



# FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

JULY 2014

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## Letter from the President

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I want to thank all of you guys for participating in this great club of ours and making it so rewarding to be a part of it. When I see so many members bring their show and tell fossils to the meeting, so everyone can share and learn from them, I get enthused myself to do more also. When I see so many members volunteer to provide refreshments at the meetings, and bring extra fossil to the raffle table and donate fossil books to the club library and fossils for kid's digs, I get happy. When I see so many members come out to club functions, sometimes requiring them to sit in the sun and heat just to share their knowledge and passion about this great hobby, it makes me not mind so much all of the hours I spend also doing things for the club. So, I want to say--thank you!

Many of our members do many things for the club, and I cannot single out each one here today, but this month I want to highlight Sandy Schwartz. When I took over, as president again, in 2004, Sandy was a relatively new member. But when we decided to try and attempt to go digital with the newsletter, Sandy stepped up and volunteered to do it. She had to learn it, herself, but spent many hours perfecting the process and we have done it that way ever since. Since that time, Sandy has always jumped in and agreed to do things she was able to do, such as design and sew the cover for our library cart, make signage for shows, events, etc., helped at the yearly fossil auction, the Christmas meeting party, and recently revised and reformatted the club brochures and also the club membership forms. And other things over the years, as was needed, and she has always tried her best to help everyone. Of course, Sandy is now the club Treasurer! She is trying something new, again!, and doing a bang up job. Sandy is an avid fossil hunter, and not being able to spot a horse tooth at her feet, while looking for horse teeth, has never deterred her from trying! She got certified to dive so as to find fossils at Venice, and got a Kayak to explore the Peace river fossil beds as well. Sandy has been a big asset to the club over the last 10 years and we all appreciate her very much. So, bring her a horse tooth. She'll give you a big smile!

Phil Briskin has been very hard at work trying to get access to pits and mines for the club to fossil hunt. This is a daunting task. Most pit/mine operators shy away from allowing people onto the property for various reason. However, Phil is making progress, stressing the community outreach that we do and sharing the fossils with the community. Since many of our members have decided to loan some of their better specimens to the Shell Factory Fossil Museum, this is also a plus that may help convince mine owners to share their property with us to hunt. Good luck, Phil, and we anxiously await, buckets in hand and shovels at the ready, to hear of your accomplishments.

Mike Siciliano, our hard working, hard diving, vice president, came up with an idea to promote the club and help get some new members to join up. He suggested a fossil discovery day, at the Shell Factory, where the new fossil museum is now located. So, on June 29, we set up some displays, a fossil enriched sand-filled kid's dig, a large shell factory acquired Dinosaur, and some sweat rags!, and gathered under a couple of tents in the parking lot, and promoted fossils and the club. We also sent the people inside to see the fossil museum and a couple of us were in there giving informal tours and talking about the club. An article by Mike, in this newsletter tells more about it.

The feature fossil of the month, for show and tell, seems to be getting more popular. So far we have featured horse, shark, and mammoth and last month, alligator. Many members brought in some pretty cool Alligator fossils to show. This month the featured fossil will be Deer. Since Deer go back at least 5 million years in our fossil record, we find their fossils on a regular basis. I expect many member have deer fossils and I ask that you bring them in for show and tell and share them with all of us this month.

Last month Kassie Hendy and her husband Austin traveled from Gainesville to speak at our meeting. We had some



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technical glitches and could not get the projector system to work, until Matt came from his house and fixed it for us. Kassie spoke about the FOSSIL PROJECT, which is an exciting new development in the fossil community that provides interaction between everyone from the beginner to the professional to the museum level. Austin then spoke about fossils from Panama and Venezuela, and showed some great power point slides of the hunting as well as the finds! Thank you both for such an informative, interesting talk.

The club now owns a laptop as well as a new digital projector. I had it at the meeting and could have used it to help solve our "glitch" with the fellowship hall's equipment, but I goofed and had not done the "startup" necessary to make it work. This equipment WILL be meeting-ready for the next time it is needed!! Al Govin was able to procure this for the club, at a very good price. Thanks, Al.

The speaker for July will be Bob Fuqua. If you purchase one of his new books on Venice fossils he will gladly sign it for you.

I encourage all of you to check out the Fossil Project website at [www.myfossil.org](http://www.myfossil.org) This is a great site to learn a lot of interesting things about what others are doing in the fossil world. You can sign up to see as well as contribute to their monthly newsletter also.

To finish, I want to say that July 19 is Cape Coral Parks and Rec Day. We will man a table at this event, held at the main pavilion at the Cape Coral Yacht Club, on the river. Anyone wanting to help out is welcome. Events like this are fun to participate in. We have a unique hobby and a unique club. Many people have an interest in this but have no idea this is going on. So, we present ourselves and our fossils, to the community and help the education process. It's fun to do and very rewarding. As citizen scientists, lets spread the word!

