



FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

MARCH 2015

Letter from the President

Fossil hunting is mighty tough this year, so far! We wait anxiously each rainy season for the rains to stop and the water levels to drop in the rivers and creeks so we can do our thing. However, this year is different. It is March already and the water has been too high to hunt, most places, and the season is ticking away! Of course, you can still collect online, and at fossil shows. The Southwest Fossil Society provided an opportunity with their fossil auction last month. And, of course, our auction is THIS month. But, most of us want to get out as often as we can and search for those fossil treasures on our own. Unfortunately, I see that the recent rains have caused the Peace River water levels to shoot up again to at least double what we need it to be. And, it is still rising. I say, come to our auction and get your fossil fix on!

This year's annual fossil auction has a lot of great stuff! Something for everyone! Plan on coming! The viewing is from 5-6 and the auction starts at 6. We stay until it's done! There will be great bargains all the way to the end! We have put in a lot of work to make this happen, and many members have donated some awesome items. I really hope to see you all there! It is one of our main fund raiser for the year, and also helps fund our scholarship program.

The Fossil Club of Lee County has the largest paleontological libraries of any fossil club in Florida. Possibly in the USA. And our librarian and curator, David Sheehey has done a great job organizing and maintaining the library. Unfortunately, David is moving, and must give up his position. At the most recent meeting I announced this and also asked for a volunteer to step up and be the new librarian. One of our board members and active club member, Don Lindsey agreed to do the job! Thank you Don, for taking on this important task

This leads me to my next topic--the library and members reading the books. I've noticed a

decrease in usage of the library. It is a great lending library and available, free of charge, to any member. But, in this digital age, where we can be "always on and always on you", the trend seems to be less books and more online searching. However, to me, that is sort of like always using a GPS to get someplace. You find the destination, but you've missed the journey. And you may not have learned enough to repeat the same trip without using the GPS again. If we automatically go online, to Google, to the FOSSIL FORUM, to Wikipedia, to face book, etc., we MAY find the answer, but we miss all the knowledge that is needed to arrive at that answer on our own. Books prevent that. You learn more from books. You get it right more often by reading than just a terse, concise answer online. I am noticing members who own NO fossil books. Zero! And they don't borrow any from the library. Yet they are always asking for identification, often of basic common fossils that is in every fossil book we use. Books such as Florida's Fossils, by Robin Brown, Vertebrate Fossils: A Neophytes Guide by Frank Kocsis Jr., The Fossil Vertebrates of Florida by Richard Hulbert Jr., and even Fossil Shark Teeth of the world, by Joe Cocke, will all give you a much deeper understanding of our fossil world, especially here in Florida. These books, ranging from a everything you need to know to just many pictures for ID, are all very interesting to anyone with a passion for fossil hunting and collecting, and provide the overview and in-depth knowledge that a simple online search cannot possibly do. If you have been actively hunting and collecting for several years here and still do not know



Continued on page 2

the id of a porpoise vertebra, or a sloth vertebra or a piece of mammoth tooth enamel or a sting ray grinding mill, then by all means, use the library! And, if you want to have the book in your own home to keep, our merchandise store sells many of the more helpful books at pennies over our cost.

Remember this, also. You can send a picture of a fossil to an online site, hoping to get an id, and you may get back eight different answers/guesses. And most are by others who only know what they have learned from online searches. But that one person with the right answer learned the old fashioned way, but you won't even know it's the right one, so you are still in a quandary. But--think about this--what about all the ones you didn't ask about or fossils you didn't even keep because you weren't sure if it was something? Yes!! Think about it!

Several years ago, I brought up the subject of having an on-line fossil ID web site, to Dr. Bruce McFadden, of the FLMNH. He thought the idea may have merit but needed funding to accomplish, especially since I envisioned using the museum's collections as the basis for this site. We were close, with almost every fossil club in the state agreeing to help fund this project, except one. And club's members would travel to Gainesville to help photograph the fossils needed for the site. However, without everyone's cooperation this idea/project failed to move past the preliminary talking stage. But, this site would have almost all the bones and dentition, several views, from each animal we find as a fossil! You would be able to match up your find until you found the right one. However, even though that didn't make it, Bruce has taken the same principle and expanded it, through other funding, into THE FOSSIL PROJECT. This site is intended to provide resources for fossil enthusiasts, all over the USA and even the world. Along with another site I DIG BIO, we may be able to eventually use online sites to get accurate answers to our fossil questions. The fossil project website info inside this newsletter, and I encourage members to check it out.

