



Fossil Club OF LEE COUNTY

APRIL 2011



Message from the President

Greetings to all and a warm welcome to our new members. We are always pleased to have new members and we hope you will enjoy participating in the many club activities.

Its April and its our dry season so fossil hunting should be great in our rivers. However, the recent heavy rainfall has made it just about impossible. For the record, the water level at Zolfo Springs (on the Peace River) soared to six feet above normal on April 2nd. But, we have hope. The hunting should be great by mid-April. For those of you who must return to the north this time of year, you will miss out on the hunting, but we will miss you and hope you have a great summer.

The Club had a great auction last month and raised about \$3600.00. As most of you know, the Club generally gives scholarship money to the University of Florida and the University of South Florida to assist deserving students that are pursuing advanced degrees in paleontology or other related sciences. Once again, we want to thank all of our members who generously donated items for the auction and to those who worked so hard to make this a great event.

Our next meeting is April 21st and we will elect a new Director at that time. Michael Orchin has resigned due to conflicting schedules. Michael had been our Trip Leader at one time and he was always ready to help out on any club activities. He was instrumental in getting the display cases to the Tom Allen Exhibit. Michael is still a member of the club, but he may not be able to participate on a regular basis. Many thanks to you Michael for your service to the club.

The club will hold its April meeting in the Iona House at the Calusa Nature Center. Our Club Library, which is lo-

cated in the Iona House (consists of over 100 books that Dr. Robin Brown gave to the club) will be open for business. A full line of club merchandise will also be available.

For those of you who don't know Curt Klug, he is a long time member and is our club webmaster. This month, we are privileged to have Dr. Klug as our speaker. He has been involved in some very interesting paleobiology research on Pine Island and will share some of his findings with us.

We have several new members who have not been to the Iona House. Its located behind the Calusa Nature Center main building. You can find directions on the club website or call one of the club officers for more details. The meeting starts at 7pm, but normally most people arrive at 6:30 or so to share stories and see what others have brought to show and tell. There will be door prizes and a raffle with lots of good items. Bring in something to donate to the raffle if you can. It adds to the excitement!

Many of you know that our club has several display case of fossils on exhibit at the Imaginarium in Fort Myers. But, what you may not know is that there is now a wonderful exhibit of "Monsters of the Ancient Seas", which includes extinct mako and megalodon shark jaws, prehistoric large creatures of the sea, suspended sharks, rays, and many other species. Its a great display and well worth seeing. The display is on loan and will be removed by mid-May.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.
Best regards and good luck. Bill

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is on April 21st in the Iona House at the Calusa Nature Center starting at 7pm.

EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Most members now receive their newsletter on-line and it does save the club the postage and printing costs. For those of you who receive the newsletter in the mail and would like to now receive it on-line, please let us know. Thanks

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Please pay your dues to ensure continuation of your membership in the Fossil Club of Lee County. You may pay your dues at the next meeting or mail them. The application form is at our web site www.fcolc.com. The Club appreciates your support and participation.

REFRESHMENTS

Many thanks to the Bonita Beachcombers who provided such a wide variety of wonderful treats for the March auction. It was one of the highlights of the evening. Also, thanks to Hollie Tiner, our Club Photographer, for the great photo of the Beachcombers. We are blessed to have a so many wonderful people in our Club!

Our volunteer for April refreshments is Jack Boyce and we sure do appreciate him. For awhile it looked like we were not going to have any refreshments at our April meeting.

We need volunteers for the rest of the year to do the refreshments, so please sign up and do your bit. As of now, we have no one for May. You will be fully reimbursed for you expenses unless you wish to make it a donation to the Club. No one expects a lavish spread--just some snacks, cookies and beverages is just fine. You will be greatly appreciated.

OFFICERS

Bill Shaver, President, 239-834-0694
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Michael Siciliano, Vice President, 239-980-1406
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Kathy Pawlowski, Secretary, 239-267-6130

DIRECTORS

Dean Hart, 941-979-8217
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COMMITTEES

Cherie Neat, Newsletter
Curt Klug, Web Master
Bill Shaver, Speakers
Louis Steiffel, 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

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

In accordance with Club By-laws, elections are held in April with the successful candidates taking office on May 1st. This year we have two candidates for the position of Board Director vacated by Michael Orchin. The candidates are Pam Plummer and Joshua Frank. A ballot will be given to all members present at the April meeting to make their selection. The person selected will be announced at the close of the meeting. We are pleased to have members that are willing to serve their club.

