



Fossil Club of Lee County

October 2008

Message from the President



It is that time of the year when the leaves are falling and the snow birds are trickling back to sunny Florida. Welcome back to those who have returned and we look forward to having all of our members back with us soon. Also, I wish to offer a warm welcome to our new members. I am sure you will enjoy being part of a real good club.

Our speaker for October is new members who, with his family, operate "Sanibel Shellers". Frederic (also known as Phil) Briskin will talk about local fossil shells and their relationship to our geological formations. We encourage our members, especially those who are mainly into fossil shells, to bring in some specimens.

As part of our monthly program, we will have our "show and tell" segment, so bring in whatever you want and share you findings/acquisitions with us. We will also have the "ID the mystery fossil" segment so get out the books and tell us what it is. Incidentally, I found a small fossil in the Peace River in early October and as part of my "show and tell" I'll be looking for ID help--don't know what it is, but it's a pretty little thing!

Yes, the Peace River is back to normal water level and it's just wonderful. The water temperature is great, very few ants, and with a lot of digging we were finding nice specimens---but no pristine megs as of yet. I think we need to go diving for the big megs—right, Mike?

(continued on page 2)

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, 16, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Blvd.

Officers

Bill Shaver, President (239)834-0694 /
billshaverpeaceriver@hotmail.com

Al Govin, Vice President 541-2845

And cell 910-2339

Ray Seguin, Treasurer, 939-1921 or
936-5019

Leslie Stieffel, Secretary

Board Members

Director—Louis Stieffel, 458-9818

Michael Orchin, 574-6318

Sandy Schwartz, 772-8015

Trip Director, Bill Shaver

Dive Trip Director, Mike Siciliano ,
980-1406

Committees

Newsletter: Cheryl Mitchell

Speakers: Bill Shaver

\$1. Raffle: Mike Siciliano

Auction: Louis Stieffel

Web Master: Curtis Klug

Continued from page 1 president's report

We have several members that are divers and Mike Siciliano, our Dive Trip Leader, is ready to take you out to the big ones! Well, I might have over stated that one, but anyway check with him if you're interested in diving. We are taking trips to the Quality Pit on Sundays, so sign up at the meeting if you would like to go with Gunter Lobisch---who leads the mine trips.

We have been doing a lot of work for our Fossil Show which will be held at the Calusa Nature Center on Saturday, December 6th, 2008. We have completed the show flyer and will have copies available and will talk about distribution. We appreciate the way so many of you volunteered to help with your club's show. We will go over the highlights and details at our October meeting. We will, as in past shows, have games and will need grab bag material for prizes. If you have anything you would like to donate, please bring in to the meeting. If you have any ideas on advertising (for free) or how to reach the right audience, please let us know. We appreciate your participation. Also, if you have any suggestions about the Show or our Club, please let us know.

We have a volunteer for October refreshments--one of our newer members----Faydra Hernandez. Thanks for pitching in. We also need a volunteer for November so please step forward and support your club. We reimburse you for your expenses and provide the cooler.

As most of you know Cheryl Mitchell is publishing our newsletter. If you have any articles relative to fossiling or want to write an article, please submit them to Cheryl.

Our Webmaster, Curt Klug, has updated our site and also included the flyer for our Fossil Show. Check out our website at www.fcolc.com when you get a chance. It's a great site with interesting links. Thanks Curt.

At our October meeting we will have a surprise event--I hope all of you can attend!!

October Speaker of the Month:

Fredric "Philip" (Phil) Briskin was born Feb 12, 1961 in Chicago Illinois. He first moved to Florida in 1978-1979 to Sanibel Island, Florida. He then moved to Tampa, Florida in 1980-1981 to attend The University of South Florida, to pursue a pre-med curriculum and later Computer science degree. He has obtained bachelor's degrees in Biology (Pre-med) and Computer Science. He was a member of Alpha Epsilon Delta Pre-Medical honor Society at USF. During college he worked in the Scuba diving industry as a Padi Scuba Diving instructor and dive master. His love of scuba diving took him to areas around the world for many years of his life to dive and study mollusks and other marine organisms in their natural habitats. After graduation, he decided to pursue work in the computer industry. He worked for IBM in a management capacity for the medical industry for many years. He is distinguished as being one of the original 30 VARS or valued added resellers in the world for IBM responsible for pioneering speech recognition technology for the legal & medical industries. His computer company Inside Cyberspace Consultants was one of the world's leading IBM resellers of speech recognition technology. In 2003, he left the computer industry to be the founder of "Sanibelshellers" with his wife, mother & son. Sanibelshellers is a dealer of exquisite fossil and specimen seashells, coral, seashell art, and other marine creatures.

