

FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

JANUARY 2011



Message from the President

Greetings to all and a Happy New Year. As we begin a new year, we look ahead and find that we are in good financial shape. Our treasurer has completed the annual financial report and we have a sizeable inventory of club merchandise. Our Fossil Show in December was a financial success and most certainly a wonderful community event. Looking ahead, we will have our annual fossil auction in March. Our auction is a fun event that gives our members an opportunity to acquire a variety of fossils while raising funds for worthy causes. We thank those who donate fossil specimens for this event. At this time, about half of the number of items we need for the auction have been donated. This means that we need some more items and would appreciate your support.

Last year, our club voted to provide scholarship funds for deserving students pursuing advanced degrees in paleontology at UF and USF. We also made a donation to the Calusa Nature Center. Assuming the auction will be successful, we anticipate having sufficient funds available to make

similar grants this year. The staff at each of these organizations has expressed their appreciation for our generosity and they in turn have graciously responded to be speakers at our club meetings. In fact, Dr. Bruce McFadden, Curator of Vertebrate Paleontology at the University of Florida Museum of Natural History has accepted our request and will be the speaker at our January meeting. He always makes a great presentation and we look forward to having him with us.

We will hold our January and February meetings in the Planetarium at the Calusa Nature Center mainly because we anticipate much larger attendance than we normally have. If you recall, last year when Dr. Robin Brown spoke, we had about 90 people, which is just about 20 more than we can accommodate at the Iona House. We plan to return to the Iona House in April.

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We know that many of you are eager to go hunting in the field and we have planned some trips for February and March. And of course, we will have our usual trips to the pit on Sundays throughout the year. The Peace River water level is below normal and fossiling is good. There are several places on the river that you can walk into so a boat is not really needed. If you plan to collect any fossils other than shark teeth, remember to have your fossil permit with you. Good luck to everyone and bring in some finds for Show and Tell or write a brief story for your newsletter.

The program for January will be new business, financial report, door prizes, speaker presentation, refreshments, club merchandise, trip sign-up, Show and Tell, and the usual raffle. Please bring your donations for the auction to the January meeting and also feel free to donate items for the monthly raffle.

Best regards and happy hunting,
Bill

JANUARY MEETING

The January meeting will be held on Thursday, January 20th, 2011 at the Calusa Nature Center Planetarium. The speaker for the evening is Dr. Bruce McFadden from the University of Florida.

E-MAIL OR SNAIL MAIL

The Club would like to send out the newsletter via email to all members who have email capability. The Club currently mails the newsletter to about 20 members and will continue to do so unless the members ask for email transmission. The bottom line is that email is no cost to the Club. Please indicate your preference on your membership renewal form. The Club appreciates your support.

OFFICERS

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COMMITTEES

Cherie Neat, Newsletter
Curt Klug, Web Master
Bill Shaver, Speakers
Michael Orchin, Auctioneer
Kathy Arnold, Club Merchandise
Ray Seguin, Membership
Gunther Lobish, Pit Trips
Michael Siciliano, Raffle and Dive Trips
Coby Pawlowski, Youth Activities Director
Hollie Tiner, Club Photographer
Gunther Lobish, Invertebrate Education
Louis Steiffel, Vertebrate Education

REFRESHMENTS COMMITTEE

The Club needs volunteers to bring in snacks and beverages for the January and February meetings. Please sign up. You will be reimbursed for your expenses. Please see one of the Directors or Officers to volunteer. You will be appreciated.

REFRESHMENTS

Thanks to all of you who volunteered to bring in refreshments (snacks and beverages) for your fellow members. The monthly meeting for January and February will be held in the Planetarium at the Calusa Nature Center so snacks will be light due to lack of space in that facility. Volunteers are always welcome and appreciated.

SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

January

We are pleased to have Dr. Bruce McFadden from the University of Florida Museum of Natural History as our speaker for the January 2011 Club Meeting.

February

Southwest Florida Fossil Club is having its Annual Fossil Auction on February 12th, at Edison College in Punta Gorda. Viewing starts at 5 pm and the auction starts at 5:30 pm. See their website for detailed directions.