See you at the July meeting!!

Louis Stieffel

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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

**Meeting minutes from June 19 meeting of  
the FCOLC**

Meeting called to order by President Louis Stieffel.

New members welcomed and informed of some of the club services such as the \$1 raffle, merchandise store, library and show and tell.

Mary Southall and Mike Siciliano was thanked for providing refreshments. Bill Howat will be doing July. Mike Cox volunteered for August.

The show and tell featured animal for July will be DEER.

Volunteers were solicited for Fossil Discovery day.

Pam Plummer spoke about the National Fossil Day.

Louis asked for newsletter contributions from members.

Kassie Hendy spoke about the Fossil Project and let member know of ongoing projects and accomplishments.

Matt, from the Church, came by and helped get the power-point system working.

Break.

Austin Hendy spoke about fossils of South and Central America.

Bob Fuqua will be the speaker for July.

Phil Briskin spoke about the recent trip the club took to SMR and about his efforts to gain club access to other pits and mines.

It was announced that the river hunting is probably done for this season, with the rivers about 4-5 feet over hunting levels, and rising.

Show and tell was held, with many members bringing in the featured fossil of the month--alligator--as well as recent finds.

The \$1 fossil raffle numbers were called.

Meeting adjourned.



## **July Speaker of the Month**

### **Bob Fuqua**

*Fossil Hunting in Kansas, Maryland, and Florida*

This talk starts with finding my first fossil shark tooth in the chalk bluffs of western Kansas when I was a young boy. I also talk about other fossils that have been found in Kansas and surrounding areas. Then we move into hunting fossils in the Calvert Cliffs area of the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland.

The last part of this talk is fossil hunting in Florida. It is mainly about SCUBA diving in the Gulf, but also talks about hunting in rivers, surface mines and construction sites.

Bio: Bob Fuqua was born in Kansas in 1949 and graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1971. He then served in the U.S. Air Force for four years which led to a 30+ year career in intelligence. Most of his career was in Maryland, but he also had a four year tour in Hawaii, as well as numerous work trips throughout Europe and Asia. In 2002 he retired and he and his wife Linda moved to Venice, Florida in 2004.

Bob has had a life-long interest in fossils. This is largely due to the fact that Kansas was once part of a large inland sea, something that has always fascinated him. He fondly remembers finding his first fossil shark teeth in the chalk bluffs of western Kansas when he was a very young boy. Those teeth are some of his most prized possessions.

In 1977, he became a certified SCUBA diver and started making trips to the Florida Keys and Caribbean to dive on the coral reefs. He also dove on many ship wrecks in the Atlantic from New Jersey to Florida. In 1985, he volunteered as a SCUBA diver at the new National Aquarium in Baltimore and eventually became the Sunday Dive Captain. He was also an EMT and SCUBA diver with the Laurel (Maryland) Volunteer Rescue Squad.

## **Refreshments for July**

*Bill Howat*

## **Fossil Festival**

**December 6<sup>th</sup> 2014**

If anyone is interested in being a vendor at this year's Fossil Festival please fill out the attached form and return it to the address on the form. I can't reserve your tables without the deposit. We have limited number of tables this year with our new venue. Our festival will be held at the Shell Factory and Nature Park.

The Shell Factory has been open for 76 years with proven methods of promoting events. There will be thousands of flyers handed out (one goes in each bag), TV and radio coverage. They will also have local newspapers ads. With this type of publicity, we know that this venue will be very successful so reserve your tables now!

We have tables inside the Dolphin room and we will have two 30' x 30' tents set up in the parking lot. Non-member vendors to be charged for inside tables \$65.00 for 2 tables and \$25 per additional table, member vendors \$50.00 for 2 tables and \$20.00 per additional table, all outside tables will \$20.00 per table, at the time vendors make reservations, a 50% non-refundable deposit will be required.

## **Next Meeting**

FCOLC next meeting is on Thursday, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at Zion Lutheran Church  
7401 Winkler Avenue, Fort Myers. Meeting starts at 7 PM.

### **Wanted--newsletter articles!!**

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](mailto: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

# **WE ARE EXPANDING**

Due to the overwhelming response from our customers at The Shell Factory & Nature Park, we will be expanding our new Fossil and Gem Museum.

First I want to thank my fellow fossil hunters for their generosity in loaning us the specimens. We quickly filled the museum; I even had to turn specimens down!

Now that we will have 20 more cabinets to fill, I'm reaching out to the fossil community once again.

If you're interested in displaying your specimens in a museum please contact me.

Clubs and societies this is a perfect time to reserve a spot in the museum to promote your organization. The Shell Factory has over 1.5 million visitors a year. We also include the Fossil and Gem museum in our field trip tours with local children. Generations of children have been coming to The Shell Factory and Nature Park. My parents brought me, I brought my children and now I have the privilege to bring my grandchildren.

