



FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

AUGUST 2014

Letter from the President

Greetings, all!!

It's time for another monthly newsletter and this month we have some interesting topics for you. With the full brunt of our summer rainy season upon us, fossil hunting in the local rivers and creeks is all but impossible. If you have a land site available, the rains actually help as long as you don't get stuck in the soft mud. Offshore diving is still an option, off of Venice Beach, if you are a diver. However, overall, the fossil hunting season has slowed way down. What this means, though, it is time to do any prep you may have been putting off, or labeling and organizing your collection. It also means you have more time to read and learn about the fossils you find, and our club library is a great way to find the right literature to help you find that new information. David Sheehy the club librarian has spent a lot of time recently curating the books, pamphlets and newsletters in the library just so you can have them to learn from. You can also update your "finds" list, so when you reapply for your Florida fossil permit you have this information easily available. Another thing, fossil related, that you can do is to write an article for this newsletter! I would like to see more members contributing to it. Tell about a special find or a memorable fossil hunt or a display you are considering or a talk you gave to a group, or just about anything to do with our hobby! For instance, Sandy, (our treasurer) could tell us how she manages to get wet to the top of her ears when fossil hunting a shallow creek. If there is 3 inches of water, Sandy will be soaked, even though the rest of us are not wet above our knees! So, if you give it a little thought, you would be surprised to realize how interesting you are! Tell us!

We are now OFFICIALLY a 501c3 incorporated non-profit organization. We have the written notification from the IRS and after a long application process (thanks Pam

Plummer!), retaining a local lawyer, and spending a ton of money, we now have this legal status. We are excited that we now have this much needed, and deserved, official and recognized title as we have always been total non-profit from the club's beginning

The August meeting is a bit different than most other meetings. It will be an interactive meeting with our annual show and tell and trade and sell agenda. Next month, September, we will have a scheduled speaker, Matt Hayes, who unfortunately had to postpone because of an unexpected illness earlier in the year. I have some other speakers I'm trying to schedule as well, and will let you know who as soon as I get a solid commitment.

The November meeting will be moved to the Shell Factory. I have a separate announcement inside this newsletter, so be sure to read it.

By the time you read this our second fossil discovery day at the Shell factory fossil museum will be history. We plan on manning a table, representing the club, at the museum re-opening on August 8, 9 and 10. They have expanded the fossil museum and will be celebrating the opening of the new addition during those dates. I will report more about this at the August meeting.

I want to thank all of you who have contributed, in any way, to the fossil club of Lee County in the past month. Without your help we do not exist! And to all who plan on helping forward, I thank you in advance! See you at the meeting!!

Louis Stieffel
President
Fossil Club of Lee County



Member focus--Zack Deyo

We participate in and enjoy a unique hobby. Most people usually express surprise and comment "Really?" "Here?", when we explain that we collect fossils, especially here in SW Florida. So, frequently, we are asked to provide a speaker for small groups, explaining our fossil hunting and collecting adventures. We are very fortunate to have someone in our fossil club who actively seeks out these opportunities to share the knowledge, adventure and passion of paleontology, especially to the children. His name is Zack Deyo.

It is surprising, though, that this particular member is doing this, because, you see, Zack is only 15 years old! And, he has actually been giving talks for over a year already, and has recently expanded his involvement by leading actual fossil hunting trips for school aged groups.

Zack is, believe it or not, very quiet and almost painfully shy at our meetings. Yet he overcomes this and does what most folks do not want to do--speak before a public group. To see Zack at a meeting you would never guess he does public speaking, yet he does, and is growing quite a long list of engagements. Some of his talks included a RSW Airport lecture for TSA employees; two lectures and fossil displays at the Golisano Children's museum of Naples; two lectures at the 2013 National Fossil Day Show, a senior lecture at the Emeritus assisted living facility; speaking at Dino Days at the Coconut Point Mall in Estero; heading a shark camp in Naples at the end of July and also led a river fossil hunt for the club during the low water season.

As the club president I usually get the requests from groups who express a desire to have a talk about fossils. Zack makes my job of lining up a speaker for these groups easier, as he is always willing to do so, as long as school work allows. His dad supports him fully in his speaking endeavors and helps get him to the various locations, because, you see, Zack is still too young to drive! Zack is an asset to the Fossil Club of Lee County and we are glad he is such an integral part of our organization.