Burrowing Owls Event at Cape Coral Rotary Park, February 26th, 2011

March

Tampa Bay Fossil Fest at Florida State Fairgrounds, March 13th and 14th, 2011 (see Tampa Bay Fossil Club web site for details)

Fossil Club of Lee County Annual Fossil Auction at Zion Lutheran Church on 7401 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL beginning at 7 pm on March 17th, 2011

Cape Coral Fossil and History Fest at Rotary Park on March 26th, 2011 (10am-4pm)

April

19th Annual Venice Shark's Tooth Festival, April 8th, 9th, and 10th, 2011



WEB SITES & LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

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Fossil Club of Lee County: www.fcolc.com

Museum of Natural History @ Gainesville
www.flmnh.ufl.edu/

Florida Vertebrate Fossil Permit <http://flmnh.ufl.edu/natsci/vertpaleo/vppermmit.htm>

Southwest Florida Fossil Club
www.southwestfloridafossilclub.com

Orlando Fossil Club
www.floridafossilhunters.com

PEACE RIVER Water Levels
www.canoeoutpost.com

Mark Renz's Fossil Expeditions
www.fossilx@earthlink.net

Smithsonian Natural History Museum
www.mnh.si.edu
Florida Fossil Clubs
www.fossil-treasures-of-florida.com

Picking Up Isolated Native American Artifacts
<http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/archaeology/underwater/finds>

Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium 3450 Ortiz Av, Fort Myers Tel 239-275-3435
www.calusanature.com

Imaginarium 200 Cranford Ave, Fort Myers
www.cityftmyers.com/imaginarium

Southwest Florida Museum of History 2300 Peck St., Fort Myers www.swflmuseumofhistory.com

The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, 3075 Sanibel-Captiva Rd, Sanibel, FL www.shellmuseum.org

Randell Research Center PO Box 608, Pineland, FL
www.flmnh.ufl.edu/RRC/

Cracker Museum at Pioneer Park in Zolfo Springs, FL Tel 863.735.0119

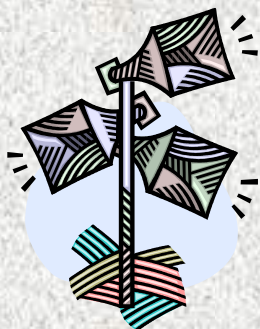
Lost in Time, 4719 69th Street, N. St Petersburg, FL 33709, Tel. 727-541-2567 Owner Brian Evensen

Peace River Wildlife Center
3400 West Marion Avenue (Ponce De Leon Park)
Punta Gorda, Florida
www.peaceriverwildlifecenter.com

Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife Burrowing Owls
www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE CLUB NEWSLETTER

The Fossil Club of Lee County publishes a very fine newsletter each month. The success of any such publication is not only the layout and artwork, but the appropriateness of the content. The Club thanks all those of you who find and share fossil related stories and photos with us. We especially thank Coby Pawlowski for his monthly column focused mainly at the youth, but also and always of interest to all. We also thank Louis Steiffel of the education committee for his informative and interesting articles. We also thank Louis and Gunther Lobish for sharing their knowledge of fossils with the Club at each monthly meeting. The current editor of our newsletter is Cherie Neat who is doing a super job and we also want to thank some of her predecessors who also gave their time and energy to put out a timely newsletter. So thanks to our previous editors: Bob Wood, Cheryl Mitchell, and Sandy Schwartz. Also, let's thank Curt Klug, our webmaster who maintains several years of our past newsletters. We also need to recognize Holly Tiner, our Club photographer, who sends us some excellent photos for the newsletter. Our Club has over 150 members. Each and every one of you are most welcome to make a contribution to your newsletter. Just send your information via email or slow mail to Bill Shaver and it will be considered and credit will be acknowledged.



SUGGESTIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

The Club Officers and Directors encourage all members to offer suggestions or recommendations. It is your Club! Speak to your representatives or write an email or letter if you have any suggestions. Your inputs will be considered and appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP DUES



Please pay your annual dues at the January 20th, 2011 meeting or mail your application to The Fossil Club of Lee County, 2124 Harvard Avenue, Fort Myers, FL 33907. See web site www.fcolc.com to obtain the membership form or pick one up at the January meeting. Dues are as follows: Single \$15.00, Couple \$17.00, Family \$20.00, or for a Child Joining Alone \$8.00. If you joined or renewed your membership in October, November, or December 2010, you are good for the year 2011. Thanks for supporting your Club!

