



FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

JUNE 2014

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to summer!!

Yes, it got here overnight! Suddenly it is blazing hot, and we hope some rains come soon! Of course, the rains put an end to the river hunting, but it's been a long 7-8 month season.

If you haven't been, it's time to stop thinking about it. Some of us are still hunting the rivers and creeks, but we know it's the last ditch effort because it will soon be over.

We had a trip to SMR, May 24. It was one hot day!! Yes, the hunting was also hot, but, wow! That hard hat felt like an overturned cooking pot. Phil (and Louise) Briskin did a bang up job getting all the participants organized, forms taken care of, participant monies collected (along with Sandy), and lined up ready to hunt. Roger Portell, the paleontologist from the FMNH took over from there and we all had a great time. We hope to schedule another trip soon, but it is very hard to get one of these coveted slots.

Bring in your show and tell stuff! We want to see what you found this past month! Put your extras on the \$1 raffle table, so others can share in your success.

This month the featured fossil is **Alligator**!! Bring your Alligator fossils to show and tell, as well as any other fossils you want to show. We are very fortunate to be able to find Alligator fossils.

Many collectors in other areas, all over the world, wish they could do so also. Appreciate the ones you have and show them to all of us.

Al Govin, our recently elected Secretary, with direction and approval from the board, purchased a laptop for the club, as well as a new digital projector. He was able to get some great pricing on this purchase. We now have the capability to enable a speaker to just show up with his/her presentation on a thumb drive and plug and play. Al will maintain possession of these and bring them to each meeting. We do not want to store this new equipment in the storage locker. The old projector did not last long and we think it is because of temperature fluctuations in the storage locker. Even though Al got a great deal, it's still a lot of club funds and we want to care for it as such.

The speaker this month will be Kassie Hendy. She is from Florida Museum of Natural History and is FOSSIL Project Coordinator. Kassie (actually Katherine) will speak to us about the FOSSIL PROJECT, which is an exciting organization of fossil clubs and professionals. I think most of you will be also excited to hear of all the developments taking place in our fossil world. Kassie is married to Austin Hendy, and some of you have met her when she accompanied Austin here for his past speaking engagements.

Next month's speaker will be Bob Fuqua who has written a book about Venice fossils, and will be speaking of fossil hunting experiences.

As I stated in last month's message, I had major computer issues. I had to get a new one and in the process lost many of my files. My address book and some info folders I stored club information on was lost I asked Sandy Schwartz to send out the newsletters, especially since I was traveling to Costa Rica for dental work with my wife. I had a few emails from members saying they didn't get their newsletter. We are sorry for that, but we all tried. Curtis Klug posts the newsletter on our web site each month, so if you don't get it for whatever reason, check it out there. www.fcolc.com

I want to thank Al Govin for running the meeting last month. We all know how shy Al is, but he somehow overcame it! Also thanks go out to Joe Larkin for doing the refreshments for the May meeting. Even though I was not there (Costa Rica), I heard he put on a mean pot of chili! Thank you Joe. Mary Southall volunteered to do refreshments this month and Bill Howat will do it in July. We can always use a member to volunteer to do refreshments. Don't be shy! The club will reimburse you up to \$40, and we have the drink coolers already and a full kitchen if needed. It needn't be a big production.

David Sheehey has done an excellent job as the club librarian. We now have many, many curated books to be



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used by our members. I encourage each of you to take advantage of the largest club Paleontology library in the state.

I want to thank Ray Seguin for his many years of service and membership with the club. Ray is an original member (1993), and is also the oldest member of any fossil club in Florida. Ray turned 90 a couple months ago, and we celebrated his birthday at Hooters! (HIS choice!) For many years he was a club director (still is!), and also built many things for our use, like the storage cabinet we presently use and the display cases at the Imaginarium, as well as professional framing we needed, etc, etc. Ray recently stepped down from the merchandise committee, but still helps whenever and wherever needed. Even though Ray had to stop fossil hunting a few years ago, (yes-he misses it!), he still collects them, and always brings something for the door prizes. I stopped over to see Ray a few days ago, and he was in the middle of a construction project at his home! He recently received a VERY prestigious award as the top volunteer at the Harry Chapin food bank, where he goes four days a week! He was the top volunteer of 2,700 people!! I sure hope I am still as active as Ray if and when I reach 90! We are proud to have Ray as a member, and we wish him many more good years.

