

# Fossil Club of Lee County

June 2010

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## Message from the President



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The hurricane season is already upon us so we can expect to get a lot of rain in the near future. The water levels, especially at the Peace River have been unusually high this year and we have not done a lot of fossil hunting because of it. That being said, most of us are eager to do some hunting and we hope the rain holds off for a few weeks at least!

We have several young people coming to our meetings now and it's a pleasure to have them. They are attentive, enthused, and eager to learn about the hobby and science of fossils. The Club has named Coby Pawlowski as Director of Youth Activities and we know he will serve as a role model for our other young members.

Last month we talked about establishing a Tom Allen Collection at the Calusa Nature Center. Tom was a naturalist by career and spent much of his life with nature, always interested in the many aspects of being a naturalist. Some of his collection resides at the University of Florida Museum, some at Ogilve, some at the Smithsonian, and he has given what he now has to our Club. We in turn are loaning on a long term basis to the Center. It should serve to inspire young naturalist. Tom is also a writer, artist, sculptor, wood carver, bee keeper, Indian artifact collector and collector of minerals and fossils. Tom has some serious health issues. We wish him well and hope he will be attending meetings with us again in the near future.

We have lined up a speaker for June who has recently published a book entitled What we can Learn About Fossils. He will have copies for sale at our next meeting. In July, we

have an expert on many types of fossils especially those of the Tertiary period. We are looking forward to having both of these exceptionally knowledgeable people at our meetings.

At our last meeting we discussed having a trip to the University of Florida and some other stops as well. This is being worked on and will be an item on the agenda at our June meeting.

As usual we have Show and Tell, door prizes, and a raffle at our next meeting. I look forward to seeing everyone there. Best regards, Bill

### Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on, Thursday, June 17, at 7:00 p.m. at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Blvd, Ft. Myers.

### OFFICERS

Bill Shaver, President, 239-834-0694,  
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Michael Siciliano, Vice President, 239-980-1406  
Ray Seguin, Treasurer, 239-939-1921  
Kathy Pawlowski, Secretary, 239-267-6130

### DIRECTORS

Dean Hart, 941-979-8217  
Gunther Lobish, 941-268-7506  
Charles OConnor, 239-246-5526  
Michael Orchin, 239-574-6318

## COMMITTEES

Bob Wood, Newsletter Editor

[sailzonandon@verizon.net](mailto:sailzonandon@verizon.net)

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

## MINUTES OF MAY MEETING THE FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

DATE: May 20, 2010

PLACE: Iona House, Calusa Nature Center

ATTENDANCE: 44

PRESIDED BY: Bill Shaver, President

Bill congratulated the new officers and board members and thanked them for taking leadership roles in the Club. He also thanked the out-going members for their service and contributions to the Club. He also announced that Coby Pawlowski has been made Director of Youth Activities and Raffle Committee Assistant.

Bill thanked Ray Seguin for his continued contributions to the club. In addition to being Treasurer, Ray also is handling membership and managing the merchandise inventory. Ray also donates the items used for door prizes and brings in several items for the monthly raffle.

Ray announced that the Club now has \$6826.30 in the treasury. Bill stated that the Board had met and proposed donating \$1,000 to the University of Florida, \$1,000 to the University of South Florida, and \$1,000 to the Calusa Nature Center. In addition, it was proposed that \$500 be used for establishment of the Tom Allen Collection at the Nature Center and \$500 for display cases for that museum. The Club unanimously concurred with the proposed donations. The display cases are available at the Lost in Time Store in St. Petersburg. The store will close at its current location and the owner (Brian Evensen) will operate the store from his home. Sad to say, Brian had to have surgery on his left leg and amputation was done just below his knee. Brian had made a wonderful presentation on Indian artifacts to our Club last year.

The Club membership agreed to hold a Fossil Show later this year. Plans for the show and details will be discussed at a future meeting.

## CLUB RAFFLE

The club holds a monthly raffle about 10 times a year for the purpose of giving members an opportunity to win interesting items for a very minimal price. The money generated goes into the treasury and adds to monies available for scholarship grants. Please support the raffle by buying tickets and also bringing in items to place into the raffle. Your support will be appreciated.

It was announced that our new newsletter editor, Bob Wood, would appreciate photos and articles for the newsletter.

Some people are not receiving the newsletter---this may be because their email or snail mail addresses are incorrect. Please make sure to update your information, perhaps at the next club meeting.

Bill announced that the club has an excellent library of books donated by Dr. Robin Brown. This is a great source of information for serious fossil collectors. Charles OConnor announced that he is leading walks through the Six Mile Slough and invited people to sign up. Gunter Lobish announced that members visiting the Quality Mine must sign the liability waivers before entering the area.