Zack will be a sophomore in high school this year and will be facing new adventures in school, but still plans to continue his public speaking and opening the eyes and minds of the uninitiated to the wonders and knowledge of paleontology!

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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

NOTICE:

The location of the Fossil Club of Lee County general meeting--for the month of **NOVEMBER**--will be moved from the Zion Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, where we hold our monthly meetings to the Dolphin Room at the Shell Factory. The church holds its annual harvest festival in November and has asked us to not meet there on our regularly scheduled third Thursday.

The Shell Factory will be where we hold our annual Fossil Festival on December 6 and it seems like a good place to also hold the November meeting. Members attending can get a good feel of the location of our fossil festival as well as enjoy a different venue for this **one time** change. The Fish Bones restaurant, adjoined next to the Dolphin Room will be providing the refreshments.

The December meeting will be held, as usual, at the Fellowship hall.

Minutes from July 17 General Meeting of the Fossil Club of Lee County

Meeting was called to order by president Louis Stieffel

New members were welcomed and informed of the club \$1 raffle, the club store and the library.

Refreshment volunteer, (and club store operator), Bill Howat, was thanked for providing the evenings refreshments.

It was announced that Mike Cox will provide refreshment for August, and Phil and Louise Briskin volunteered to do September.

The fossil discovery day held at the fossil museum at the Shell Factory was declared a success. Seven new members signed up there.

Louis asked for member contributions to the newsletter, including articles and fossil finds.

The August general meeting will be the annual show and tell and trade and sell. Members should bring in fossils for this meeting.

The monthly speaker Bob Fuqua then gave a very informative presentation about fossil collecting in several different states.

The meeting for November may be moved because of a scheduling conflict with the Fellowship Hall.

Phil Briskin reported on the preliminary hunting trip to SW Aggregates. He said we will have a club trip there in the cooler fall weather.

Phil also reported on his efforts to get club land trips to the Mosaic Phosphate mine as well as other active dig sites in the area.

An announcement was made that our 501c3 incorporation status has been officially approved by the IRS. Woo-ee!

Pam Plummer and Dean Hart spoke about the December fossil show.

Pam spoke about the fossil museum.

The focus fossil for the month of August show and tell will be turtle.

Two signed and numbered colored pencil prints by Mike Menasco was exhibited to the club. Mike kindly donated these to the club.

One will be a part of the grand prize raffle at the fossil show and one will be in the annual club auction.

Louis announced that we now have new club membership signup forms.

Mike Siciliano conducted the \$1 raffle.

Meeting adjourned

August General Meeting

The August general meeting of the Fossil Club of Lee County will be held at 7pm on August 21. The meeting this month will be the annual **show and tell and trade and sell** format!

Members are encouraged to bring some of their fossils in to show. They will also have the opportunity to trade them as well as openly sell some to other members. This is the only meeting where member fossil sales are permitted.

Due to certain tax obligations for the club we must charge a nominal fee for a table for any member who wants to **sell** some of their fossils. The charge will be \$1 per table, which includes the sales tax.

The club member who is selling will then be individually responsible for reporting, collecting and submitting sales tax to the state. There is **no** table fee for any member who displays fossils and does not sell.

We will forgo the regular \$1 raffle table, for this meeting. In its place will be a silent auction table with the winners announced near the close of the meeting.

There will be no speaker this month. Refreshments will be served, as well as the library will be available, as well as the paleo store.

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.

The expansion of the Fossil and Gem Museum at the Shell Factory and Nature Park is now open! I want to thank all my friends, fellow collectors and the following organizations, Fossil Club of Lee County, Southwest Florida Gem, Mineral and Fossil Club, Florida Paleontology Society, Florida Geological Foundation and Southwest Florida Fossil Society for making this expansion possible.

The Fossil Club of Lee County will be at the museum for the opening on August 8th, 9th and 10th from 12 - 4. If you would like to volunteer to help the club promote paleontology contact Louis.

Hope to see you all there!