So, you are asking, first you say to read the books and not depend on the online sites so heavily, then you promote an online site! And, you're right! I am saying both things. You can get more of an overview from the books and if you must go online, then use the right site. Change is a part of life and we have no choice but to accept it. But the smart person makes that change work for him/her. You have choices and I am just trying to help steer you in a direction that may help! Good luck! Happy fossiling!! See you at the auction meeting!

Louis Stieffel
President

Second First Floridians First Americans Conference will be in the Monticello, Florida Opera House on October 1, 2, 3, 2015. We will present 22 speakers and an Exhibit hall will include displays of pre-Clovis artifacts and an artifact identification booth where private collectors can learn the age of their finds. Because of the stature of the Page-Ladson site, our speakers include Dennis Stanford of the Smithsonian, Michael Waters of TAMU and others, some of the foremost Paleolithic scholars in the Western Hemisphere. The Conference is free to the public. Registration is open at <http://www.firstfloridiansconference.com>.

Contact: Anne H. Holt, Coordinator, ahholt@ahholt.com, 850-576-0721

FCOLC Meeting Minutes February 19, 2015

Louis Stieffel called the meeting to order

77 Members present

Discussion was held on the dollar raffle

Discussion was held on the door prize drawing and merchandise for sale.

Dave Sheehey is moving and will not be the club librarian anymore. Don Lindsey volunteered to take his place as the new club librarian.

March 19th meeting is the annual fossil auction. It will start at 6:00 will auction preview at 5:00 pm.

Please remember payment for auction purchases will be cash or check only. No credit cards.

Elections will be held in April. Anyone seeking to hold office to please let Louis know.

FCOLC Fossil Show will again be at the Shell Factory with the next date being February 6th 2016. This new date should help with increased attendance.

Speaker was Victor Perez, jr. He was very informative and well received.

Lunch Break was held. The food refreshments were provided by Leslie Stieffel and the Drinks provided by the Rosencrants.

Trip scheduled for March 17th is pending due to the water levels which have been too high.

Request went out for members to pay 2015 dues.

Upcoming shows for other clubs were mentioned.

Members reminded to stop at Shell Factory and see new displays in the fossil museum.

members were reminded to take advantage of The Fossil Project website.

A raise in membership fees was suggested by Al Govin, \$20 single \$30 family.

Joe Larkin suggested raising allowance for monthly food allowance, both that and membership fees will be discussed at the next board meeting.

Secretary

Al Govin

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Dean Hart.....941-979-8217

Dave Seehaver

Jeanne Seehaver

Don Lindsey

Jim Manderfield

COMMITTEES

Al Govin, Club Trips Director

Curt Klug, Web Master

Cherie Neat, Newsletter Developer

Sandy Schwartz, Badges,

Membership

Dave and Jeanne Seehaver,

Merchandise

Michael Siciliano, Raffle and Dive

Trips

Charles O'Connor, Speakers

Louis Stieffel, Auctioneer,

Vertebrate Education, Newsletter

editor, FOSSIL project

representative

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month, at Zion Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall.

Websites & Locations of Interest

Fossil Club of Lee County: www.fcolc.com

FCOLC, c/o Sandra Schwartz, 1821 SE 5th Terrace, Cape Coral, FL, 33990

The FCOLC website is a source for links to Fossil websites of interest, archived monthly club newsletters, details on club meetings and officers.

