

2003 Expedition to Niger

University of Chicago

Communication #1

FROM: Paul C. Sereno
TO: 2003 Expedition members
DATE: August 8, 2003
RE: **2003 Expedition to Niger: Basic information**

Greetings! *Communication #1* is designed to update my files on expedition participants and provide basic information about the expedition. PLEASE READ CAREFULLY. This is private correspondence; do not make this information available to other people except as needed for your personal affairs. I have included the following:

- (1) *Personnel Information* page--return to Sereno immediately
- (2) *Document & Medical Preparation* page
- (3) *Background Information*
- (4) *Schedule & Schedule Explanation*
- (6) *Personnel & Team Lists*
- (7) *Personal Documents, Gear & Sundries*

Personnel Information

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1) Passport (*attach copy for my record)

Nationality _____
Passport Number _____
Place of Issue _____
Date of Issue _____
Date of Birth _____

2) Medical Information

a) Blood type _____

b) Vaccinations/pills planned prior to departure (circle)

Yellow Fever	Meningococous (optional)
Polio Booster	Typhoid
Diphtheria/Tetanus	Hepatitis A
Mefloquine (Malaria) pills (1 per week plus 4)	Hepatitis B

c) Medical problems or conditions

Medicinal allergies (e.g., penicillin):

Food allergies (e.g., seafood):

Other allergies (e.g., hay fever, insect bites):

d) Prescription drugs you may take:

e) Health Insurance Information

3) Emergency Contact Information

Name :
Relationship:
Telephone:
Address:

4) Personal Contact Information

Phone/fax/telephone (from now until September departure)

1) Document Information

You must have a **valid passport** and a **yellow vaccination card (WHO card)** with a record of your vaccinations. You can get the yellow card when you get your vaccinations and staple it in your passport. You should make photocopies of all important documents, including passport, WHO card, health insurance, airline itinerary, prescriptions, etc. Potential drivers (Sereno, Lyon, Peterson, Nagurski, Miller) should get an AAA **international drivers license**.

2) Visas

Wendy Taylor (Project Manager of the lab) is in the process of getting the visa forms prepared. You should have a minimum of 5 passport photos on hand. Two are needed for the visa. You should always have 2 extra in case you need to replace your passport. The final photo is useful if someone needs to meet you but does not know what you look like. Suitable photos may be purchased at an office on the ground floor of the Admin Bldg. for those on campus.

3) Medical Precautions Required

Each person must:

- ◆ Ensure that all vaccinations are received and/or are up-to-date.
- ◆ Obtain a yellow vaccination card (WHO card) showing inoculations for:
 - Hepatitis A Typhoid
 - Hepatitis B Yellow Fever

**start soon (esp. Hep B, shots 1 & 2); all can't be taken at once; also the oral Typhoid vaccine is preferably to injected but it requires one week to administer.
- ◆ Get malaria pills (Mefloquine [Lariam] or an alternative)
 - Pills (1 per wk.) need to be taken *2 weeks* before and after entry into a malarial zone.
 - Those entering/leaving Niger (Sep 22-Nov 15), for example, need 11 pills (2 + 7 + 2 = 11 pills).

4) Optional Precautions

Meningococcus and cholera immunizations are optional.

Background Information

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General Background. For general information about the Sahara, the best available travel book is the *Sahara Handbook* (Simon Glen, 1990, 3rd ed., Roger Lascelles (publisher) 519 pp., paperback). It can be hard to find, necessary to order, and expensive (\$47). It is distributed by Hunter Publishing, Inc., 155 Riverside Drive, NY, NY 10024. A copy will be on hand during the expedition.

Popular account (see also www.projectexploration.org):

- 1996 P. C. Sereno. Africa's Dinosaur Castaways. *National Geographic*, June 1996.
2001 P. C. Sereno. SuperCroc. *National Geographic*, December 1996.