Pam Plummer

Director Fossil and Gem Museum

Shell Factory and Nature Park

Better Lucky Than Good

by Al Govin

On the second week in July Louis Stieffel and myself were hunting a creek in Desoto County. This is extremely unusual this time of year as the water levels normally prohibit this from happening. Last year this time I buried my Yukon in a nearby field because of high water levels. This day we started at approximately 10:00 AM and had dug and screened until 3:00 PM. I had been having a reasonably successful day. I had found 32 shark teeth, 3 alligator teeth, 2 ray mouth parts, 3 horse molars, 1 horse incisor, 1 tortoise spur, 1 ray dermal, 4 turtle center scutes, 1 alligator coprolite, partial dolphin inner ear, 3 holmesina scutes, snake vertebrae, 1 frog leg bone and assorted pieces for kids digs.



We had decided to wrap things up and call it a day. I had my screen, and portable table under my left arm and my shovel in my right arm. I have waded about 20 yards and said I wonder if there is any gravel here. I took my shovel with my right arm only and put it on the bottom and pushed it forward for 10 or 12". When I lifted the shovel there was virtually no gravel but there was a perfect 2-1/2" meg tooth. See attached picture. Seeing that tooth, all I could say is, **it's really better to be lucky than good.**

That find of course gets you motor running and Louis and I scheduled a trip for the following week, if the water levels stayed low.



The following week we returned to the spot I found the meg tooth. I was disappointed to find no gravel but about 6 feet away I did find a great spot and spent the rest of the day digging there. I found 24 shark teeth one being a perfect meg tooth 2-3/4", 3 ray mouth parts, 1 gator tooth, 2 ray dermals, 1 deer antler, 1 horse molar, 3 pcs of ivory as well as assorted kids dig material.

After being rewarded by the fossil gods with low water and some neat finds I'm looking forward to a time when the water levels are once again low enough to hunt. Oh, I can honestly say for a change I out-hunted Louis.

Fossil finds of the month

APOLLO MISSION

This Florida summer is just as it should be: blisteringly hot and punctuated by outbursts of dangerous lightening. I was reading a post on The Fossil Forum and the originator of the thread invited everyone down to south Florida to dig on some land sites with him.

I was tempted...but only for a second. I imagined myself laid out on the sand like raw meat in a frying pan, trying to remember, through a haze of heat stroke, exactly what I was supposed to be looking for.

Pass!

Yet I found myself on the Tampa side this weekend and instead of exiting onto I-4 East to Orlando, my OCD took over and I continued south on I-75 to the Apollo Beach exit.

I needed some fossils in a bad way!

A couple of years ago I spent a summer scouring Apollo Beach while I waited for my first season in the Peace River to ensue. Apollo Beach is an ugly, bizarre place but the small strip of easily accessible sand yields some great little fossils, "little" being the operative word. I rarely use 1/4" fossil screen in the Peace River as all the tiny stuff frustrates my search for that big perfect meg, however, after my recent visit to Apollo Beach, I'm rethinking my feelings about "micro" fossils.

Look at this tiny incisor! Smaller than a squirrel; bigger than a mouse. Maybe a Pleistocene rat? It has beautiful sheen and color and I can't wait to buy a magnifying glass so I can actually see it.

And I think I found the smallest gator osteoderm ever!

I'm currently reading "Florida's Geological Treasures by Iris Tracy Comfort and she writes, "Because of the ample supply and...ease of collecting and storing, many collectors have...begun to specialize in microscopic material."

I'm not ready to commit to a microscopic fossil collection (sounds like a migraine in the making) but I can now see the allure of the tiny fossil.

Next time I'm in the area, I'm going to scoop some of the beach "slurry" into a bucket and take it home for closer inspection.

Aimee Hankel



Announcement:

The Shell Factory will be celebrating the grand opening of the expanded fossil museum on August 8, 9 and 10th. We will staff a club table, inside the building, near the museum, for the purpose of promoting the club, and helping visitors understand the fossils in the museum.

The Shell Factory has decided that the museum has been so successful that it tore out a wall, fixed up that adjoining room, and expanded the museum by about a third or more! Pam Plummer, the museum director, has worked hard to get new fossil acquisitions for all the display cases in the addition. This museum is a very nice fossil museum and it also houses minerals and gemstones.

We encourage all club members to visit the museum, and possibly loan specimens for display.

Fossil finds of the month

For a couple of weeks in June, Joe Larkin took advantage of the unseasonal low water and spent the time digging a honey hole he discovered in the Peace river. He discovered this un-dug, fossil rich site while prospecting and went back three times until the water level got too high to work it. Although the gravel layer was not deep, by scraping along the bedrock Joe was able to recover a lot of nice Megalodon teeth as well as a Mastodon tooth and other fossils.