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

The Fossil Project www.myFOSSIL.org

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

Smithsonian Natural History Museum www.mnh.si.edu

Southwest Florida Museum of History 2031 Jackson St., Fort Myers www.MUSEUMofHISTORY.org

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

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

www.hardeecounty.net/crackertrailmuseum/about.html

Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife Burrowing Owls

www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org

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

www.calusanature.org

Imaginarium 2000 Cranford Ave, Fort Myers

www.i-sci.org

Florida Fossil Clubs

Southwest Florida Fossil Club

www.southwestfloridafossilclub.com

Tampa Bay Fossil Club

www.tampabayfossilclub.com

Orlando Fossil Club

www.floridafossilhunters.com

The Fossil Forum

www.thefossilforum.com/index.php

Fossil Treasures of Florida

www.fossil-treasures-of-florida.com

Florida Paleontological Society

<http://floridapaleosociety.com/>

Collecting Vertebrate Fossils on Florida state lands **requires** a permit. A fossil hunting permit is also part of being an ethical Florida fossil hunter.

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

Peace River Water Levels

<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/rt>

Picking Up Isolated Native American Artifacts www.flheritage.com/news/faq.cfm

If you find an Indian artifact, such as an arrowhead, on Florida state lands or river bottom, be aware that possession of an Indian artifact found on state lands after 2004 is a Class 3 Felony.

Events and things to do!!

Ongoing ~ A T-Rex named Sue!! Fl. Museum of Natural History. Jan.24 through September 13, 2015.

March

Ft Myers Beach Shrimp Festival 14-15th

St. Patrick's day bash at the Shell Factory -- 17th

Fossil Club of Lee County annual fossil auction--19th

Tampa Bay fossil club- Fossil fest--21-22nd

Cape Coral Fossil Show--28th

April

April Fool Day!--1st

Easter Sunday--5th

Ray Seguin's 91st birthday!--8th

Venice Shark Tooth Festival--10, 11, 12th

Cape Coral Cardboard boat regatta--17-18th

Facebook Posts



I lifted this picture from a face book post. Pretty bad, huh? SO, when we are out in the field, doing our fossil collecting, or anything else. please bring you trash back home to discard. And, why not bring some more that we can pick up, as well? Thanks, guys. We need to do our part to stop this sort of thing! Louis

Fossil Finds of the Month

I was lucky enough to find this lower jaw of a bear while hunting a creek bed. Due to high water in the Peace River, I found lower water in a creek. The previous week I discovered one complete side of an alligator jaw and we actually hoping to uncover more of that animal. But when I saw a canine sticking out the side of the shovel as I was putting it in the screen, I knew that wasn't alligator. After carefully extracting the jaw I put the shovel down and started rooting around in the hole with my hands, not wanting to break anything if there was more. AND--I found the other half of the jaw!! Like the alligator, this is quite old, but possibly not a true fossil. After it thoroughly dries I will do the burn test for protein and see how that turns out.

It is much larger than the two black bear jaws I compared it to, but I still think it may be from a black bear, but a very large one. I also dug up the rear of the skull of an alligator. I am not sure yet if it belongs to the jaw I found. I also found about six osteoderms and a vertebra, along with some unassociated gator teeth. Planning on getting back there and seeing what other treasures await!

Louis



Fossil Finds of the Month



Sloth Claw, found by Jack Boyce. Hunting with Joe Larkin.

The river was high, but they gave it a go anyway!



Pictures sent to Richard Hulbert, vertebrate collections manager at the FLMNH came back with this reply:

This is a very nice claw of *Megalonyx jeffersonii*. Claws of *Megalonyx* are relatively narrow compared to their size; in contrast those of *Paramylodon* which are wider. The larger claws of *Eremotherium* also tend to be narrow, but of the smaller claws can be broad. This generalization also holds for older members of their respective families, such as the megalonychid *Pliometanastes*.

I checked our on-line database for sloth claw images, but there are not yet that many posted. We will have to work on that.

Richard

Fossil Finds of the Month



Fossil Finds of the Month



From top left gator tooth, 2 gator scutes, 2 fish vertebrae, 2 dolphin inner ear bones, ray mouth plates, let side top to bottom: 2 tortoise spurs, deer ankle bone, deer tooth, and of course various shark teeth and partial vertebrae. There was of course the usual kids fossils I gave to Louis. Pretty good for not having the regular spots to hunt due to high water.
Al Govin

Fossil Finds of the Month

These are some fossils from Joe Larkin's recent trips with Jack Boyce to an unnamed creek. He was able to find somewhere to hunt that the water levels were acceptable. Way to go Joe!

