Department | 06/2023–07/2023 |
| Year 11 Student Tutor | Ysgol Penglais School | 04/2019–01/2020 |

# FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & AWARDS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outstanding Poster Presentation Award |  | 5th International Conference of Geobiology, Wuhan | 2025 |
| GSA Graduate Student Research Grant | $2500.00 | GSA and GSA Southeastern Section | 2025–2026 |
| AASP-TPS Student Research Grant | $3000.00 | AASP-The Palynological Society | 2025–2026 |
| Cooper Memorial Geology Fund | $1000.00 | VT Department of Geosciences | 2025 |
| ICTAS Doctoral Fellowship | $152,500.00 | VT Institute for Critical and Applied Science | 2024–2028 |
| Fitzgerald Prize | £200.00 | Exeter College, University of Oxford | 2024 |
| Duke of Edinburgh: Silver Award |  | Ysgol Penglais School | 2022 |
| Duke of Edinburgh: Bronze Award |  | Ysgol Penglais School | 2020 |
| CREST Gold Award |  | Ysgol Penglais School | 2019 |

# MENTORING & OUTREACH

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| “Digging Deep: Paleontological Insights” Exhibit | Virginia Tech Science Festival 2024 | 02/11/2024 |
| GSRS Judiciary Committee | Virginia Tech Geosciences | 09/2024–04/2025 |
| Geosciences Undergraduate Mentor | Virginia Tech Geosciences – William Barber | 09/2024–05/2025 |

# FIELD EXPERIENCE

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fieldwork:** |  |  |  |
| Lake Khuvsgul, North Mongolia | 17 days | Stratigraphy and palaeontology (PhD collection) | 2025 |
| Mesoproterozoic Strata of North China | 3 days | Stratigraphy, sedimentology and palaeontology | 2025 |
| Ediacaran–Cambrian Strata of South China | 14 days | Stratigraphy and palaeontology (PhD collection) | 2025 |
| Cryogenian–Cambrian Strata of South China | 10 days | Post-5th ICG Cryogenian Subcommission Fieldtrip | 2025 |
| Ardley Trackways, Oxfordshire | 1 day | Member of Dinosaur Trackway Dig Team | 2024 |
| Mainland Greece (south) and Santorini | 11 days | Active tectonics and igneous processes | 2023 |
| Lilstock and Lavernock | 2 days | Rhaetian vertebrate fauna and stratigraphy | 2023 |
| Cornwall | 7 days | Variscan Orogeny; ophiolites; economic geology | 2022 |
| Assynt | 12 days | Proterozoic metamorphic and igneous processes | 2022 |
| Dorset and the Jurassic Coast | 8 days | Mesozoic stratigraphy and palaeontology | 2021 |
| Isle of Arran | 9 days | Devonian/Carboniferous stratigraphy | 2021 |
| **Fieldwork organized/led:** |  |  |  |
| Ord, Isle of Skye | 5 weeks | Caledonian Orogeny; structure; stratigraphy | 2022 |

# PUBLICATIONS

1. **Lole Durbin, O.**, Anttila, E.S.C., Briggs, D.E.G., Macdonald, F.A., & Anderson, R.P. (2025). ‘Maximum age constraints on animal evolution: Insights from the Kheseen Formation, Mongolia’. In prep.
2. **Lole Durbin, O.**, Duffin, C.J., Hildebrandt, C., Benton, M.J. (2024). ‘Onset of the Rhaetian Transgression in deep waters at Lilstock, North Somerset: Microvertebrate faunas’. Proceedings of the Geologists’ Association 135, pp.181–195. ([Link](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pgeola.2024.02.001))

# PRESENTATIONS

1. **Lole Durbin, O.**, O’Donnell, K., & Xiao, S. (2025). ‘Constraining the Ediacaran–Cambrian boundary in South China using microfossil assemblages’. Poster presentation given at the 5th International Geobiology Conference, Wuhan, China. ***Won award for Outstanding Poster Presentation.***
2. **Lole Durbin, O.**, Anttila, E.S.C., Briggs, D.E.G., Macdonald, F.A., & Anderson, R.P. (2025). ‘Early Cambrian Doushantuo-type Microfossils from Mongolia: Implications for Calibrating Animal Molecular Clocks’. Flash talk given at the 3rd Geobiology Society Conference, Banff, Canada.
3. Fitzgerald, D.M., Xiao, S., Mazzamuto, K.C., **Lole Durbin, O.**, & Narbonne, G.M. (2025). ‘Microfossils from background mudstone of the Ediacaran Trepassey Formation at Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve, Newfoundland’. Flash talk given by D. Fitzgerald at the 3rd Geobiology Society Conference, Banff, Canada.
4. **Lole Durbin, O.**, Vayda, P., Fitzgerald, D.M., & Xiao, S. (2025). ‘Microfossils of the Ediacaran Shuurgat Formation, Zavkhan Terrane, Southwest Mongolia’. Poster presentation given at Virginia Tech Institute of Critical and Applied Sciences Research Symposium 2025, Blacksburg, VA.
5. **Lole Durbin, O.**, Vayda, P., Fitzgerald, D.M., & Xiao, S. (2025). ‘Microfossils of the Ediacaran Shuurgat Formation, Zavkhan Terrane, Southwest Mongolia’. Oral presentation given at Virginia Tech Geosciences Research Symposium 2025, Blacksburg, VA.
6. **Lole Durbin, O.**, Anttila, E.S.C., Briggs, D.E.G., Macdonald, F.A., & Anderson, R.P. (2025). ‘Doushantuo-type Microfossils in Earliest Cambrian Rocks of Mongolia’. Poster presentation given at GSA Southeast, Harrisonburg, VA.
7. **Lole Durbin, O.**, Anttila, E.S.C., Macdonald, F.A., & Anderson, R.P. (2024). ‘Doushantuo-type Microfossils in Latest Ediacaran-Cambrian Rocks of Mongolia’. Poster presentation given at Progressive Palaeontology, Bristol, UK.

# MEMBERSHIPS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student Member of The Palynological Society since 2025  Student Member of The Geological Society of America since 2024  Student Member of The Palaeontological Association since 2023 |  |  |
| Student Member of The Geological Society of London since 2021 |  |  |
| Student Member of The Paleontological Society since 2017 |  |  |