Louis



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COMMITTEES

Al Govin, Club Trips Director

Curt Klug, Web Master

Phil Briskin, Land trips/Invertebrate Education

Cherie Neat, Newsletter Developer

Pam Plummer and Dean Hart, 2014 Fossil Show

Sandy Schwartz, Badges, Membership

Bill Howat, Merchandise

David Sheehey, Librarian

Michael Siciliano, Raffle and Dive Trips

Louis Stieffel, Auctioneer, Vertebrate Education, Speakers, Newsletter editor, FOSSIL project representative

FCOLC MEETING MINUTES 5/15/2014

24 members attended the meeting

Members were informed of new computer and projector purchase for \$916.37 The projector was needed as the old one had ceased working and was non repairable

Spoke briefly about upcoming fossil show

Members were told Joe Larkin looking for pictures for handout brochure.

Shopping and designing new "T-shirts" is in the works.

Members requested that the women's "T's have women's cut for better fit.

Discussed that the board is examining ways to handle and institute an outreach program. Members were asked for any ideas or suggestion for outreach program.

It was mentioned that members need to support donation can for refreshments and that our meetings average between \$300 and \$500 per meeting.

Fossil of the month for June will be alligator

Phil Briskin discussed at length the SMR trip and it's requirements. Chuck Ferber notarized signatures on SMR required forms.

Tom Granata was the speaker and spoke on " A Fossil Journey". Tom had examples of what constitutes various fossils and passed some around. He provided hand out's titled "A Fossil Journey" He was applauded and thanked after speaking.

Chuck Ferber was thanked for his efforts to notarize forms.

Joe Larkin Was thanked for his efforts with the food for the meeting.

Louis Steiffel was thanked for his many hours and activities on behalf of the club.

Show and tell was held covering sharks as well as some recent finds.

Meeting was closed and dollar raffle was held.

Secretary

Albert Govin

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/

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>

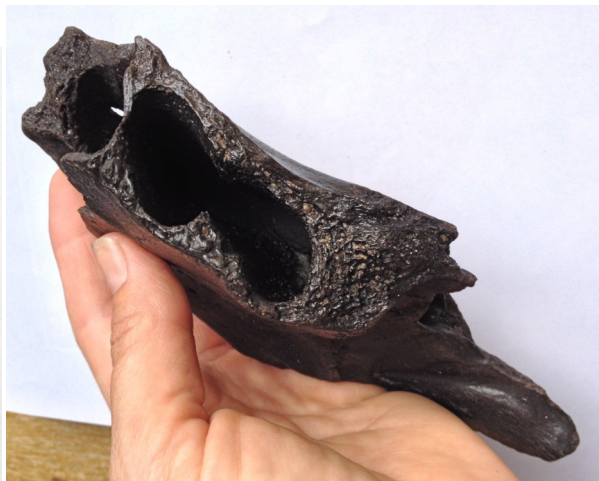
Peace River Water Levels

<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.

Here's a couple of my finds from this weekend: jaw fragment from ground sloth and manatee tooth.
Aimee :-)



Speaker of the Month

Katherine Hendy, the FOSSIL Project Coordinator, Florida Museum of Natural History will be traveling here from Gainesville to talk to us about the FOSSIL PROJECT.

As she says to me in her recent email to me; "I'll be talking about FOSSIL, and we have now gone live onto our new website, www.myfossil.org, which has plenty of good info. On the website, we have workshops, fossil parks, and other resources available there. We are also going to launch a new page with fossil identification guides from all over the country". [This should be online by the time you receive the newsletter]. "Our newsletter is supposed to come out tomorrow, (May 30), but it may be delayed still a few more days as we are waiting for the paleontologist we are interviewing to get back to us. I don't envy your responsibility of getting a newsletter out each month! Our previous interview fell through, and we are hoping our back up will come through in time. We also have a face-book page www.facebook.com/TheFossilProject and a twitter account <http://twitter.com/projectFOSSIL>."

I encourage all of you to attend this month's meeting. Kassie will be presenting some very interesting material and you don't want to miss it.