The Shell Factory & Nature Park is giving us the opportunity to fulfill part of the FOSSIL project concept of having the clubs collaborate in learning, science, and outreach. Let's not waste this opportunity to show off just how good we are!

Our target finish date is August 2014. Please contact me at 239.246.5993 or [fcoldtreasures@yahoo.com](mailto:fcoldtreasures@yahoo.com)

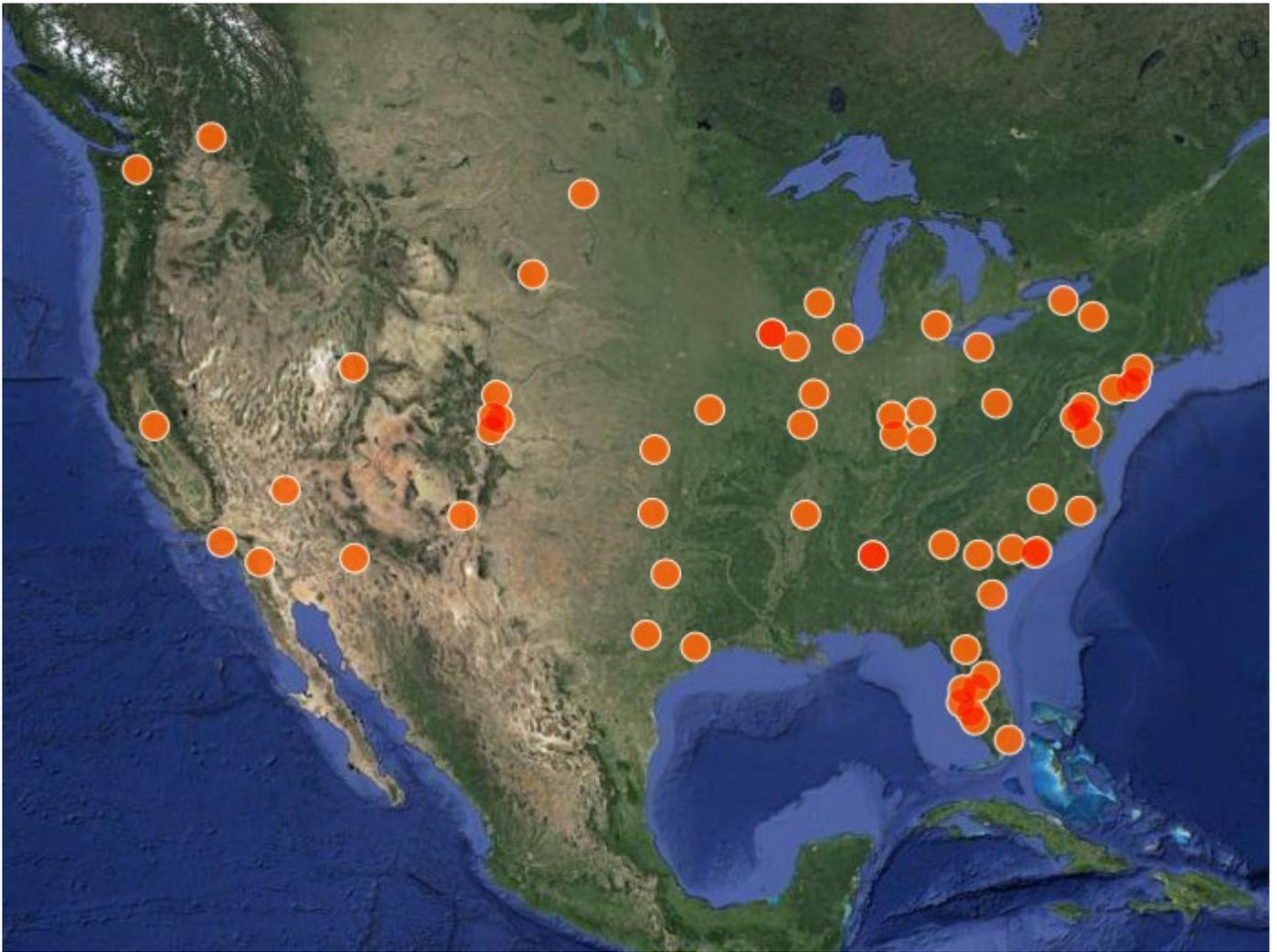
Thank you

Pam Plummer



## Fossil Clubs in the USA

This is a map of the USA showing the locations of fossil club. As you can see, not every state is represented, while other states, such as Florida and the Carolinas, as well as Maryland and other Northeastern states have several. Where the fossils are, is where the fossil clubs are! The most southernmost dot is, I believe, the Miami fossil club. Since they are no longer a club, that makes our Fossil Club of Lee County the most southernmost club in the US.