Technical articles:

- 1994 Sereno, P. C., J. A. Wilson, H. C. E. Larsson, D. B. Dutheil, H.-D. Sues. Early Cretaceous dinosaurs from the Sahara. *Science* 266:267-271.
- 1996 Sereno, P. C., D. B. Dutheil, M. Iarochene, H. C. E. Larsson, G. H. Lyon, P. M. Magwene, C. A. Sidor, D. J. Varricchio, J. A. Wilson. Predatory dinosaurs from the Sahara and Late Cretaceous faunal differentiation. *Science* 272:986-991.
- 1998 Sereno, P. C., A. L. Beck, D. B. Dutheil, B. Gado, H. C. E. Larsson, G. H. Lyon, J. D. Marcot, O. W. M. Rauhut, R. W. Sadlier, C. A. Sidor, D. J. Varricchio, G. P. Wilson, J. A. Wilson. A long-snouted predatory dinosaur from Africa and the evolution of spinosaurids. *Science*, 282:1298-1302.
- 1999 Sereno, P. C., A. L. Beck, D. B. Dutheil, H. C. E. Larsson, G. H. Lyon, B. Moussa, R. W. Sadlier, C. A. Sidor, D. J. Varricchio, G. P. Wilson, J. A. Wilson. Cretaceous sauropods from the Sahara and the uneven rate of skeletal evolution among dinosaurs. *Science*, 286:1342-1347.
- 2001 Sereno, P. C., H. C. E. Larsson, C. A. Sidor, and B. Gado. The giant crocodyliform *Sarcosuchus* from the Cretaceous of Africa. *Science* 294:1516-1519.

The following websites have information on Niger:

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-sru/inatl/longterm/worldref/country/niger.htm>

(Washington Post; carries archived articles about Niger)

<http://travel.state.gov/niger.html> (State Dept. Info sheet)

<http://www.tripprep.com/index.html> (Travel Health Online; see "country summary")

<http://www.travel-finder.com/search/Niger.html>

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/io/niger1.html> (see Niger info.)

<http://www.ph.kcl.ac.uk/local/cia/1994/176.html> (CIA world facts; last update 1994)

<http://www.sil.org/ethnologue/countries/Nige.html> (languages of Niger)

http://iucn.org/places/niger_co.html

<http://www.txdirect.net/users/jmayer/about.html>

or <http://www.txdirect.net/~jmayer/cet.html> (political update)

FIELD SCHEDULE

2003 Expedition to Niger

September 11 to November 18 (69 days)

Field Plan: We plan to work in 4 basic areas. First we will re-visit the Cenomanian to collect some bones of a titanosaur and re-scout the terrain. Then we prospect to the north and west, examining low exposures. We move the camp to new Cenomanian outcrop. We return to Agadez for the forum, take a side-trip to Gadoufaoua to relocate and collect a skull of *Sarcosuchus* and finally we excavate whatever needs to be finished in the Cenomanian in the north.

Arrival and Set-Up (15 days)

Sep 11 Peterson Bozeman—>Chicago
Sereno & Peterson, Chicago→Paris
Sep 12 *Advance team* (Sereno, Peterson, Dutheil), Paris→Niamey
Sep 13-22 Get permissions, vehicle check, arrange truck
Sep 21-22 *Support team*, Chicago→Paris→Niamey (arrive 3 pm)
Sep 23-24 Team travels, Niamey to Agadez (depart 5 am)
Sep 25 Arrange base in Agadez, plan guard

Cenomanian phase I--Sep 26 to Oct 18 (23 days)

Camp I
Camp II

Forum in Agadez--Oct 19 to 21 (3 days)

Oct 19 Prepare for forum
Oct 20-21 Forum

Gadoufaoua--Oct 22-28 (7 days)

Cenomanian phase II--Oct 29 to Nov 8 (12 days)

Camp III
Camp IV

Departure (8 days)

Nov 10-11 Arrange supplies in Agadez, load truck with jackets, supplies
Nov 12 Travel to Niamey
Nov 15 *Support team*, Niamey→Chicago (Paris)
Nov 16-17 Load container; arrange final details in Niamey
Nov 18 Sereno, Peterson, & Dutheil, Niamey→Paris—>Chicago