I missed the deadline for putting this into the July newsletter, but it's better late than never. Even though the rivers are now too high for fossil hunting, let this be an inspiration to get back out there when the water gets lower!



FCOLC Paleo Library

The Fossil Club of Lee County has the largest, most comprehensive paleontological library of any fossil club in the state. It is available for club members use and they are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity and check out some of this unique literature. The club librarian, David Sheehey, recently spent several hours updating, cataloging, and organizing all the new additions and it is all ready for loan to members

David arrived back in SW Florida from an extended visit to Lithuania, and will be traveling again soon, but took the time to get everything in order first. We all appreciate his efforts and dedication to making the club library as much of an asset as it is.

Many of the library books have been donated by members, and some have been outright purchased by the club. Many are no longer in print and this library gives a chance to learn about fossils from books that are no longer available to the general public.

THE FOSSIL PROJECT

The FOSSIL Project is bringing together professional paleontologists, natural history museums and amateur collectors together to form working partnerships in the field of paleontology. The club encourages members to take advantage of this relationship and to stay abreast of ongoing accomplishments. Check in to the website often to stay informed and aware. <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/myfossil/resources-2/>

You can also see daily activities and featured articles on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/TheFossilProject>

Private collections have a legitimate role in the preservation and study of our planetary heritage. Most private collectors gladly open their doors to any interested scientist and many readily donate specimens or money to research programs. The historical value of well-curated collections often end as bequests to museums. It is fair to say that this does necessitate patience on behalf of paleontologists wishing to house such collections, but the Fossil Project maintains that this is the perfect reason to work with collectors to ensure a partnership that will help in the curation, conservation and preparation of samples and ultimately in its accession to a collection.

Fossil finds of the month

I am relating a fossil hunting story told to me by Mike Sicialano, our club's hard-working, hard-diving vice-president.

Louis

I was diving with Captain Mike, from his dive boat, during July, off of Venice Beach, trying to find the elusive Megalodon shark teeth. Visibility was very bad that day, perhaps 2-3 feet at best, so I stayed close to the boat and tried fanning the bottom, hoping for a fossil to pop up. As I was fanning I noticed something that looked metallic, and thought it may be some sort of buried treasure or something. As I continued to fan the sand, it grew larger and was shiny. Excited, I finally just reached out and grabbed it, trying to figure out what it was in the murky water. Suddenly I was being pulled forward, but didn't know why. Then it would stop, but just as quickly I was forward again. I know the metal object was large and I was trying to figure out what treasure I had but the current, apparently, was moving me along. Finally, I tried standing up on the bottom for a better look and realized what I had found. You guessed it--I had uncovered the anchor from our boat!! The waves on top kept pulling me along as it moved the boat!! I then, of course, tried to push the anchor back into the bottom but the sand kept shifting and it kept slipping. Trying not to panic, I just kept pushing it into the sandy bottom and finally! it dug in and held! Good thing because if I could not have stopped the boat there is no telling where it would have drifted and since there was no one in the boat, it could have been bad. I don't know, really, how I was not able to discern what I was fanning, but I know I will NEVER dig up the boat anchor again!

Mike

Linda Warner's fossils!!

Some of you may remember Linda Warner, she was a club member but many people did not know her as she was very quiet and shy. She was also a member of the SW Fossil Club. Linda had a tremendous collection as she had been hunting for over 20 years, her husband went with her but mostly to watch out for her. You are probably wanting to know where she hunted. She was a good friend of Jim's wife, Jim owned and operated Handi-Phil, so she had access there from early on and did a lot of hunting at 5:00 a.m. She told a story about how she found a big mammoth bone and couldn't figure out how to get it home so she made her husband swim across a canal to get it and swim back with it.

Linda was loads of fun, Sue Collier and I miss her. It is over a year ago that she died of cancer and Sue Collier acquired her collection in June. You may remember that Sue got up in June at the meeting and offered to let members see the collection and purchase pieces if they wanted. I went and acquired a few lovely pieces and was also able to purchase one of her display cases which I am now in the process of organizing.

