



Fossil Club of Lee County

April 2007

Message from the president

Hello fossil hunters of Lee County!!

Time again for another monthly installment of the Fossil Club of Lee County. This meeting has lots going on. Our speaker will be Dana Ehret, from the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. He will talk about fossil turtles and discuss the upcoming shark exhibit at the museum (we will try to participate in this). Again, we have to thank Bruce and the gang up there for continuing to make the trip here to speak to us., As the sports saying goes: These guys are good!!!!

Also this month, we will be holding the annual elections. Anyone wanting a position on the board as an officer or director should let me know as soon as possible. At the present time all current officers have agreed to continue on in their same positions for another year, but if a member wants to run for an office, we will have a vote and let the members decide. This month we will also hold a small auction to take care of items brought in too late to make last month's auction. No \$1 raffle will be held this month.

I need some volunteers for refreshments for next month, May, also June and July. Lots of members have done their part in this already, and have done very well. Thanks to you all!!

Sandy Schwartz has put in a lot of time and effort in guiding the designing and procuring of T-shirts for the club, we hope to see them at this meeting. She has also gotten plenty of riker mount cases for your treasures, at minimal cost. We do not try to profit from the club members, but we need to recover our costs.

Donna is now handling the books for sale,

April Meeting

Our April meeting will be held on Thursday, April 19th at 7:00 p.m. at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Blvd. Our speaker will be Dana Ehret from the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville.

which we will also have at the meeting.

We will discuss the fossil ID project we are trying to get started with the University at Gainesville. Bruce McFadden has held some meetings and discussed our ideas and they are willing to do this. We will discuss this for member's approval, and if approved we will help fund this web site. Don't miss the meeting if you want to give input or add some ideas to this project. I will write all the conclusions we arrive at after the meeting and distribute it, through Sandy, to the members so you know what is going on. We are asking to spend some of the club's money and are going to let you know all the details as this progresses. April showers bring May flowers, or so the saying goes. It doesn't really work like that for us down here in south Florida, but it IS a reminder to go hunt those rivers before it's too late!! The low water makes for easier hunting, as we know, and also makes it easier to walk the banks to find the treasure spots. Boating, however, is harder, but still possible. The most important thing is to go do it!!

Alice has got two consecutive trips for the club at the Rinker pit in Miami!! By the time the meeting happens these trips will be over and members will be showing off their stuff!! Bring in show and tell items and turtle fossils for id by Dana. Last month we had our annual fossil auction, and it was a packed full house!!!!!! We broke the all time record, and everyone had a great

time!!

See you at the meeting!!
Louis, the prez.

Volunteer Hours

Officers

Louis Stieffel, President (239) 458-9818
or e-mail: Cape 187@earthlink.net
Al Govin, Vice President 541-2845
and cell 910-2339
Ray Seguin, Treasurer, 989-1921 or
936-5019
Chuck Ferber, Secretary 489-2891

Board Members

Leslie Stieffel 458-9818
Michael Orchin 574-6318
Sandy Schwartz 772-8015
Trip Director: Alice Thorne

Committees

Newsletter: Sandy Schwartz
Speakers: Louis Stieffel
\$1. raffle: Mike Siciliano
Auction: Louis Stieffel
Web Master: Curtis Klug

Minutes

MINUTES OF MEETING OF FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

There was no meeting on March 15th as the annual auction was held.

Our club goal is to provide volunteer hours to the **Calusa Nature Center** in exchange for our (almost) free meeting room each month. This is **voluntary** but we hope all those who are able will participate.

Several members worked on April 7th and reported they had a good time, working with the kids in the egg hunt and other activities. Thanks to the members who get out and secure our meeting room for us.

If you wish to volunteer, please call **Kim Pierce at 275-3435**, Sunday to Thursday from 8:30—5:00. There are no more big events planned at this time but there are opportunities to work in the gift store, office work, and grounds work. Please report the number of hours and date worked to me at; Cameraqueen @earthlink.net or (239)772-8015 Sandy

Remember to visit our website to find out water levels and other information.

www.fcolc.com

Refreshments

April—Alice and John Thorne

May -volunteer needed

June-volunteer needed

July-volunteer needed

More evidence that birds descendants of dinosaurs

Scientists decode proteins from T. Rex bone The associated Press

Washington—Researchers have decoded proteins from a 68 million-year-old Tyrannosaurus rex, the oldest such material ever found. The unprecedented step, once thought impossible, adds new weight to the idea that today's birds are descendants of the mighty dinosaurs.

“The door just opens up a whole avenue of research that involves anything extinct,” said Matthew T. Carrano, curator of dinosaurs at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History.

While dinosaur bones have long been studied, “it's always been assumed that preservation does not extend to the cellular or molecular level,” said Mary Higby Schweitzer of North Carolina State University.

It had been thought that some proteins could last a million years or more, but not to the age of the dinosaurs, she said.

And now, researchers led by John M.

Coming Events

April 20, 21 & 22 Venice Shark Tooth Festival in Venice, Florida. Located across from the Venice Fishing Pier and Sharky's. The hours are Friday 4pm to 9, Sat. 10 am to 9 pm and Sunday. If you plan to go Sunday, call the Chamber of Commerce ahead of time as the hours are listed incorrectly on their web site.

Louis reports that he went last year on Friday evening, many of the vendors were just getting set up and were too busy to talk. There are no lights under the tent and it was difficult to see so he recommends you go Sat. or Sunday if you can.

Asara of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston have been able to analyze proteins from that bone.

The genetic code that directs the development of living things in the DNA, but that is more fragile and they didn't find that.

“But proteins are coded from the DNA, and they're kind of like first cousins,” Schweitzer said.

What Asara's team found was collagen, a type of fibrous connective tissue that is a major component of bone. And the closest match in creatures alive today was collagen from chicken bones.

Schweitzer and Asara report their findings in today's issue of the journal Science.

“Most people believe that birds evolved from dinosaurs, but that's all based on the architecture of the bones,” said Asara. “This allows you to get the chance to say, “Wait, they really are related because their sequences are related. We didn't get enough sequences to definitively say that, but what sequences we got support that idea.”

“The fact that we are getting proteins is very, very exciting,” said John Horner of Montana State

University and the Museum of the Rockies.

And, he added, it “changes the idea that birds and dinosaurs are related from a hypothesis to a theory.”

In science, a hypothesis is an idea about something that seems probable, while a theory has been tested and is supported by evidence. Previously, the bird-dinosaur relationship was based on similarities in the shape of bones, now there is solid evidence of a relationship at the molecular level.

Horner, who found the bones studied by Schweitzer and Asara, said this is going to change the way paleontologists go about collecting specimens—they will now be looking for the best preserved items, often buried in sand or sandstone sediments.

T-Shirts

We should have our new T-shirts in for this meeting. We have an all cotton pocket T with a shark's tooth on the pocket and the club name. On the back we have Florida fossils. We also did a small order for people who like the picture on the front, no pocket. Sizes run from small to XXlarge. The price is \$14.00.