Club Field Trips

The Club had an organized trip to the Peace River in mid-March and Don and Flo Young took some pictures to prove we were there. Jim Brown and Pat LeGree each found one of the coveted "meg" teeth. See photos. It was a beautiful day and it was the maiden voyage for Gunther Lobish's new boat. He was assisted by first mate Pam Plummer. Gunther found a three-toed horse astragalus that was in excellent shape. All in all, everyone found some keepers and it was a wonderful social event as well. Another Peace River trip is scheduled for April, but it may be put off if the water level is too high.

Gunther is taking up to five club members to the pit each Sunday and they are finding echonoids. Sign-up sheets will be available at the April meeting. Some of the club members are diving off Venice and making some good finds. See Mike Siciliano if you are interested in diving. Happy Hunting!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The Fossil Club of Lee County is pleased to welcome the following named people as Club Members:

Kathy and Tom Copmann

SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

April

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

April 21th FCOLC Meeting Calusa Nature Center.

APRIL SPEAKER

Curtis R. Klug

Hydrogeologist

"Palynology and the oldest land plants in Florida"

Dr. Klug has over 30 years of professional experience in the combined geologic fields of hydrogeology, biostratigraphy, paleontology, palynology, and mined- land reclamation. He has served as on-site geologist and supervisor during the construction of three deep injection wells, two aquifer storage and recovery wells, over 20 public water supply wells, and numerous irrigation production wells. He has also served as project manager for the compilation and submission of applications for water use permits for dewatering and irrigation projects as well as applications for water use permit renewals. Dr. Klug has also served as geologic researcher for projects involving carbon sequestration in Alabama and Florida for the U.S. Department of Energy, hydrologic resources to support a proposed biofuel production plant in Florida, injection wells for the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authorities, and litigation support between a large petroleum company and a major metropolitan area in the northeast U.S. He also is experienced with water quality analyses, site assessment, and reclamation evaluation of abandoned coal strip mines. He has taught college-level courses (introductory to upper level) at five institutions and has served as Curatorial Assistant at two geological museums. He has also held positions at two state geological surveys as laboratory manager and research geologist and has carried out and published on research interests in micropaleontology, palynology and paleobotany.

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/vppermit.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

Tampa Bay Fossil Club
www.tampabayfossilclub.com

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

Happy Easter!



The Treasures of The Peace River

by Ron Seavey

Sunday, March 20, 2011 began as hundreds of other days had in the last 5 1/2 years since I moved to Florida. I was going fossil hunting. I met up with Mike and Chuck at about 11:00 a.m. at Nocotee, on the Peace River, and we walked upriver about 800 feet to a place that Mike had previously worked and done well.

The area was hard to dig in, but in about 10 minutes I had a small, but broken Meg and a small, but good upper Hemipristis Serra. After 30 minutes I left Mike and Chuck to go to Arcadia and try my skill (luck) there. I felt funny leaving Nocotee after such a short time as I recently spoke at the Lee Club meeting saying to give an area a fair chance before moving on.

Having arrived at Arcadia, I decided to work to the left of the boat ramp about 200 feet north. After about 2 minutes in the water I noticed someone else also in the water about 1000 feet downriver. I decided to go there and see who it might be and maybe work with him.

I drove to the area and went down to the river only to notice he was getting ready to leave in his kayak. I got there just in time to see it was our own illustrious Club President, Bill Shaver. As we were talking, I noticed Bill had an encrusted long-handled scoop in his left hand that he had just found approximately

1000 feet downriver from where I had lost it in December 2009, some 15 months earlier.

Also of interest is the fact that Bill had not worked this area in about 4 or 5 years and had been heading further south in his kayak but stopped there to give it a try. Bill was gracious and returned the long-lost scoop to me.

Had I not left Nocotee; had I not seen someone working downriver; had I not gone there immediately; had Bill not stopped where he had not worked in such a long time and had continued south, I would not have been reunited with my scoop. I've started cleaning it and hope to have it back in good condition soon. God is good.

Also Bill and I got to hunt together again after about 5 years since the last time. It was fun.

On the same day there were two other men hunting 800 feet south of Bill and me and I thought I knew them. When I finished for the day I drove down to where they had been hunting, but they had already left. As I drove there I saw something blue lying in the road and I picked it up and it turned out to be a wetsuit that had fallen off of my friend's truck. I was able to return it to him soon thereafter and the circle was completed.