2003 Expedition to Niger

University of Chicago
Personnel

Team Lists

Advance Team (3)

- 1 Didier Dutheil
- 2 Nels Peterson
- 3 Paul Sereno

Support Team (9)

- 1 Ronan Allain
- 2 Andrew Gray
- 3 Carol Gudanowski
- 4 Michael Hettwer
- 2 Jeff Stiver
- 6 Gabrielle Lyon
- 7 Luke Mahler
- 8 Joshua Miller
- 9 Brian Nagurski
- 10-14 Boube Gaddo and Nigeriennes

Terminators (3)

- 1 Didier Dutheil
- 2 Nels Peterson
- 4 Paul Sereno

Documents

- 1) Valid driver's license and AAA International Driver's License for primary drivers—
312.372.1818—100 W. Randolph
- 2) Passport and 5 extra passport photos.
- 3) Photocopy of passport, driver's license and AAA International Driver's License, WHO card, health insurance, prescriptions (medical, eyeglasses, etc).
- 4) Vaccination certificate (i.e., yellow fever in passport)

Money

- You could pick up some French francs (fixed exchange with CFA, the currency in Niger), but this is not necessary.
- Traveler's checks are less useful in Africa.
- U.S. dollars can be used (enough for souvenirs, special foods, sundries etc.)

Vaccinations/pills

- 1) Yellow Fever
Polio Booster
Diphtheria Tetanus
Hepatitis B (optional)
- 2) Meningococcus (optional)
Typhoid (oral)
- 3) Hepatitis A (1 week before leaving)
Malaria

Personal Gear

- ◆ personal tent, 2-person (with substantial stakes; the longer the better)
- ◆ sleeping pad
- ◆ sleeping bag
- ◆ small rugged backpack (for day use—few zippers, they won't last)
- ◆ compass
- ◆ flashlight & holder or headlamp (extra batteries & bulbs)
- ◆ knife
- ◆ field notebooks, journals
- ◆ writing utensils
- ◆ camera & film (& extra batteries)
- ◆ a bag for film that is sand proof
- ◆ water bottles (at least 2 liters total)
- ◆ pocket French dictionary
- ◆ safety whistle
- ◆ eyepiece magnifier (optional)
- ◆ rock hammer (optional)

Clothing

- ◆ sun hat & bandana
- ◆ warm jacket for cold nights & mornings (fleece or down; warm hat)
- ◆ long pants (at least 2) (1 pair should be good enough to meet with officials etc—women may opt for a long skirt)
- ◆ shorts (2 pair)
- ◆ light long-sleeved flannel shirt (2)
- ◆ T-shirts (many)
- ◆ one decent shirt
- ◆ one pair rugged field boots (break them in)
- ◆ camp shoes/sandals
- ◆ socks (many pairs)—bring liner socks also
- ◆ underwear
- ◆ bras
- ◆ towel
- ◆ belt

Miscellaneous

- ◆ sunglasses (2-3 cheap pair)
- ◆ sunscreen & chapstick (spf 15 or greater)
- ◆ alarm clock or watch alarm
- ◆ personal toiletries
- ◆ personal medications, vitamins, lotions
- ◆ extra eyeglasses (contacts not recommended)
- ◆ personal documents/valuables (document holder/carrier so they're all in one place)
- ◆ books/tapes/toys etc.
- ◆ small gifts or mementos
- ◆ ziplocks (lots) or other type of containers to store dust-sensitive things (cameras, eyeglasses, etc)
- ◆ shoe goo/barge cement
- ◆ insect repellent (optional)
- ◆ sewing kit
- ◆ extra batteries for any electronics—the ones in Niger are no good, they often leak and will destroy your radio/gps etc
- ◆ 2 large soft duffels, preferably with combination padlocks

