



# Fossil Club of Lee County

October 2010

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## Message from the President



Seasons greeting to all of you. Yes, its fall---that wonderful time of the year when the foliage is beautiful up north and here in Florida we can do some serious fossil hunting. The Peace River water level is about one foot above normal and dropping. The all-summer-long abnormally high and rushing water has shifted some of the river bottom exposing some long hidden gravel deposits. It has been reported that some fine fossil specimens were found already this month in the Peace River. In addition, the cool mornings has made fossil hunting in the mines much more tolerable. As one of our members has said, the planets are once again in perfect alignment so now is the time to go fossil hunting!

Speaking about fossils, we have relocated our Club's fossil exhibit at the Calusa Nature Center to a more prominent place in the main room. It is just outside the newly opened Tom Allen Exhibit room. For those of you who not yet seen the Tom Allen Exhibit, I encourage you to visit this tribute to a most talented artist and wildlife expert. Our Club and the wildlife community will greatly miss Tom.

Several of our members deserve recognition for their efforts and talents in helping to bring the Exhibit on line. Michael Orchin and Dean Hart helped to get the display cases, Hollie Tiner took several photos of the hung art work and display case for purposes of recording the exhibit content, Mike Siciliano, Loretta Blessing, and Ray Seguin helped to layout the collections, and Ray Seguin did a magnificent job of framing all the artwork and wall mounted documents. Thanks for a job well done!

Last month we talked about our Fossil Show, which will be held on Saturday, December 4th from 9am to 5pm. As in past

years, many of you have worked hard on Show day to make sure the event is a success. It takes a lot person-power to handle the silent auction, kid's dig, fossil spin game, grand raffle, admissions, exhibits and club merchandise. We also need people for set-up on Friday afternoon and tear-down Saturday evening. Since we have had success with giving a gift to each child that attends the Show, we also need someone to handle that pleasant task. In summary, please consider allotting some of your time to support the needs of your Club on that Saturday. Let's make this a real success. The money we raise goes to worthy causes as well as funding for speakers, refreshments, trips, and scholarships.

We have the Fossil Show flyers printed and ready for dissemination. These will be available at our October meeting and we will discuss how and when to make distribution. The Imaginarium staff will support our Kid's Dig again this year. We appreciate any suggestions you may have regarding the Show. And most of all, the Club will appreciate all of you who volunteer to work the Show.

Our next monthly meeting will be held on October 21st. We will have Dr. Greg Herbert from USF to talk about some of their research projects that we have been supporting by way of grants in 2009 and 2010. As usual, we will have our door prize activity, Show and Tell, and the monthly raffle. Please bring in items for donation to the raffle and for donation to support the Fossil Show.

As always, we appreciate those of you who bring in Show and Tell specimens. It gives everyone an opportunity to learn something new about fossils.

Best regards, Bill

### Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on, Thursday, October 21st, at 7:00 p.m. at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Blvd, Ft. Myers.

### OFFICERS

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### DIRECTORS

Dean Hart, 941-979-8217

Gunther Lobish, 941-268-7506

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Michael Orchin, 239-574-6318

### COMMITTEES

Bob Wood, Newsletter Editor

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

Curt Klug, Web Master

Bill Shaver, Speakers

Michael Orchin, Auctioneer

Kathy Arnold, Club Merchandise

Ray Seguin, Membership

Gunther Lobish, Pit Trips

Michael Siciliano, Raffle and Dive Trips

Coby Pawlowski, Youth Activities Director

Hollie Tiner, Club Photographer

### CLUB RAFFLE

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

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

Date: September 16, 2010

Place: Iona House at Calusa Nature Center

Attendance: 37

Presided By: Bill Shaver, President

Bill welcomed all attendees

Mentioned that Coby Pawlowski as the Youth Director was erroneously omitted from the Sept newsletter in the committee column.

Thanked Bob Wood for doing the newsletter and also Coby Pawlowski and Kathy Pawlowski for all of their help. Also thanked Dean Hart and Michael Orchin for helping with the cases for the Tom Allen museum.

He also thanked Ray Sequin for the work he did in framing all the art, certificates and miscellaneous documents for the museum and thanked Loretta Blessing for helping to sort and identify the rocks and minerals Tom donated for the useum.

Bill mentioned that the Fort Myers Newspress was doing an article on the Tom Allen in the Sept 26th edition and the grand opening for the Tom Allen museum was on Sept 28th, 2010 at the Calusa Nature Center.