Louis

Next Meeting

FCOLC next meeting is on Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at Zion Lutheran Church
7401 Winkler Avenue, Fort Myers. Meeting starts at 7 PM.

Announcement:

I ask that anyone wishing to submit a fossil for fossil of the month, to please send me a short write-up and a couple of clear pictures to: cape187@earthlink.net

I need this by the first few days of the month to be included in the newsletter. I will submit as many as we have room for.

I also ask for members to write an article for newsletter submission. I do not want to be the only writer in the newsletter or the only fossil submitter

The newsletter belongs to the club. Please use it. Be famous! Be a published author!! Show off your finds!! Send me stuff!!

Louis

Fossil Discovery Day!!

The Fossil Club of Lee County will be participating in a fossil discovery day at the Shell factory in Ft Myers, on June 29. The fossil museum is now open there and we will be showing

fossils and teaching visitor about the fossils displayed both at the museum as well as the ones we bring

We will staff a couple of tables near the entrance, possibly under tents and also have an inside table We will give away fossils to children and those adults who want them also

Members are asked to volunteer some of their day and join in! Bring some of your fossil finds to show and tell. We will have club sign-up forms available. The Shell Factory is not

only supporting this event, providing tents and tables, but are offering a free Nature Park pass to anyone who joins our club on this day!

The reasons for this event are two-fold. We help people learn about fossils and we hope to sign up some new members. Our club, as every other club of any type, needs to be refreshed

from time to time with some new members. This gives the club a boost of new energy and helps keep the vitality present. Lately we have seen a decrease in attendance on field trips, as

well as participation in some events. We understand that things can seem stale after a while to older members and they don't participate as much, so the idea of a membership drive has

been approached and this is our attempt to sign on some new folks Mike Siciliano, club vice-president, thought of this great cross marketing plan and will talk about it more at the June meeting.

Introducing the FOSSIL project

Throughout the U.S., more than 60 fossil clubs and paleontological societies hold meetings, host speakers, organize festivals, run field trips, conduct outreach, work with scientists and build their own collections. Unlike many other science hobbyist groups (e.g., birdwatchers), fossil clubs and paleontological societies do not enjoy the benefits of a national network.

To facilitate networking, the Florida Museum of Natural History has begun to develop a community of fossil clubs, paleontological societies and professional paleontologists. The effort—called FOSSIL (Fostering Opportunities for Synergistic STEM with Informal Learners)—is supported by funds from the National Science Foundation. To date, more than 30 fossil clubs and paleontological societies have expressed interest in participating in FOSSIL as has an initial cohort of professional paleontologists.

In December the FOSSIL team at the Florida Museum met with representatives of a small number of these clubs and societies to determine priorities for the development of FOSSIL. This was followed by the inaugural meeting of FOSSIL, in conjunction with the 10th North American Paleontological Convention in Gainesville, FL, this February. Nearly 30 clubs were in attendance at the convention, and were able to discuss in detail the rollout of future FOSSIL resources and activities. These discussions combined with results from a national survey conducted in 2012 revealed interest in improving communication between clubs/societies, creating training and development events, enabling attendance at professional meetings and workshops, conducting K-12 outreach to underserved audiences, having online access to the growing digitized collections of natural history museums and creating and sharing personal digitized fossil collections. The broader community of amateur and professional paleontologists will ultimately determine the scope of FOSSIL activities, tools, and resources and collaborate in their development and implementation.

For more information and to keep track of developments with FOSSIL please like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/TheFossilProject, follow us on Twitter [@projectFOSSIL](https://twitter.com/projectFOSSIL), or subscribe to our eNewsletter at www.myfossil.org.



This is a great, Bone Valley, Phosphate mine collected Dugong tooth. This **Metaxitherium Floridanum** was collected by a worker in the mines, many years ago, and was sold to me at the Venice Shark Tooth festival, this past April. I was approached by this gentleman, as I was in my booth, and asked to identify some fossils. It seems he worked in the mines for many years and collected some nice fossils. After telling him what he had, and along with this was some shark teeth and a few other vertebrate fossils, I asked if he was selling them. After I offered a price, he swapped the fossils for some money and we were both happy! Since I collect Dugong teeth, this fits nicely into my collection. I didn't find it, but it was definitely my fossil of the month!