Several members participated in an excellent Show and Tell program for the evening. Ray Seguin brought in an extensive collection of animal skulls. Werner Grabner gave a presentation on wood carving and Mike McDonald had some super mastodon and giant ground sloth specimens. Others included Cay Small, Ian Bartoszek, Elida Byard, Donna Johnson, Coby Pawlowski, Ron Seavey, Gunther Lobish, Mike Siciliano, Zack (our youngest member), and of course, Louis Steiffel. Bill thanked everyone for participating in the evenings program.

The monthly raffle was held, Kathy Arnold managed the club merchandise and sold several items, and door prizes were given out to the lucky ticket holders. Bill thanked the Arnold family for providing the refreshments. The meeting concluded at 9:30pm.

Submitted by Kathy Pawlowski, Secretary

## ADVANCE PEEK AT JULY'S PROGRAM

## REFRESHMENTS

### REFRESHMENTS

June-----Gunther Lobish and Bill Shaver

July-----Need volunteers

August-----Need volunteers

Everyone is invited to participate/take a turn in bringing in refreshments. The Club will provide you with the drink cooler and will reimburse you for your expenses. Thanks for helping.

Andreas Kerner is president and founder of "The International Fossil Co.,Inc.". He specializes in Tertiary mammals of the Southeastern US, but also works on projects involving Eocene, Jurassic and Permian fossils from Europe. Working closely with various Museums and Universities around the globe, IFC has donated thousands of specimens to Museum collections and Andreas has discovered several new species of mammals and reptiles. His research focuses on fossils from Florida's fossiliferous underwater deposits. He is married to Lisa Jefferson and lives in Orlando, FL.

## PROGRAM FOR JUNE

### A Comparison of Fishing Cultures: The Prehistoric Gulf Coast of Florida, The Pacific Northwest, and the Walmart Fisherman

Robert Sinibaldi, Ph.D. is a former president of the Tampa Fossil Club. His latest book **What Your Fossils Can Tell You: Vertebrate Morphology, Pathology, and Cultural Modification** was released by the University Press of Florida in April of 2010. He is also the author of **Fossil Diving: In Florida's Waters or Any Other Waters Containing Prehistoric Treasures** and **The Handbook of Paleontological Terms**. He works for the Pinellas County School District and with the University of South Florida in the field of exceptional student education. Fossils are just a hobby, or as his wife, Mary says, "By the time you get to the third book, it's an obsession."

He will sign books after the presentation - What Your Fossil Can Tell You (\$35), Fossil Diving (\$10), Handbook of Terms (\$3).

## INTERNET SITES & LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### WEB SITES & LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

Fossil Club of Lee County: [www.fcolc.com](http://www.fcolc.com)

Museum of Natural History @ Gainesville  
[www.flmnh.ufl.edu/](http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/)

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

Southwest Florida Fossil Club  
[www.southwestfloridafossilclub.com](http://www.southwestfloridafossilclub.com)

Orlando Fossil Club  
[www.floridafossilhunters.com](http://www.floridafossilhunters.com)

PEACE RIVER Water Levels  
[www.canoeoutpost.com](http://www.canoeoutpost.com)

Smithsonian Natural History Museum  
[www.mnh.si.edu](http://www.mnh.si.edu)

Florida Fossil Clubs  
[www.fossil-treasures-of-florida.com](http://www.fossil-treasures-of-florida.com)

PICKING UP ISOLATED NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS  
<http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/archaeology/underwater/finds>



Suncoast Reef Rovers - Suncoast Area Dive Stores  
(Venice and Sarasota) - [www.suncoastreefrover.com/divestores.htm](http://www.suncoastreefrover.com/divestores.htm)

Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium 3450 Ortiz Av,  
Fort Myers Tel 239-275-3435 [www.calusanature.com](http://www.calusanature.com)

Imaginarium 200 Cranford AvE, Fort Myers  
[www.cityftmyers.com/imaginarium](http://www.cityftmyers.com/imaginarium)

Southwest Florida Museum of History 2300 Peck St.,  
Fort Myers [www.swflmuseumofhistory.com](http://www.swflmuseumofhistory.com)

The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, 3075 Sanibel-  
Captiva Rd, Sanibel, FL [www.shellmuseum.org](http://www.shellmuseum.org)

Randell Research Center PO Box 608, Pineland, FL  
[www.flmnh.ufl.edu/RRC/](http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/RRC/)

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

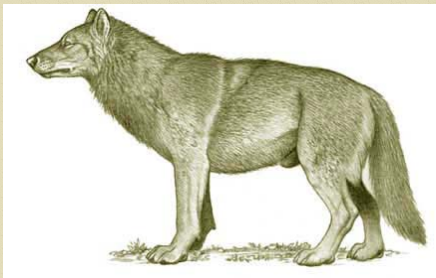
Lost in Time, 4719 69th Street, N. St Petersburg, FL  
33709, Tel. 727-541-2567 Owner Brian Evensen

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

Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife Burrowing Owls  
[www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org](http://www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org)

## Young Fossil Collectors *Goby's Column*

By Coby Pawlowski



Fossils are evidence left by ancient living things. Examples would be bones, teeth, leaf remains/imprints, petrified wood, dinosaur tracks in stone and fossilized sea shells.