One good turn deserves another. Not all of the good things found at the river are fossils. Sometimes it is friends.

AUCTION 2011

Our Annual Auction, which was held on March 17th, was a super event. The Club netted about \$3600.00, which far exceeded our expectations, and everyone who participated seemed to enjoy the "bidding action" as well as the spectacular refreshments. This year we had over 120 items in the auction. The Club is grateful to all of you who generously donated so many great items and to those of you who participated in the bidding/buying process. The funds we raised at this event make it possible once again for us to sponsor scholarships for undergraduate students who are pursuing degrees in paleontology or related sciences and to make donations to other worthy causes.

As one can imagine, there is a lot of time and energy that goes into making our Club Auction a success. The Club thanks everyone who participated and specifically thanks our Auctioneer, Louis Steiffel; and Dean Hart for his assistance, and the administrative/financial team of Ray Seguin, Leslie Steiffel, Linda Kemper, and Pam Plummer. The spectacular refreshments were provided by the Bonita Beachcombers. Thanks again Beachcombers!

ID Fossil Hunting in Florida

by Louis Steiffel

It's that time again where us fossil hunters regularly try to get out and hunt the fossil deposits of the local rivers and creeks. Usually it is ankle deep in many places. However, with unusual winter rains, some exceedingly heavy, the water has risen too high. So now is a good time to review your fossil books so as to gain more knowledge of what you may find, when you can get back in the river. I get many folks to show me fossils for ID, which I love to do, but sometimes they can be easily ID by the collector, utilizing his/her own resources. The club stocks and sells at very reasonable prices, many of the popular fossil books, especially for our area. Many of the club members have these books. At this time I suggest that they be opened and read. Heck, just look at the pictures!! You will be surprised how good you will get knowing your fossils, with very little effort.

A few tips, from questions I've been asked. You will NOT find fossil skin. You will NOT find fossil organs, whether the heart, brain, gizzard, or whatever. Eyeballs do NOT fossilize. Ears do NOT fossilize, only the hard inner ear bones. If you find a claw (lucky you!) it is a claw core. The actual fingernail material does NOT fossilize, just the bony core. Remember there is cartilage between bones. Bones in the body, if healthy, do not rub against each other, so there should always be a small bit of play between two fossil bones. Always keep in mind ---form = function. If it is a certain bone, it performs a certain function. A large bulky animal, (Elephants, Rhino, etc.) will have more

flattened bone ends and carpal and tarsal bones than a lighter, more agile animal. Carnivores will have lots of joint movement, so the balls on the femur and humerus will be very pronounced. Teeth are also a good indicator of the type, thus ID, of the animal. An animal that grazes will have grinding teeth, while a browser will have cusped teeth and a carnivore will have sharp sheering teeth. Some animals have a combination. An alligator has pointed biting/grasping/holding teeth in the front half of its' mouth and more rounded, blunt crushing/chewing teeth in the rear. In many animals canine teeth are pointed and fairly sharp. Incisor teeth are for grasping and finishing the bite. However, in rodents the incisor teeth are the larger ones, such as the very pronounced ones from the Giant Beaver, or the Capybara.

So, as you can see, some study is involved. Since you enjoy this hobby, looking at the pictures in a book will not seem like a chore. In fact, as you keep spotting bones and teeth that you have, and now know what they are, you just may have trouble putting those books down!!

The Fossil Club of Lee County has one of the most comprehensive club fossil book libraries of any club in the state. I urge you to take advantage of this and utilize this great resource. I believe you will be glad you did.

If anyone has a request on more specific information about a vertebrate fossil or animal, let me know. It may lead to a whole article, if needed.

See you on the river!!

Louis

Pictures from 2011 Annual Auction.



Fossil Etiquette

by Louis Steiffel

When we are fossil hunting as a group, there is naturally a desire to find the best stuff before it gets scooped up by another hunter. However, certain manners must be observed so as to make it an enjoyable experience for everyone. This being said, it is polite to think of the other folks with you, and to remember to be fair about collecting. In a pit or mine, there is usually lots of space, that enables you to give others around you a reasonable area to hunt. Do not cut them off or walk in circles around them. It is also important not to rush to pick up an item immediately in front of your fellow hunter that he or she may have picked up if given the chance. As hard as this is, it is the right thing to do. Being the fastest does NOT mean being the best. At the end of the hunt, you will see that many of the slower hunters actually have the best finds. Winning the "Cheetah Award" for fastest, and covering the most ground, does not give you a better haul than the slower folks. It is WAY more important to look closely and be careful, rather than to go fast while seeking that rare, elusive, perfect fossil, just sitting on its own pedestal to be snatched up by the swiftest hunter.