Sue will be bringing some pieces to sell at our swap meet on August 21st so you will have another opportunity to get something that Linda lovingly collected.

Sandy

National Fossil Day is a nationwide celebration of our nation's rich fossil history. Check out this website for events that are happening around our great country. <http://www.nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/events.cfm>

National Fossil Day will be held on October 4th 2014 at the South Florida Museum in Bradenton, FL

It's extremely important for the Fossil Club of Lee County to participate in this event. This event follows the FOSSIL project concept of uniting the fossil community across the nation to promote awareness and education of fossil history.

Our own Zack Deyo and Dr Charles O'Connor will be doing presentations that day. Joe Larkin, Dean Hart and Aimee Hankel have already volunteered to work our club tables, however we still need a couple of more volunteers to give them a break. Besides working our club table we also need volunteers to be at the exhibits throughout the museum to tell stories and answer questions.

Volunteers get a free pass to the museum all day, so if you're not working you can see the museum for FREE!

If you can't volunteer would you consider loaning specimens for the day for the club's exhibit?

Contact me if you're interested Pam Plummer 239.246.5993 fcoltreasures@yahoo.com

"This is NOT the boat anchor in the story!"



FIRST LAND ANIMALS KEPT FISHLIKE JAWS FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS

May 01, 2013



A juvenile *Orobates pabsti*, a reptile-like four-legged amphibian. Philip Anderson of UMass Amherst and colleagues examined images of 89 fossils of early tetrapods and their fish-like forebears ranging in age from about 400 to 300 million years old. The pictured specimen is from the Museum Der Natur in Gotha, Germany. Credit: Thomas Martens, Stiftung Schloss Friedenstein Gotha, Germany

Read more at: <http://phys.org/news/2013-05-animals-fishlike-jaws-millions-years.html#jCp>

Scientists studying how early land vertebrates evolved from fishes long thought that the animals developed legs for moving around on land well before their feeding systems and dietary habits changed enough to let them eat a land-based diet, but strong evidence was lacking. Now, for the first time fossil jaw measurements by Philip Anderson at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and others have tested and statistically confirmed this lag.

"This pattern had been hypothesized previously, but not really tested. Now we've done that," Anderson says. He and his team found that the [mechanical properties](#) of tetrapod [jaws](#) did not show significant adaptations to land-based feeding until some 40 to 80 million years after the four-legged creatures initially came out of the water. Until then, tetrapod jaws were still very fish-like, even though their owners had weight-bearing limbs and the ability to walk on land. Anderson says this finding suggests tetrapods may have shown a limited variety of feeding strategies in the early phases of their evolution on land.

"What it took to really initiate [evolutionary changes](#) in the jaw system was for these [animals](#) to start eating plants," he says. For the study, published in an early online edition of the journal *Integrative and Comparative Biology*, Anderson and researchers Matt Friedman of the University of Oxford and Marcello Ruta of the University of Lincoln, U.K., examined images of 89 fossils of early tetrapods and their fish-like forebears. The fossils ranged in age from about 400 to 300 million years old. Anderson and his team were interested in how the jaws of these fossilized animals differed through time.

They used 10 biomechanical metrics to describe jaw differences. One of these, called mechanical advantage, measured how much force an animal can transfer to its bite. Anderson points out that while fossils can't tell you what an animal actually ate, scientists can infer potential feeding behavior from fossilized evidence of biomechanical tools like jaws. The researchers compared jaw features from the [fossil](#) record and calculated the rates at which jaws evolved.

"The basic result was that it took awhile for these animals to adapt their jaws for a land-based diet," Anderson says. "They stayed essentially fish-like for a long time."

It turns out that just moving into a new environment is not always enough to trigger functional adaptations. In their paper, the authors say the results may be explained by an earlier hypothesis: A shift from gilled to lung breathing in later tetrapod groups was necessary before they could devote their jaw structure to eating plants.

Anderson says the statistical methods they developed for this work could be used in future studies of more subtle biomechanical patterns in fossil animals that may not be initially clear.

Explore further: [Early dino was turkey-sized, social plant-eater](#)

More information: *Integrative and Comparative Biology* 'Late to the Table: Diversification of Tetrapod Mandibular Biomechanics Lagged Behind the Evolution of Terrestriality' Philip S.L. Anderson, Matt Friedman, Marcello Ruta

Provided by [University of Massachusetts Amherst](#)

Read more at: <http://phys.org/news/2013-05-animals-fishlike-jaws-millions-years.html#jCp>

Copied from Face Book! Too Funny!!