### fossil of the month

It is an arrowhead I found this past week in South Georgia  
by Coby Pawlowski



### Fossil Discovery Day



## FOSSIL DISCOVERY DAY

On Sunday, June 29th, 2014, the FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY held our first "Fossil discovery day", which was held at the shell factory in north ft. Myers. This special day was designed to let people of all ages discover fossils, discover the new fossil and gem museum, and to discover our wonderful club. Outside in the parking lot we had 2 tents set up filled with club member volunteers, and very curious people. We had a free kids dig, free spin and win game, free bags of shark teeth, and lots of fossil displays. We also signed up 7 new families to our club. Everyone who signed up received free entrance to the Nature Park at the shell factory. People from as far away as Boca Raton came to participate in this highly advertised event. Several club members also came by and visited.

We shared fossils, stories, hunting spots, techniques, anything fossil related with our wonderful guests. Inside the fossil/gem museum, club president Louis Stieffel and Board member Joe Larkin were educating and answering all questions to museum guests. This event was a Huge success for our club. But this event would not have been possible, if not for our generous club member volunteers. Thank you Pam and Jim Siegel, Don Lindsey, Phil and Louise Briskin, Mike Cox, Board member Dean Hart, club Treasurer Sandy Schwartz, accompanied by her husband Herb, Loretta Blessing, Joe Larkin, Sue Collier, Louis Stieffel, and of course, Board member and museum director Pam Plummer, along with the great folks at the shell factory.

During the afternoon, a Fox news reporter/cameraman came by and we made the 10 o'clock news that night.

Michael Siciliano

vice president, Fossil Club of Lee County



## "Living Fossil" Caught off Key West

Commercial fisher Carl Moore wasn't sure what he had netted last week just south of Key West, when he saw the fish's flat, blade-like snout. Only after the Georgia angler photographed and released his catch was its identity confirmed: It was a goblin shark, a rare deep-sea shark, and it's believed to be only the second such specimen ever caught in the Gulf of Mexico.

These sharks are so rarely encountered that any information about them is eagerly devoured by researchers, says John Carlson, a research biologist for the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Service. After Moore examined his curious catch and took a series of photos of it, he released it back into the ocean and contacted NOAA. Moore's photos were referred to Carlson, who specializes in sharks and was excited to get more data on this rare one.

"We don't know how long they live; we don't know how often they reproduce, or even how big they are when they reproduce," Carlson says. "They're a mystery."

Moore had told NOAA he thought the shark he released was about 18 feet (5.4 meters) long. When Carlson and colleagues analyzed Moore's photographs, they gauged the length to be more like 15 feet (4.5 meters) long. And they made an educated guess about the shark's sex.

Carlson says male sharks have external sexual characteristics called claspers, two fin-like appendages near the tail that males use to hold on to females while mating. "From the photographs, we don't see those, so we're suspecting it's a female," he says.

### Life in the Dark

Moore caught the goblin shark at around 2,000 feet (610 meters) deep. That's on the shallower end of the average depth range for this species, Carlson says: They're usually found between 2,000 and 3,000 feet (610 and 914 meters) deep. That makes it one of the deepest occurring species among sharks and their relatives—and many of the shark's unusual features probably are adaptations to its habitat, he says.

Sharks have a series of sensors in their head called ampullar of Lorenzini, which enable them to pick up the electrical signals of animals around them. The goblin shark's unusually shaped head may provide an advantage in the gloomy deep, Carlson says, as the distribution of those sensors along the long, flat blade would extend the radius in which the sharks could detect prey. "It's the same sort of thing with hammerhead sharks," he says, with the ampullae found along the edge of the animal's distinctively shaped head.

Once a goblin shark locates its prey, that's where its needle-like teeth come in. Carlson says the teeth act like

knives, impaling and holding on to soft-bodied prey such as fish and squid.



### Shrouded in Mystery

The first recorded appearance of a goblin shark in the Gulf of Mexico was fairly recent, in 2000. Before that, the last time anyone reported seeing a goblin shark in the North Atlantic was in the 1970s off the Bahamas, says Carlson.

They've been found in the waters off Brazil, French Guiana, Colombia, and the Indo-Pacific, but "probably 80 percent of known records [of these sharks] occur off Japan," the research biologist says.

Carlson and colleagues are working on a paper describing this latest goblin shark sighting in the Gulf of Mexico, and are trying to figure out if there are hot spots for this animal around the world. The scientists aren't sure whether goblin sharks are just more abundant around Japan or if the lopsided sightings are a consequence of uneven sampling by researchers.

To build his knowledge of goblin sharks, Carlson says, he would have loved to have seen the specimen Moore pulled up. But he's glad that Moore was able to release it alive, to resume its mysterious life in the deep.

*Credits: National Geographic*

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