The guest speaker was Ian Bartozek, a Biologist w/Conservancy of SW Florida and also Dennis Giardina

with Florida Fish Wildlife Conservation. They spoke tonight about the current Python invasion in Southern Florida. They have a very nice slide show and answered a lot of questions. For the grand finale they brought out a live black indigo snake for all to see and touch. Bill thanked Ian, who is a member of our Club, for doing such a great job. He also encouraged our members to visit the Calusa Nature Center and see all the snakes they have on display.

Bill asked members to continue looking for appropriate articles and photos to send to Bob Wood for the newsletter.

Sharon and Jim Hale were thanked for providing the refreshments.

Kathy Pawlowski, Secretary

### REFRESHMENTS

October Honey Archey

November Dean Hart

December Holiday Dinner meeting  
A big thanks to Sharon and Jim Hale for doing the

September refreshments. The Club thanks all who have volunteered to provide your fellow members with refreshments during the year 2010!

## **PROGRAM FOR OCTOBER**

. Dr. Gregory Herbert Dr. Herbert is a professor at USF, Department of Geology. He spoke at our club two years ago on Florida fossil invertebrates.

His program this year is an update on two projects that our club has helped to fund. One project is the dissertation research of Ms Jenn Sliko, who will be finishing her Ph.D. Jenn's research has to do with documenting the pluvial rains received year round in Florida during the Pliocene. FCOLC funding helped to cover extra isotope analysis of fossil corals, which have annual growth rings (like a tree). Dr. Herbert will discuss the conclusions from Jenn's research.

The second project is about the inter-action between predator and prey involving stone crabs and their attack on gastropod shells and how shell shape and ornamentation affect the survival of the animal.

## **NOVEMBER'S PROGRAM**

Mark Renz The focus of Mark's presentation will be about his fossil hunting trip to Peru. Some people who have heard him speak about this trip claim that at the end of his talk they were ready to buy plane tickets!

## **INTERNET SITES & LOCATIONS OF INTEREST**

### **WEB SITES & LOCATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mark Renz's Fossil Expeditions  
[www.fossilx@earthlink.net](http://www.fossilx@earthlink.net)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## Young Fossil Collectors **Goby's Column**

By Coby Pawlowski



Florida's phosphate mines generate millions of dollars for Florida each year. The mines are also a great source for fossil treasures. Accessing a phosphate mine requires always getting permission to enter the property and carefully following mine rules. If you do get access, you can only search the slurry pile. Most fossils are damaged on the trip to the slurry pile. To get to the slurry pile, the fossils are tumbled around with rocks and debris for a few miles of piping and then are dumped into the slurry pile. The most common finds are sharks teeth, especially megalodon teeth with fish and stingray fossils and horse teeth.

Coby Pawlowski, Youth Director

### **THE TOM ALLEN MUSEUM**

The Calusa Nature Center officially opened the Thomas J. Allen Exhibit on September 28, 2010. Sandy Allen performed the traditional ribbon-cutting ceremony. The event was hosted by the Calusa Nature Center Board of Directors and Ms Jennifer Cleary, Executive Director. Board President Steve Wilson welcomed everyone and expressed his appreciation to the Fossil Club of Lee County for their generous donation of Tom's Collections and dedicated efforts to make the Exhibit a highlight at the Nature Center. The Exhibit Room will also serve as the Naturalist Training Room.

Sandy Allen spoke to the audience and expressed her gratitude to the Fossil Club for making Tom's dream come true. She said this is just what Tom wanted. He hoped that his collection and accomplishments would inspire young people to have a greater appreciation of all aspects of nature and perhaps they too might pursue a career as a naturalist. Tom spent his entire life as a naturalist. From the time he was a child, he loved all

aspects of wildlife, pursued an education in entomology and biology, worked as a wildlife naturalist for the State of West Virginia for over 33 years, and continued to be involved in wildlife projects and organizations after his retirement.

The opening of the Exhibit was attended by several members of the Fossil Club and many other friends from Cape Coral organizations. Those from the Fossil Club included Bill and Kathy Shaver, Ray Seguin, Mke Siciliano, Michael Orchin, Louis Steiffel, Jerry Graham, Loretta Blessing, Kelly Galla, Pascha and Ed Donaldson, and Sandy Schwartz.