SPEAKER PROGRAM

Dr. Bruce J. McFadden, Curator of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Florida Museum of Natural History at the University of Florida will speak about Fossils from Panama: A once-in-a-century opportunity. Recent excavations to widen the Panama Canal have uncovered extraordinary new fossils, including bear-dogs, rhinos, and camels that lived in the ancient rain forests 15 million years ago. Dr. McFadden's talk will describe a new project led by the University of Florida that relates to this once-in-a-century expansion of the Panama Canal and the paleontological discoveries that are being made there.

Dr. McFadden has been a professor of paleontology at the University since 1977. He received a B.S. degree from Cornell University (1971) and his PhD from Columbia University in 1976. His area of interest is extinct mammals from the Americas and how science is communicated to the public. He is the author of more than 150 scientific articles and the 1992 book entitled "Fossil Horses." In 2009-2010, he spent a year at the National Science Foundation in Arlington, Virginia managing programs that improve how children and families learn about science in museums. Some of his recent field areas include Florida, Nebraska, China, Peru and Panama.

Fossil Field Trip News

Several Club members have been hunting the rivers despite the cold weather and cold water. The water levels are low and some places are now accessible without the use of a boat. The subject of a Club trip is on the agenda for the January meeting. The Club also has access to some pits and sign up sheets will be available at the next meeting.

COBY'S COLUMN



Nurse shark teeth

Fossil Auction

ANNUAL FOSSIL AUCTION

It's a tradition! The Fossil Club of Lee County will hold its annual Fossil Auction in March. This great event will be held on March 17th, 2011 at the Zion Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall on 7401 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL. Every year the Club auctions off over 100 fossils and related items for the benefit of its members. It is also a major fund raising event with the proceeds being made available for scholarships and donations to worthy causes. Many of the Club members donate fossil specimens, rocks and minerals, books, and other items from their personal collections. At this point in time, about 50 items have been donated for the event. The Club needs about 50 more items and asks all members to consider making a contribution for this worthwhile event. Please bring your donations to the January 20th or February 17th meeting. All items will be appreciated.

How many fossils have you passed up sifting in the Peace River? More than you know. Some of the most looked over, passed up, and forgotten fossils around are micro-fossils. Micro-fossils range from the tiny frog and snake bones to the rare nurse shark teeth. The main reason that micro-fossils are looked over is because most screen boxes have a 1/4 inch screen in them, in which the micro-fossils pass right through the screen. For micro-fossils, the best tool for gathering them is the plastic colander in your kitchen (With the tiny holes in it). Collecting micro-fossils is a very time-consuming task that requires ALOT of patience. To start collecting micro-fossils, I would suggest going to your favorite Peace River hangout, get in the gravel and start digging. (This usually requires another person to help you) Use your 1/4 inch screen box and put the colander underneath so the sand and small gravel falls into it. You can usually just put it under another person who is sifting in the river, they usually don't mind. Sift the colander to where only tiny pieces of gravel are left. Dump that gravel into a one-gallon bag (try to keep water out). When you get back home, let the gravel dry out, and then carefully sort through it with tweezers. You will be surprised with what you find.

Happy Hunting,
Coby Pawlowski

IDENTIFICATION OF DUGONG FOSSILS

by Louis Steiffel

This time of the year most members of the club will try and get out a few times to fossil hunt the Peace River. We find a large assortment of vertebrate fossils, many of which we are not sure of the ID. A common one found that seems to stump many people is the top process from a Dugong vertebrae. The *Metaxatherium Floridanum* Dugong, an ancient, extinct sea cow, is usually represented by their dense rib bones. However, sometimes we find a worn down vertebrae, but more often find just the top process from that vertebra. These pictures show a few of them and also where it attaches. I hope this may help some of you that were confused, and want to know what your fossils may be.