Some of the most exciting fossils found in Florida are those belonging to the Dire Wolf. The Dire Wolf ranged from North America to South America. It lived

during the Pleistocene Epoch and died out about 8,000 years ago.

The Dire Wolf was a very fierce animal. They hunted in packs and were similar to modern wolves and dogs. They were related to the modern Timber wolf, but Dire Wolves had larger teeth and shorter limbs. It averaged five feet in length (1.5m) and weighed 130 to 190 lbs.(57 kg - 87.9 kg).

Although most Dire Wolf fossils are found in the La Brea Tar Pits in California, they are also found throughout Florida, including rivers like the Peace and pits/quarries like Quality Materials.

## FCOLC FOSSILS ON EXHIBIT

The Fossil Club of Lee County has a collection of fossil specimens on long-term loan to the Imaginarium and the Calusa Nature Center. Club members are encouraged to visit these organizations and view the specimens. There are many specimens on display and it is a great opportunity to learn more about the fossils we can find here in southern Florida. The Southwest Florida Museum of History also has some good fossils on display as well, however they are not part of our fossil exhibits.

## PALEO NEWS

### Odd Mosaic of Dental Features Reveals Undocumented Primate

**It's in the teeth. An odd mosaic of dental features recently unearthed in northern Egypt reveals a previously undocumented, highly-specialized primate called Nosmips aenigmaticus that lived in Africa nearly 37 million years ago.**



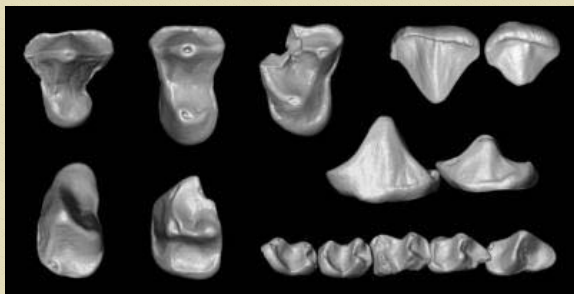
May 10, 2010

Composite lower dentition of the 37 million-year-old primate *Nosmips*, from northern Egypt, is shown. Credit: Erik Seiffert, Stony Brook University.

Because it is only known from its teeth, the paleontologists who discovered it don't know what its body looked like, but the find likely represents an ancient African lineage whose discovery makes early primate evolution on that continent more complicated.

"It comes as a bit of a shock to find a primate that defies classification," said lead researcher and assistant professor of Anatomical Sciences Erik Seiffert of New York's Stony Brook University.

Seiffert says during the last 30 years or so, three major primate groups were established as being present in Africa some 55 to 34 million years ago: early monkeys, lemur-like primates, and an extinct group called adapiforms. But the newly discovered primate's teeth place *Nosmips* in Africa at the same time. What's more, its teeth suggest it could be an evolutionary oddity that is not closely related to any of these groups.



"There are only a few species that nobody agrees about and that really can't be placed into any of the major primate groups. These mystery fossils must have something important to tell us about primate evolution."

Right now *Nosmips* is one of those rare mystery fossils and so far is only known by 12 teeth, most of which were found in isolation at a site in the Fayum Depression about 40 miles outside Cairo,

Egypt.

We usually identify primate fossils by their teeth because teeth are the most durable parts of the body and are most likely to fossilize, and so are most likely to be recovered.

Analysis shows *Nosmips* had a rare combination of enlarged and elongated premolars with simple upper molars. It also had premolar teeth that had taken on the form of molars, instead of being relatively simple as in most other primates.

"*Nosmips* appears to be a highly specialized member of a previously undocumented and presumably quite ancient endemic African primate lineage" Seiffert said.

Seiffert and colleagues compared the teeth of these extinct species with those of living primates, and determined that *Afradapis* had adaptations for eating leaves, whereas *Nosmips* probably ate more fruits and insects.

Researchers from the Duke Lemur Center, Midwestern, Penn State and Oxford Universities also contributed to this research.