I see A lot of different species here, including a sloth vertebra, a Giant Armadillo tooth and a great three-toed horse upper molar! That pristine Hemi is right at the 2" mark!!



Fossil Finds of the Month



AUCTION !!!

The Fossil Club of Lee County will be holding their **annual fossil auction** at the regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, **March 19, 2015**.

Viewing time will be from 5-6pm. Auction starts at 6pm and will proceed until finished.

Included are 100+ regular auction items, with several having multiple items, and also 3- silent auction items.

Please sign up for a bidder number when arriving, view the items for regular auction and feel free to bid on the silent auction items.

We are not set up to accept credit cards. However we will accept personal checks and cash.

We have instituted what we believe to be a more streamlined accounting operation, and hope to avoid the large checkout delay times experienced last year.

This year, we have something for everyone! From great fossil jewelry, terrific display items, Riker cases, and lots of collectables from Arrowheads to Giraffe bones to crystal clams!

Refreshments will be served. Come enjoy a nice time!

See you there!!

CAPE CORAL FOSSIL SHOW!!!

The annual **Cape Coral fossil show** will again be held at Rotary Park, 5505 Rose Garden Road, on **Saturday March 28, 2015!!** Come to Rotary Park and learn about Florida's pre-historic past and maybe take a piece home with you!

Fossils, Calusa art, gems, children's activities and more! 10:00 AM-4:00 PM , admission is just \$2 and children under 10 are free!

(Rotary Park is located right next door to the dog park, at the end of Pelican. Turn south onto Pelican from Cape Coral Parkway. Go to the stop sign. Look for the signs!)

Vendor spaces are still available. If interested, call for details @ 239-549-4606

Finding fossils in the river!

Every year, we anxiously await the rains to stop and the water to go down in the local rivers and creeks. Then we head to our favorite spot and commence to digging for treasures. If you use a screen with a 1/4" spacing, you will find a lot of fossils, but many will be small, and it will take you a long time to thoroughly search through all that small gravel. (***may as well find a place to sit, relax and take your time.***) If you use a 1/2" screen you will do a lot more digging (***Oh, my aching back!***!?), and sifting, but, I believe, you will find more fossils. (Those **small** ones go through the screen, however.) I ascribe to the **"whomever moves the most gravel--wins!!"** school of thought, but in that process it is important to do it properly. After all, you waited forever to have the river hutable. Then you packed up everything and drove there, and either walked to your honey-hole or boated there. So, after all this time and effort and digging, why would you not want to collect all the fossils you find? Yet, I see it all the time. Fossil hunters tossing collectable fossils away. I see them on the piles of discarded gravel, which, in fact, is the first place I hunt when I stop at a gravel bar. It's like picking candy off the shelf! So, I have a few suggestions which have worked well for me over the last two decades of doing this.