Folks, be aware of this. Lawn flamingos may seem kitschy and adorable, but they can pick a T-Rex clean in under 90 seconds at this time of year.

Be careful. Use a trusted anti-flamingo spray before venturing outdoors. Let's be safe out there.



Hello!

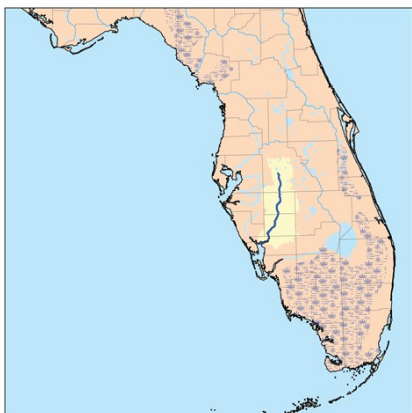
I hope that this newsletter finds you well. As you might have seen on the FOSSIL Project's Facebook and Twitter pages, we are coming out with another issue of our newsletter in September. We are asking paleontological/fossil societies/clubs to contribute submissions for our "Featured Fossil" section of the newsletter. If you would like to submit a fossil, please send a photo and a description of the fossil to this email (llundgren@flmnh.ufl.edu) or to fossil@flmnh.ufl.edu. For an example of the last submission, please see the newsletter page of FOSSIL's web-page (<http://www.myfossil.org/archived-newsletters/>) and click on the link which reads "Featured Fossil." We look forward to seeing your submission!

Cheers,
Lisa

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FOSSIL Project Assistant
UF School of Teaching and Learning PhD candidate

Peace River (Florida)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



The Peace River is a river in the southwestern part of the [Florida peninsula](#), in the [U.S.A.](#)^[1] It originates at the juncture of Saddle Creek and Peace Creek northeast of [Bartow](#) in [Polk County](#) and flows south through [Hardee County](#) to [Arcadia](#) in [DeSoto County](#) and then southwest into the [Charlotte Harbor estuary](#) at [Port Charlotte](#) in [Charlotte County](#). It is 106 miles (171 km) long and has a [drainage basin](#) of 1,367 square miles (3,540 km²). [U.S. Highway 17](#) runs near and somewhat parallel to the river for much of its course. The river was called *Rio de la Paz* (*River of Peace*) on 16th century [Spanish](#) charts.^[2] It appeared as *Peas Creek* or *Pease Creek* on later maps. The [Creek](#) (and later, [Seminole](#)) Indians call it Talakchopcohatchee, *River of Long Peas*.^[3] Other cities along the Peace River include [Fort](#)

[Meade](#), [Wauchula](#) and [Zolfo Springs](#).^[4]

Fresh water from the Peace River is vital to maintain the delicate [salinity](#) of Charlotte Harbor that hosts several [endangered species](#), as well as commercial and recreational harvests of [shrimp](#), [crabs](#), and [fish](#). The river has always been a vital resource to the people in its [watershed](#). Historically, the abundant fishery and wildlife of Charlotte Harbor supported large populations of people of the [Caloosahatchee culture](#) (in early historic times, the [Calusa](#)). Today, the Peace River supplies over six million gallons per day of drinking water to the people in the region. The river is also popular for [canoeing](#).^[5] There were many [Pleistocene](#) and [Miocene](#) fossils found throughout the Peace River area, eventually leading to the discovery of [phosphate](#) deposits. Most of the northern watershed of the Peace River comprises an area known as the [Bone Valley](#).

The Peace River is a popular destination for fossil hunters who dig and sift the river gravel for fossilized shark teeth and prehistoric mammal bones. Several campgrounds and canoe rental operations cater to fossil hunters, with [Wauchula](#), [Zolfo Springs](#), and [Arcadia](#) being the main points of entry.