When walking as you are river (or creek) hunting, and looking down into clear water to pick up surface finds, it is important to not jump in front of the other person walking with you. Please remember to stay on the side, or your bottom disturbance will block the view of the other hunter. Not only is this not fair, but you wouldn't want that done to you, right? So when picking a spot to sift, and washing the gravel to find the fossils, please think of your choice of location. If you are immediately upstream from someone already in place, your siftings will fall into that person's hole and cause him or her to either move, or dig through your diggings. The best choice is to dump the unwanted material away from that hunter's sifting site. Again, always remember to do to others what you would like done for you.

So to conclude, please be courteous to the others around you when hunting. It produces as much for you, and keeps everyone happy. Thank you. Louis

COBY'S COLUMN



Fossils on Amelia Island

White sand beaches, dunes, shells, crystal clear water, gravel and sharks teeth? Amelia Island is located in the very Northeast corner of Florida and harbors some of the best beach hunting in the state. Fossils have always been washing up on Amelia Island's shores, but were stimulated by the dredging of the nearby St. Mary's River and Cumberland sound (Mainly for the submarine base). The dredging dumped the material onto the island's beaches, which brought the fossils with it. While walking along the beach, the common whale bone fragments can be found, along with many different types of shark's teeth, including megalodons, yes megs right on the beach! So pack your bags, get everyone in the car, and set a course for Amelia Island, because the teeth are waiting!

Happy Hunting,
Coby
Pawlowski



Pictured to the right
Coby with a
Mammoth tooth
from the 2011
Annual Auction.

A new hint of earlier N. Americans

Tools found in Texas alter prior estimates

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The discovery of ancient stone tools at an archaeological dig in Texas could push back the presence of humans in North America, perhaps by as much as 2,500 years.

Thousands of artifacts dating to between 13,200 and 15,500 years ago were uncovered by researchers led by Michael R. Waters of Texas A&M University. They report the discovery in Friday's edition of the journal *Science*.

The find was located 5 feet below materials left by the well-known Clovis culture, which was once thought to have been the first American settlers around 13,000 years ago.

It was "like finding the Holy Grail," Waters said in a telephone interview. To find what appears to be a large



open-air campsite "is really gratifying. Lucky and gratifying."

The trove of 15,528 artifacts, including chipping debris from working stones and 56 tools such as blades, scrapers and choppers, was found in the Buttermilk Creek complex near Austin.

The location is the oldest credible archaeological site in North America, Waters said at a briefing. The artifacts were

found in an 8-inch (20 centimeter) layer beneath 5 feet (1.5 meters) of earth and other material from later human occupation at the site.

The small tools were "a mobile tool kit," Waters said, and of the type that could have led to the later development of the fluted points that trademark Clovis technology.

While there are other pre-Clovis sites across the country, Waters said the new find included significantly more artifacts than the others.

Anthropologist Tom D. Dillehay of Vanderbilt University, who was not part of the research team, said he is concerned that the separation of layers at the site "appears not to be as clear as the authors would have us believe."

University of Oregon archaeologist Dennis L. Jenkins said he was also initially skeptical of the find, commenting "it would have been a hard sell" from

many other researchers.

Jenkins, who three years ago reported discovery of 14,000-year-old evidence of human DNA in a cave in Oregon, said he was concerned that settling or rodents had mixed up the specimens in Texas.

But, he said, Waters' team had done "incredible, meticulous scientific work." "I believe he's made the case," he said.

Jenkins said he would have preferred carbon-dating of the specimens, but that couldn't be done because there was no organic material to be tested in the newly found layer.

Steven L. Forman, of the University of Illinois, Chicago, a co-author of the paper, said the team used luminescence dating which can determine when the material was last exposed to light. They took samples by hammering black, sealed copper pipe into the layers.



Fossil Hunt
Arcadia -Girl Scout
Camp 3/13/11



Fossil Hunters
Louis Steiffel
and Al Govin
homeward
bound