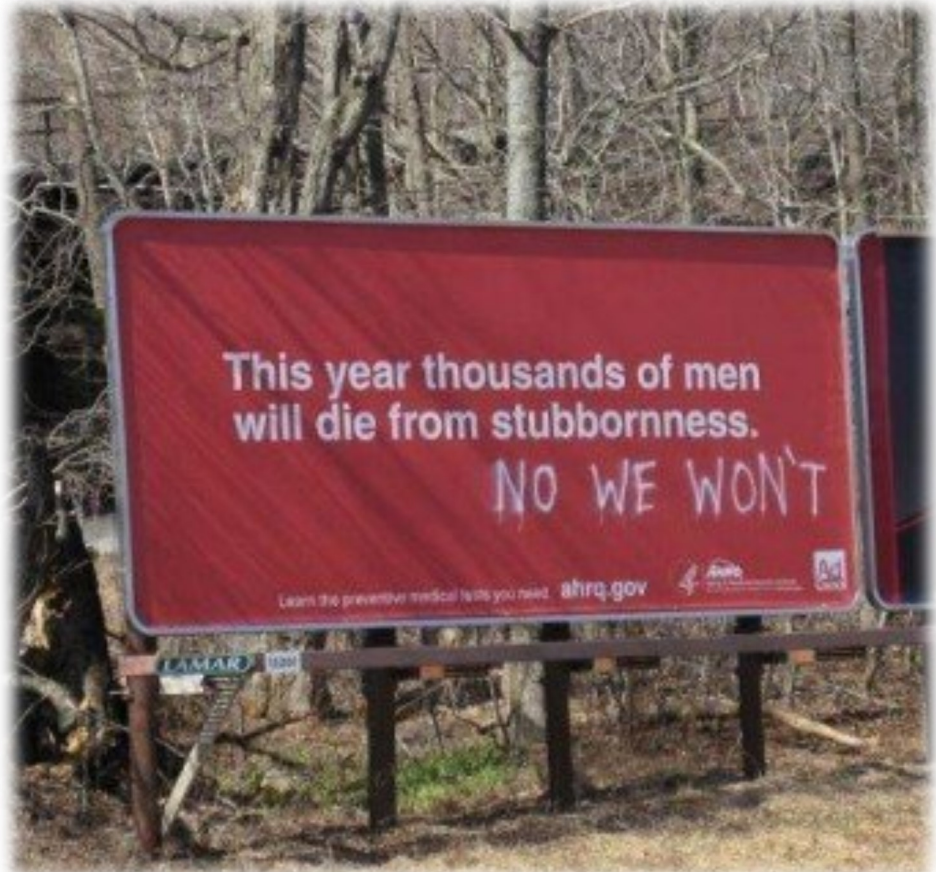
First--GET SOME FOSSIL BOOKS! READ THEM!! The more knowledgeable of what you are finding the better hunter you will be. Common discards I see are porpoise inner ear bones, stingray dermal spines, fish ballast bones, carpal and tarsal bones, and other fossils, which many hunters do not recognize. Most often these are in the most basic fossil books, readily available, if the collector would just read them. Google **may** be able to help you find the answer on a certain fossil you found and are trying to id, but it can't help you on the ones you discard. So, read a book! And, save ANY thing that may look interesting. You can always toss it later if it's nothing. I hear it many times, at the meeting, when members bring in show and tell items. Someone will say--What is that? Really? I found that, also, but didn't know what it was so I threw it back. !! When I hear this, I think--wow, really!! If that's the criteria for leaving it--because you didn't know what it was--then think how ludicrous that is. What if you found a sloth claw, or giant Armadillo, or even Glyptodont, but didn't know what it was? Hmmm....

Second--And even though you WILL object that this technique is not effective, I'm here to tell you it works! And, that technique is called **"the flip"** ! All it is, after you have thoroughly searched the gravel in your screen --the gravel you drove there to find and backbreakingly have dug and sifted--do not just throw it out!-- **FLIP IT!!** This means that since you have worked all the gravel to one side of your screen, to grasp both sides of the screen and by flicking both wrists, flip the gravel over! Like flipping an egg in the pan. That's all! And--I promise--you will be amazed at the number of fossils you thought were not there, and that you missed seeing! Do it! After you find shark teeth and other fossils you will always wonder--how could I have missed that? This very week, while digging and sifting, I searched my screen, and upon the flip, there in front of me was a 1 1/2" Hemipristis Snaggletooth shark tooth! Now--how could I have possibly not seen THAT? But, I'm telling you, this is one of the best hints I can tell you to do- the flip! The more you do it, the better you will get and will just automatically do it every time. One thing I can add, though, is to try it to the point where you believe it will

help. Once you get to that point you will actually look at the flipped fossils, not just a glance and an oh-well. Your eyes need to scan the entire screen of gravel. No need to poke through it all again, just a real good look. And flip it again, several times! I've found fossils on the 5th flip! And, folks, I've been doing this a LONG time. I still find it hard to believe how I could have missed these guys without the flip. **So--DO IT!!**