Comments

- 1) General--All personal gear should fit into 2 large soft duffel bags. We plan to load these into a cargo container that will leave with expedition supplies on July 1. Almost all of your things should be in those two bags, except your documents and other small personal gear. Remember, do not try to take as a carry-on a geologic hammer or other sharp tools--these will be confiscated. These items should all be in your bags in the container. Make sure you buy everything by mid June and **pack it by June 20** so that we can load it into the container on time. Then we need only worry about carry-ons (and maybe some last-minute things) on the flights to Niamey. Pack as light as possible but be sure to bring enough warm clothes for the cooler nights. If you plan to bring anything electronic or otherwise unusual, let Gabe or me know so we are not surprised at a police check. Anything that needs to be protected from dust should be packed in a ziplock, camera case, or water-proof bag.
- 2) Documents--Make sure these documents are in order. Photocopies of all items is a good idea.
- 3) Money--Best not to carry large quantities of money. Best to arrive with French francs, which in Niger can be converted to the local currency, CFA, on the street or in shops. Keep your currency simple, as you must list it upon entering African countries. Undoubtedly, you will want to purchase local jewelry and crafts. I would recommend that you carry a majority of your money in a money pouch or other concealable bag or belt. And it might simplify your return trip by having some US dollars in your stash to get transport back to your place after arriving in the airport.
- 4) Vaccinations/pills--Make sure you have appropriate medical vaccinations. The major vaccinations are good for more than one year. Mefloquine pills, for example, are good for several years. We will have good medical kits in camp and in every vehicle. If you have not already done so, please inform me of your blood type. Wild animals are essentially non-existent in the field. However, do not pet the camels. The most common nuisances will be scorpions and ticks. In this regard, boots and long pants are probably preferable.

- 5) Equipment--Do not bring your own short-wave radios, as these may be confiscated at checkpoints. Such equipment may be viewed as having potential military value to you or someone else. A small, two-person dome tent is probably preferable. You must limit your luggage to two large, soft-case bags (including clothing, tent, sleeping bag and sundries). We must travel in large groups in small vehicles--do not exceed these limits. Sleeping bags need not be for extreme cold, as the temperature will not reach freezing (although it might come close!). Keep in mind not to attempt to carry onto the airplane personal equipment, such as a geology hammer, knives, etc., as these will be confiscated at the airport before departure. If you bring camera equipment, be prepared to risk damage (from sand or dust) or loss (always a potential of theft despite the locked boxes that we will have in camp). Keep your camera equipment wrapped in zip-lock plastic bags.
- 6) Clothes--In general, you will want to protect yourself from the sun, despite considerable dry heat. This may mean that some of you will prefer long-sleeved shirts. Keep in mind that short pants are not the custom in West Africa, so it would be better to wear long pants and at least a short-sleeved shirt or T-shirt (rather than a tank top) when traveling to an oasis or other towns and villages. For comfort's sake, make sure clothing is 100% cotton or other natural fiber. Bring enough changes because washing will be limited in the field due to limited water. Clothes washing will most likely occur every two weeks at the hotel in Agadez. Finally, keep in mind that we will be returning to Chicago in late November. In this regard, I would bring a down vest and sweater and build up a few layers which will help keep you warm as the nights get cooler in the desert. We have always managed to experience the full range on each expedition, from 40° -130° F.
- 7) Sundries--Bring enough lip balm and other comforts so that you do not depend on someone else's supplies. Sunglasses (several pairs) with UV protection are a must to avoid eye damage. Lotion with SP protection of 15 or more is best to avoid adverse reaction to sun and heat. Leave any extra ID's, credit cards, or office keys at home. Bring only what you'll need to get back inside your apartment.
- 8) Photography--In many African countries, photography is forbidden near "sensitive" areas, which include airports, government buildings & offices, radio or TV stations, mining or industrial locales, train lines or transportation hubs, any building or area run by or staffed by military or police, sometimes even open public areas such as markets. Use your best judgment or ask if there is someone nearby.