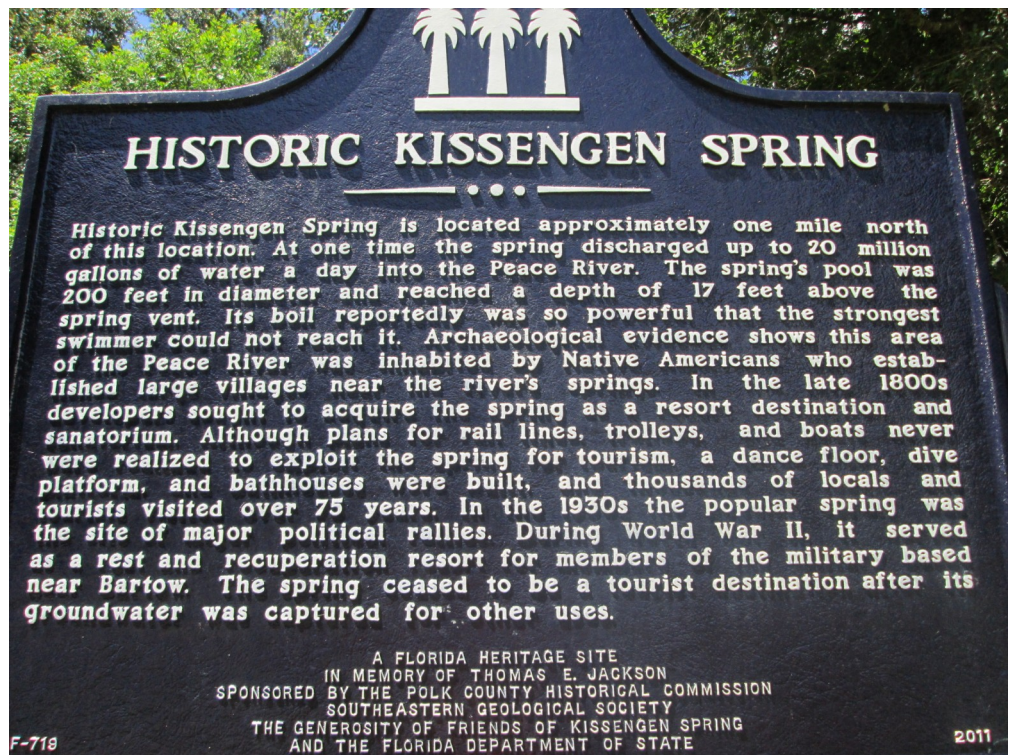
Recently my wife and I enjoyed a hot air balloon ride near Haynes City. Since it is a dawn flight, it left the rest of the day to explore on our ride back home. Driving south on Hwy 17, about 4 miles from Bartow, we stopped at the Mosaic Peace River park, <http://floridahikes.com/peace-river-park>. This is located between Bartow and Ft Meade, Florida. There is a great boardwalk through the swampy river delta which wends its way through cypress and tupelo trees to the edge of the Peace River. This being near the head waters, it was not very wide, but the recent rains had the current swiftly moving. I learned several things that morning, with one being that the main spring, Kissengen Spring, that fed the river historically, has all but dried up. I suspect that if the 20 million



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gallons of water each day from that spring was still flowing into the Peace, we would have much deeper water to attempt to fossil hunt in.

I recommend that any member traveling through that area to stop by and visit the park, located on County Road 640, . Half of it is natural and the other half is reclaimed Phosphate Mining property. We regularly fossil hunt in the peace river, but give little thought as to where it comes from. The water level fluctuates at times, also, and we don't know why. Learning that the river actually flows into sinkholes and crevasses near its beginnings helps explain a few details about the water. Such humble beginnings to such a much larger river near its mouth!



Below is a picture of the beginnings of the Peace River during low water levels.





PRESERVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

1st Annual Fossil EXPO

**Saturday, November 8, 2014
9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.**

Punta Gorda Women's Club and Historical Society Building
118 Sullivan Street, Punta Gorda FL 33950



This exciting event will have vendors from all over Florida selling magnificent fossils, minerals, Shark Teeth Books and Custom made Fossil Jewelry
A portion of proceeds from the EXPO will be used to fund student scholarships & research grants

Many other activities including;

- ▶ Lectures by Nationally known paleontologists
- ▶ Free Children's area to dig for fossils
- ▶ Refreshments and more!

Vendors and Collectors interested in table space should contact

CHUCK FERRARA at 941-769-2725 or JAY LEV at 941-575-9981

Admission for Adults \$3.00 Children under 12 years are Free!



Presented by the Southwest Florida Fossil Society Inc.