Third--Dig in someone's hole!! Yes, you heard me right! Most places in the Peace River, where most of us hunt, have gravel bars pockmarked with holes. Other fossil hunters have already been there, and have been digging away. Instead of trying to figure a place that, hopefully, no one has been in, **(Yeah! Good luck with THAT!)**, I look for the biggest, deepest hole I can find. Then I start digging **IN THAT HOLE!** My thought is--why do I want to dig someone's diggings, when I already know they did not toss their discarded gravel in the hole they were digging? And, sooner or later we all have to stop and go home, so just because the hole is dug, does not mean it is finished. I remember a few choice fossils I got almost immediately while digging someone's abandoned hole. One was a big, beautiful, perfect Giant beaver tooth, buried and hiding perhaps a half inch under the surface of the bottom of the hole. Another time, in a **very** popular gravel bar, I no sooner started digging in the bottom of a hole when I found a half of a Tapir jaw! So, I started rooting around with my hands and - YES!- up comes the other half! I still have that great Tapir jaw, with all the teeth, in my collection. this is only a couple of examples, but I have found much more. So, a final river hunting hint, unless you have a premonition to dig in a certain spot, just continue someone's hole! After all , they have done all the hard work for you!

Thank me later!! :-)
Louis





PALEO WORKSHOPS

Learn about Florida's prehistoric past in a FossilFest workshop! Experienced collectors will teach you how to find, identify, and preserve fossil treasures of your very own! All workshops are free to FossilFest attendees!

Saturday & Sunday

Discovering Florida's Fossil Treasures with TBFC's own Dr. Bob Sinibaldi PhD. Learn where and how to find fossils of your own right here in Florida!

Florida's Fossil Vertebrates & the Fossil Hunting Permit with Dr. Richard Hulbert PhD of the Florida Museum of Natural History. It's cheap and easy! Learn how to get your fossil permit and participate in the science of paleontology.

The Perfect Plaster Jacket & Other Preservation Techniques with Bill Faucher. Learn how to successfully get fossils from the field to your lab. Jacketing, glues, and preservation techniques are discussed for the beginner.

**Be a part of the adventure!
JOIN TBFC TODAY!**

www.tampabayfossilclub.com

FLORIDA'S LARGEST PREHISTORIC SHOW!

FOSSILS & ARTIFACTS

GEMS - MINERALS - SHELLS

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**KIDS GAMES * FOSSIL MINE * RAFFLES
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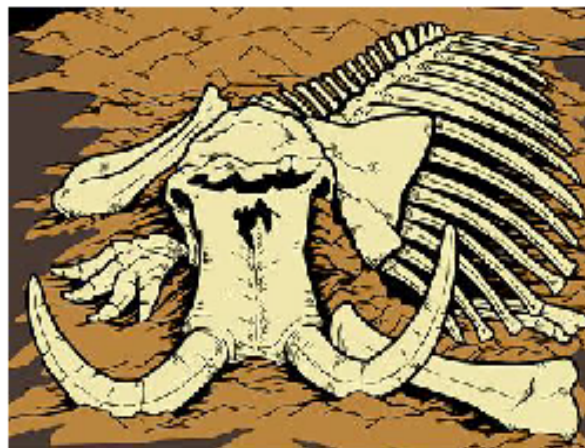
**Presents the 27th Annual
March 21st & 22nd, 2015**