Fondly,
Phil Briskin
<http://www.sanibelshellers.com>



Minutes

MINUTES OF MEETING OF FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

A meeting of the membership of the Fossil Club of Lee County was held at the time, date and place set forth below:

DATE OF MEETING: September 18, 2008

MEETING TIME: 7:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Calusa Nature Center

Number in attendance: 33

Club President Bill Shaver presiding. Bill welcomed new members.

Member Mike Siciliano made a motion for the club to host a fossil show on December 6, 2008, as previously discussed. Member Charles O'Connor seconded the motion. Club members voted yes.

The flyer for the fossil show has been updated and members are invited to review and critique it.

The speaker was Frank Ponzo., who gave a very interesting motivational talk on how to become a fossil magnet; he also spoke about artifacts, beads and cobalt amber.

See Sandy Schwartz for new books including The Roadside Geology of SW Florida and Southern Florida's Fossil Seashells.

We will have field trips for the next four Sundays at Quality Mine, limit of 5 people.

Bill wrote to Mosiac Mine about possible club trips there; they are not yet set up for visitors.

There is a volunteer sign up sheet for the fossil show. We have about 20 people who have volunteered to work the show. One or two club members may exhibit at the show.

Alice & John Thorn will not be able to have a booth at the show this year.

Coming Events

FOSSIL SHOW 2008

PRESENTED BY

THE FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

FOSSIL SHARK TEETH, VERTEBRATE FOSSILS, ROCKS & MINERALS, INDIAN ARTIFACTS, TRADE BEADS, BOTTLES, GEMSTONES, FOSSIL SHELLS, AND UNIQUE JEWELRY.

MEET LOCAL FOSSIL COLLECTORS

FIND OUT WHERE AND HOW TO HUNT FOR FOSSILS. SEE THE EXHIBITS

FEATURING SEVERAL WELL KNOWN FLORIDA VENDORS

KIDS FOSSIL DIG - KEEP WHAT YOU FIND

RAFFLES, GAMES

DOOR PRIZES, SILENT AUCTIONS

FOSSIL TALKS BY DR. CHARLES O'CONNOR

10:00 AM - FLORIDA'S FOSSILS

FOSSILIZATION, SABER-TOOTH CATS, MAMMOTHS, GIANT GROUND SLOTHS, HUGE SHARKS, HOW TO HUNT FOSSILS, & MUCH MORE! MANY FOSSILS ON DISPLAY.

2:00 PM - SHARKS

BIOLOGY, FOSSIL TEETH, & MEGALODONS - THE LARGEST SHARK OF ALL TIME! MANY TEETH ON DISPLAY.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6TH

9 AM TO 5 PM

AT THE

CALUSA NATURE CENTER & PLANETARIUM

CORNER OF COLONIAL BLVD & ORTIZ AVE.

ENTRANCE ON ORTIZ AVE

FT. MYERS, I-75 EXIT 136 - GO WEST TO 1ST LIGHT,

TURN RIGHT, ENTRANCE 500 FT ON LEFT

WWW.FCOLC.COM

ADULTS \$2 CHILDREN \$1



7' Megalodon Shark Tooth Univ. of Florida



www.sandiego.gov - fossils

Refreshments

October—Faydra Hernandez

November -

December -

October Refreshments: Faydra Hernandez

For Show & Tell, **Charles O'Connor** showed a partial gomph tusk and a whale ulna.

Louis Stieffel showed a Caloosa Indian cutting tool, pottery, fish bones, Neolithic quartz beads, a (fake?) arrowhead; a few echinoid sea biscuits and a shark vertebrae.

Leslie Stieffel also showed echinoid sea biscuits she found recently.

Bill Shaver showed a hemipristis shark tooth in oyster matrix, which he found while building his house, a lady slipper cowry, and a porpoise neck vertebrae.

Dollar raffle and door prize drawing were held.

By: Leslie Stieffel, Secretary

Louis' Megs from Venice Beach



Tiny Dino and Found Mammoth Tooth in Texas

Venice Beach Fossil Diving!

Finally!! The seas calmed down and the boat was going to go out!! A planned fossil dive on the dive boat "Hammerhead" had been previously planned and cancelled four times!! Now, it was time to do it!!

Mike Siciliano and I were booked to go and by 6:30am we were on our way. It is about an hour drive to Venice, and with the boat scheduled to leave at 8:30am, we would be there in time to load our gear onto the boat and sign all the necessary paperwork. We had seven divers on the boat, and there was plenty of room. We left the dock on time and just had about a 15 minute boat ride to the first (of two) spots. After everyone gearing up, it was time to jump in and go to the bottom.