## **Dracorex hogwartsia: Dragon King of Hogwarts**



*Dracorex hogwartsia* was a real dinosaur, named by paleontologists Bob Bakker and Victor Porter after the fictional "Hogwarts Academy" from the popular Harry Potter\* books.

Horns and Bumps

The skull of *Dracorex hogwartsia* is one of the most unusual of all the dinosaurs. The surface of the skull is completely covered in bumps and



horns. Perhaps these served as a form of protection (imagine trying to take a bite), or they may simply have been for display.

Whatever their use, these horns and bumps give *Dracorex* a very dragon-like appearance.

sharp Teeth

One of the *Dracorex* skulls discovered contains the animal's front teeth, and they reveal an exciting possibility. The incisors are serrated—perhaps the first evidence of an omnivorous dinosaur!

### The Dragon's Family Tree

Scientists speculate whether the skull may simply be from a young *Pachycephalosaurus*. It's possible juveniles were born with flat skulls and the prominent *Pachycephalosaurus* dome appeared as the animal grew into adulthood. For now, this theory remains unproven. In any case, the "Dracorex" skull is a real skull from one of the most interesting dinosaurs to ever roam planet earth!

## For Extinct Monsters of the Deep, a Little Respect



The Natural History Museum, London

**OLD BONES** An ichthyosaur preserved with the broken skeletons of its unborn. Ichthyosaurs, whose name means “fish lizard,” date back 250 million years.

By SEAN B. CARROLL

**Here is a quick paleontology quiz.** Which group of animals included large, air-breathing predators up to 50 feet long that bore live young, dominated their world for more than 100 million years and were ultimately exterminated by an asteroid 65 million years ago?

Easy, right?

Did you say dinosaurs? Sorry, wrong answer. But it was a trickier question than it may have appeared.

The correct answer is marine reptiles, which at the time of the last great extinction included mosasaurs, plesiosaurs and pliosaurs. The key clue in my question was “bore live young.” Unlike the dinosaurs, which were terrestrial and laid eggs, marine reptiles were fully aquatic and bore live young. This latter combination was no coincidence.

Despite their awesome size and abundance in the fossil record — their bones were among the first to be recognized as fossil remains of extinct creatures — marine reptiles have long played second fiddle to their much more famous saurian cousins.

Mosasaurs and other marine reptiles were center stage in the growth of the fossil record in the early 19th century. Ichthyosaurs and plesiosaurs like those discovered by young Mary Anning in the Lyme Regis area of Dorset, in southern England, were displayed in museums across Europe. Marine reptile fossils have been found across the globe, from Africa to Australia, and even Antarctica, a distribution that documents their long success. The first report of the creatures in the American West was from the Lewis and Clark expedition, which encountered a large skeleton in 1804 while voyaging up the Missouri River in Sioux country. It, too, was initially misidentified as a fish, even though at a reported 45 feet long, that would have been one heck of a fish.

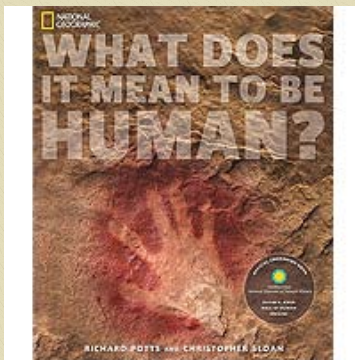
Extinct marine reptiles also exhibited another important similarity to all sea mammals: they bore live young. We know this because among the plethora of fossil skeletons that have been unearthed are specimens of female ichthyosaurs, mosasaurs and other extinct marine reptiles preserved in the act of giving birth, with their young emerging tail-first, just as baby whales, dolphins and manatees do; doing so prevents the air-breathing young from drowning.

The National Museum of Natural History is the world's preeminent museum and research complex. It is dedicated to inspiring curiosity, discovery and learning about the natural world through its unparalleled research, collections, exhibitions and educational outreach programs.

## PALEO STORE

### What Does It Mean To Be Human?

Item 10837 \$24.95



This generously illustrated book tells the story of the human family, showing how our species' physical traits and behaviors evolved over millions of years as our ancestors adapted to dramatic environmental changes.

In *What Does It Means to Be Human?* Rick Potts, director of the Smithsonian's Human Origins Program, and Chris Sloan, National Geographic's paleoanthropology expert, delve into our distant past to explain when, why, and how we acquired the unique biological and cultural qualities that govern our most fundamental connections and interactions with other people and with the natural world. Drawing on the latest research, they conclude that we are the last survivors of a once-diverse family tree, and that our evolution was shaped by one of the most unstable eras in Earth's environmental history. Paperback, 176 pages.