SMR quarry fossil trip!!

The club participated in a fossil hunting trip to the SMR quarry on May 24th. We shared the trip with the Manisota Fossil Club. Phil Briskin, the club land trips coordinator handled the details, which were very specific and detailed, and required by the pit owners. Phil has hunted this mine before and knows Roger Portell well, who was the Museum paleontologist who was leading the trip into the mine Phil also, along with club treasurer Sandy Schwartz, handled the \$15 required of each member and turned these funds over to Roger to cover expenses.

Everyone who hunted the famous SMR pit that day left with lots of fossils. It was a very hot day, though, but no one minded so much as the hunting was hot also! The overwhelming majority of finds were invertebrates, and most of those were gastropods and bivalve shells, in excellent condition. Sometimes a coral would show up, and a couple of echinoids were also found. It was easy to fill a bucket, but it was smart to discriminate some or else you would run out of buckets! I collected lots of great spiny Jewel boxes. Many were very large with terrific, long spines. I also looked for Cowries and wound up with about 30 of them that were complete. Some still have some gloss on them! The large available variety of shells, many extinct, and many in superior condition, made it difficult to decide which ones to pick up. Everywhere you looked on the piles, most of which had been recently washed by rain, you saw vase shells, turbinellas, cones, both right and left-handed, strombus, turritella, extinct oysters, nutmegs, whelks, miters, spindles, etc, etc. And here and there you could pick up a fossil shark tooth, or piece of whale bone, or something similar. It was a good day! Phil said he will try and secure another date for us in the future. I can't wait!



Aurora Fossil Festival

By: Bill Howat

My dad and I went to the Aurora fossil festival the weekend of May 24th. We spent a lot of time hunting the spoil piles that they brought from the PCS mine for the show attendees to dig in. I found some nice sand tigers, makos, hemis, tiger shark teeth, and even a partial cow shark tooth. We had a lot of fun. The only regret I have about the trip was that I wasn't prepared for hunting any of the local creeks... I have heard that Green Mill Run is a wonderful hunting place, where you can find fossils from the Pliocene all the way back to the Cretaceous. I brought some matrix (from the piles) back with me. I will be going back again next year, and I will be better prepared for some creek sifting as well as the pile hunting.



Mammoth tooth in rock/matrix, found scuba diving in Venice in 34 ft. of water. It was after one of the last cold fronts came through the area in mid May. After the cold fronts come through, the winds change, the bottom of the gulf changes, and out comes new treasures.....

Mike Siciliano



Thought this was an interesting fossil. Looks like a prehistoric rat nibbled on this turtle scute like a potato chip.
Aimee Hankel



Chris Koch, owner of Jurassic Parts.com

Showing the kids an Eremotherium Foot at the Wellington Library as part of our Ice Age Rampage Program.

(reprinted with permission. Shark jaws and sloth foot.)



Hubbell Shark

Sometimes we find a Megalodon tooth with a different look to it. It has distinct pointy, rounded root lobes and a swollen, wide blade near the top. We call these Hubbells. Since there is some confusion about exactly what these teeth are, I asked Dr. Gordon Hubbell, the world's leading authority on fossil shark teeth, and the person for whom these teeth were named. I asked him his opinion on the Hubbells, as well as how it got its name. He graciously replied back, with this answer:

There is considerable disagreement about the so called "Hubbell Tooth." Some people think that it is a different species of shark, and some think that it is just a juvenile Meg. I frankly think that it is simply an embryonic tooth from a meg. It is well established that the Lamniform sharks (White Shark, Mako, Sand Tiger etc.) grow and shed teeth while they are developing in the uterus of the female. I have seen embryonic teeth from a White Shark and I have jaws from an embryo of a Longfin Mako and a Common Blue Mako. The bigger "Hubbell" teeth can be from juveniles, but the small ones are too small (3/4") to be from juveniles. So they have to be from embryos. But, who knows they may be from a different species. I guess it is just one of those things about which scientists will continue to disagree.

The tooth was named "The Hubbell Tooth" after me by the commercial collectors, because years ago I kept asking them to save these teeth for me so I could study them. At the time we didn't know whether they were a separate species or not. As you can see we haven't progressed much in our understanding of this fossil form.