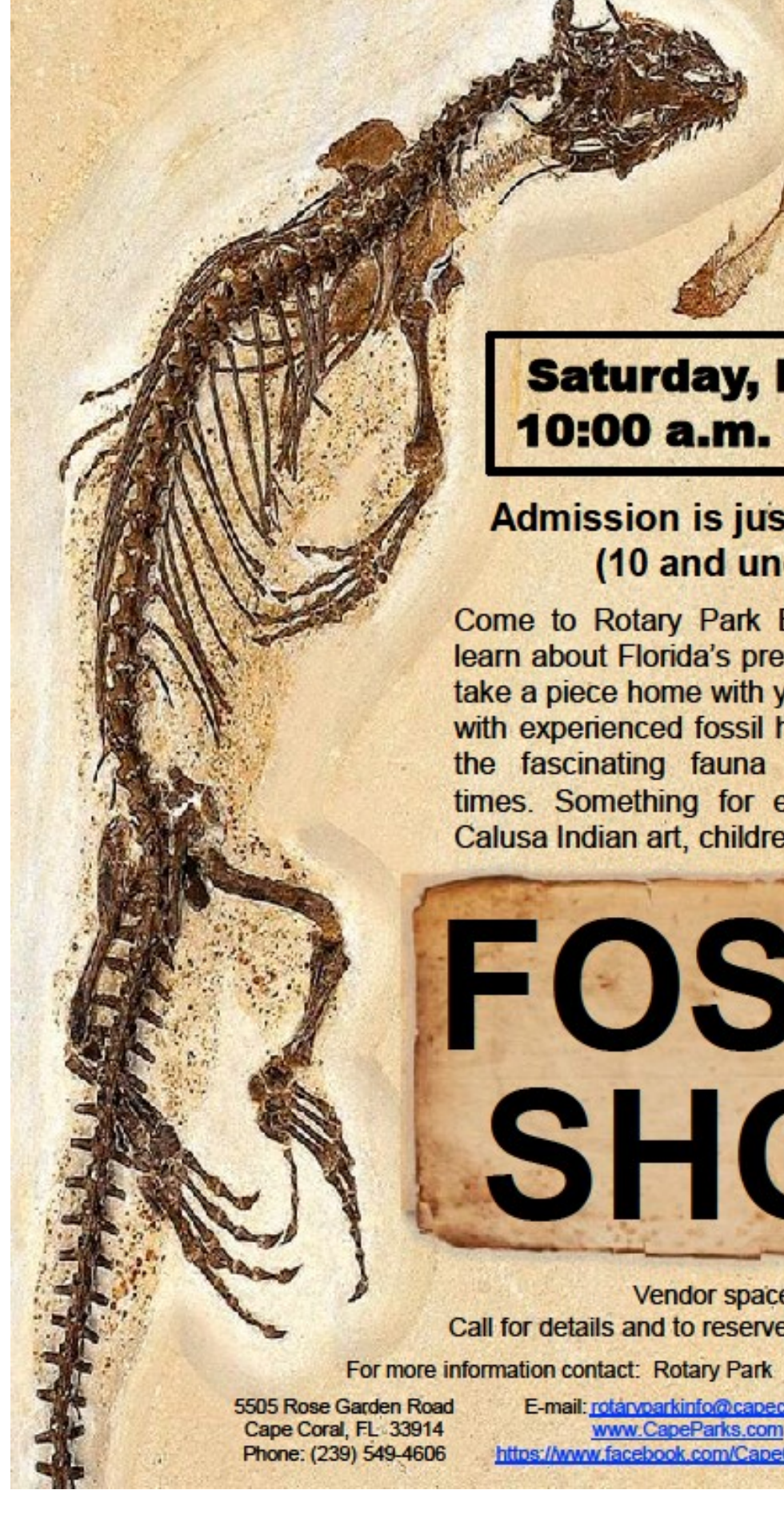
Sat: 9AM-6PM, Sun: 10AM-4PM

Adults \$7, Kids 12 and under FREE!

Florida State Fairgrounds

Intersection of I-4 & Hwy 301 just east of Tampa.





Saturday, March 28th
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Admission is just \$2 at the door!
(10 and under FREE)

Come to Rotary Park Environmental Center to learn about Florida's pre-historic past and maybe take a piece home with you. Come to shop or talk with experienced fossil hunters to learn all about the fascinating fauna of Florida's prehistoric times. Something for everyone: fossils, gems, Calusa Indian art, children's activities and more!

FOSSIL SHOW

Vendor spaces available!

Call for details and to reserve your space (239) 549-4606

For more information contact: Rotary Park

5505 Rose Garden Road
Cape Coral, FL 33914
Phone: (239) 549-4606

E-mail: rotaryparkinfo@capecoral.net
www.CapeParks.com
<https://www.facebook.com/CapeCoralParks>



FLORIDA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



Jan. 24 - Sept. 13, 2015

Experience the **MOST COMPLETE** *Tyrannosaurus rex* ever discovered! Observe a fully mounted **42-FOOT-LONG** cast of the dinosaur, which lived **67 million years ago.**

\$7.50 adults, (\$6.50 Fla. residents and seniors), \$4.50 ages 3-17, free to UF students and Florida Museum members.



This exhibition was created by The Field Museum, Chicago, and made possible through the generosity of McDonald's Corporation.



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