This is easy diving, as neutral buoyancy is not a skill needed on these dives. Weight heavy and stay on the bottom. The water was clear, and vis was close to 10 -20 feet. Plenty of vis to see the bottom. The bottom was shelly, with dugong and manatee ribs and broken bone scattered about. I got excited as I just knew I was going to find the big one today!! I turned over countless ribs and bone fragments, always expecting to find out that it was the corner of the root of a 6" tooth!! But--it was not to be. Both dives were exciting, though, as there was lots of bone, but at the end I had three horse teeth, three whale inner ear bones, a few very large ribs, a section of mastodon tusk, and a half dozen megs, none huge. I also found the usual assortment of smaller shark teeth and ray parts.

A memorable part of the second dive was my very first encounter with a live seahorse!! It was a real thrill. It was as large as my hand and was black with white streaks on its throat. Really neat!! I also saw a huge sea turtle, and a good many fish, even though I wasn't really looking for them!!

Mike found some nice Megs as well as a few other divers. No one found the really big ones, so I know they're still out there waiting for me!! I can't wait to do it again!!

Louis

Speaker of the Month

The speaker this month will present a discussion about the collection and identification of the Fossil Mollusca of Florida from the Miocene to the Pleistocene. Collection methods will be discussed as well as the identification tools that can be used to determine names and nomenclature of different species. Geological formations will be discussed in layman's terms to help aid the collector in determining what type of species might be found at a particular location in relation to their geological age or the formation they normally reside in. The speaker has been hunting Florida Fossil Shells for over 35 years and recently had a newly discovered species named after him known as "Volutifusus brinski"---a member of the volute family collected in the spoil piles in the South Bay, Palm Beach County, Florida area, a few years ago. Special emphasis will be on the Chipola Formation, Bermont Formation, Caloosahatchee Formation, Fort Thompson Formation and the Tamiami Formation. Other marine life that can be found along with shells such as coral and echinoderms will also be discussed. Samples of fossil shells will be passed around to the club for examination.

Mammoth Tooth Fossil Found in Ike-ravaged Yard.

By The Associated Press - posted: 03 October 2008 02:16 pm ET (see page 4)

This photo released by Lamar University shows Jim Westgate, a trained paleontologist and a research associate with the Vertebrate Paleontology Laboratory at the University of Texas Memorial Museum, posing in Beaumont, Texas, Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2008, with a fossil tooth of a mammoth that he found in Caplen, Texas, in the debris from Hurricane Ike. Westgate believes the fossil discovered in the Ike-damaged debris is from a Columbian mammoth.

“CAPLEN, Texas (AP) -- A paleontologist whose beachfront home in Texas was destroyed during Hurricane Ike has found a football-size tooth in the debris. Dorothy Sisk and Jim Westgate are scientists at Lamar University. They discovered the fossil tooth in the front yard of Sisk's home in Caplen on the devastated Bolivar Peninsula.

Westgate believes the fossil is from a Columbian mammoth common in North America until around 10,000 years ago.

The tooth looks like a series of boot soles or slices of bread wedged together. It is expected to be sent to the Texas Memorial Museum in Austin. More than 1 million people fled the Texas coast because of Hurricane Ike. Credit: AP Photo/Lamar University, Brian Sattler

Researcher finds tiny dino in world of giants

By Jeffrey Jones *Tue Sep 23, 5:31 PM ET*

World News - Submitted by Pat Oakes

CALGARY, Alberta (Reuters) - A Canadian researcher has discovered what is believed to be North America's smallest dinosaur, a 70-million-year-old chicken-sized beast that was also unusual for its diet of insects. Called the *Albertonykus borealis*, the odd-looking creature had bird-like features including slender legs, jaws like pincers and stubby arms with big claws.

Its bones were excavated near Red Deer, in fossil-rich Alberta, in 2002 among about 20 *Albertosaurus* remains, and went unnoticed. The dinosaur is a newly discovered member of the family *Alvarezsauridae*, from which fossils had previously been dug up only in South America and Mongolia, said Nick Longrich, paleontology research associate at the University of Calgary.

The find is evidence that the dinosaurs migrated to Asia from the bottom part of the western hemisphere, Longrich said. His research on the *Albertonykus* is published in the journal *Cretaceous Research*.

"Most of the dinosaurs we know about -- things like *Tyrannosaurus*, giant carnivores, or *Triceratops*, big herbivores -- are large. This thing is very small, about 2-1/2 feet (two-thirds of a meter) long and we think it's doing something very different: we think it might have actually been an insectivore," he said. It was not made for digging, like moles. Its features were not unlike those of anteaters, and Longrich said it appears it tore into logs so it could feast on termites or beetles. "This is a dinosaur doing what we didn't have a lot of evidence of them doing before," he said.

He said it may have been prey for such other dinosaurs as *Albertosaurus* and *Velociraptors*, those that could catch the speedy little beast. "(The find) tells us a little bit about how these dinosaurs were dispersing through the environment, and I think one of the things that it also emphasizes is that there's a lot more waiting to be discovered," Longrich said.