I then asked another question:

When a shark tooth is still developing, it is hollow and has no root. So, if embryonic, shouldn't the Hubbell also be undeveloped and not formed completely?

Dr. Gordon replied:

When the teeth are developing in the jaw, the teeth farthest back in the jaw consist of hollow enamel shells. This is true whether the tooth set is from a living shark or from an embryo that is still swimming freely around in one horn of the female's uterus. As the teeth move forward in the jaw, the root is formed, and the teeth become complete. The teeth in the front row, and in most cases the second row too, are fully developed whether they are from a living shark or the embryo that is swimming inside the female. We often refer to the developing teeth as embryonic teeth because they are just developing and not yet functional. This is misleading because they are really just developing teeth. This is why if you are out collecting fossil shark teeth and you come across a few enamel shells, the teeth have to be from a shark that died millions of years ago in that location and not shed teeth. It also means that there is an associated set of fossil teeth in the area, and one should have a careful look at all of land nearby.

I hope this helps some of you with any questions you also had about this interesting fossil shark tooth.

Louis



INDIAN BEADS!!

Yes, we have called them this for as long as I can remember. You know, those beadlike things we find, tubular with a hole in the middle. We have discussed this for years.



Is it Indian Beads? Is it fossil Tube worms? I have always contended that they were Indian beads, man made for a purpose, as I can see NO logical way for tube worms to consistently arrive at this type of specimen. Yes the rocks we find with boreholes! Surely THAT'S it, right? Somehow the "bead" formed around the hole. Countless of times.

All winding up looking pretty much the same Yeah, sure! That's gonna happen! Or tube worms which have a natural hole. It surely must be THEM! But, yes, even though tube worms have a hole, it is usually larger and the wall is usually thinner. And they tend to shatter, rather than break into small bead-like sections. So, no, I doubt that it's tube worms, either.

The story goes that the Indians would take clay they found in the creek beds (we still find it today), form it around a willow twig or some other similar sized tree branch or reed, score it into sections and then place into a fire to harden the clay. The stick would burn away from the inside and they would scoop the newly formed beads out of the ashes, once cooled down. The Indians would then string them and wear the beads as decorations. However, I have always had questions about that. Since we tend to find these beads in selected locations, usually finding a lot in that place, why would that be? And very rarely do we find other Indian artifacts associated with them. If it was a camp where they made them and wore them there, why no other evidence? It is because, I believe that they are not only NOT tube worms, OR worm boreholes, or even Indian beads, but rather--net weights!

Think about it! They weave nets, from palm fibers, grasses, etc., and then string these weights along the bottom of the net, much like we do it today. Sure they could have tied on big rocks, but that would have made it very inefficient if the net was to be used also as a type of seine, dragged along the bottom, needing weights that would not snag easily. These small weights, strung on the bottom lead line, by the hundreds, helped keep the net in the proper position and could be custom manufactured as needed. And if set out on its' own, such as a modern day gill net, tied to some sticks or something to hold it in place, and for some reason the net tore loose and wrapped up in a jumbled tangle downriver, it may have been lost or discarded. Being made of easily biodegradable materials, it soon rotted away and the man made clay net weights remained. This is why we find them in some areas and not others. Of course, the river currents, laden with fine silt, eventually wears them smooth, especially the ones tumbled along the bottom.



The weights (beads) I found several years ago, in Caloosahatchee River dredge spoil piles near Ft. Denaud, were still fairly clay-like in appearance. The tannins in the river had not stained them very much, and you can easily see that they are made of hardened clay. The Caloosahatchee River does not stain the fossils, etc., nearly as much as the Peace river, so those found in the Peace are darker.



The current had not yet smoothed them a lot, either, so these examples started my thinking about what they were really from, and their origins. Of course, the Indians possibly also used some, especially the thinner ones, for jewelry, but I believe I'm right with this net weight explanation.

I am always open to other interpretations if reasonable argument is provided to back it up. In the mean time I think my explanation solves the mystery, once and for all.

I included pictures of modern day weighted nets, as well as a selection of weights found in the rivers. The whitish ones along the bottom are some of the ones from the Ft Denaud area. Louis