The Exhibit consists of several wildlife paintings by Tom (prints), books that he authored, articles he wrote for the Birds and Bloom magazine, a collection of butterflies, moths, and insects; a collection of seashells, rocks and minerals, Indian artifacts, one of his many wood carvings, and a collection of invertebrate and vertebrate fossil specimens.

### **CLUB FIELD TRIPS**

The Club has enjoyed the privilege of access on a limited basis to the Quality mine in Charlotte County. Gunther Lobish, our Pit Trip Leader maintains a sign-up sheet ( which is available at every meeting) and leads a small group to go hunting on Sundays. The finds vary, but most of the time you will be able to find fossilized sand dollars (*Encrinurus tamiamiensis*) urchins, and clypeasters and occasionally some vertebrate material.

Mike Siciliano leads the diving trips, but it has not been a good season in the Gulf. If you are interested in a trip, see Mike and talk it over. Joshua Frank has been doing some diving and he brought some nice specimens to the last Show and Tell.

The water levels in the streams and rivers has dropped to the point where fossil hunting should be good. If anyone has any suggestions or ideas as to where the Club might gain access to fossil hunt, see Bill Shaver. Happy Hunting!

# **SNAKE INFORMATION FOR FOSSIL HUNTERS**

According to Dennis Giardina from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, when you see a snake swimming in the water, if its head is raised above the water, it is a poisonous water moccasin (cottonmouth).

If its head is in the water, it is probably a water snake.

## **NEW MEMBERS**

Please welcome our new members, Pascha and Ed Donaldson, Rich Ramsey and Mackenzie McCausland



## **Work Crew Discovers Trove of Fossils in Southern Calif.**

(Sept. 22) -- Animal fossils dating back 1.4 million years has been unearthed southeast of Los Angeles by a utility crew. More than 1,450 specimens have been identified, including some 250 large vertebrate fossils, The Los Angeles Times reported.

"And we're still counting," paleontologist Robert Reynolds of LSA Associates of Riverside, Calif., the consulting paleontologists who are handling the dig for Southern [California](#) Edison, told the paper.

Among the fossils found in San Timoteo Canyon are an ancestor of the saber-toothed tiger, large ground sloths and two kinds of camels, according to The Associated Press. There were also specimens from many smaller creatures and signs that trees once grew in the area, which is now dry, the AP reported



Rick Greenwood, director at Southern California Edison, holds a prehistoric horse leg that has teeth marks from a prehistoric cat. More than 1,450 fossils were found at the El Casco Substation project in Riverside County.

The fossils are 1 million years older than those discovered in the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles, the AP said. "Everyone talks about the La Brea Tar Pits, but I think this is going to be much larger in terms of its scientific value to the research community," Rick Greenwood, a microbiologist and Southern California Edison official, told the AP.

## **New Fossil Suggests Dinosaurs Not So Fierce After All**

ScienceDaily (Oct. 6, 2010) — A new species of dinosaur discovered in Arizona suggests dinosaurs did not spread throughout the world by overpowering other species, but by taking advantage of a natural catastrophe that wiped out their competitors.

Tim Rowe, professor of paleontology at The University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences, led the effort to describe the new dinosaur along with co-authors Hans-Dieter Sues, curator of vertebrate paleontology at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC and Robert R. Reisz, professor and chair of biology at the University of Toronto.

Sarhsaurus, which lived about 190 million years ago during the Early Jurassic Period, was 14 feet long and weighed about 250 pounds. Sarhsaurus was a sauropodomorph, a small but closely related ancestor to sauropods, the largest land animals in history.

Conventional wisdom says that soon after dinosaurs originated in what is now South America, they rapidly



spread out to conquer every corner of the world, so smart and powerful they overwhelmed all the animals in their path. *Sarhsaurus* challenges that view.

One of the five great mass extinction events in Earth's history happened at the end of the Triassic Period 200 million years ago, wiping out many of the potential competitors to dinosaurs. Evidence from *Sarhsaurus* and two other early sauropodomorphs suggests that each migrated into North America in separate waves long after the extinction and that no such dinosaurs migrated there before the extinction.

"We used to think of dinosaurs as fierce creatures that out-competed everyone else," said Rowe. "Now we're starting to see that's not really the case. They were humbler, more opportunistic creatures. They didn't invade the neighborhood. They waited for the residents to leave and when no one was watching, they moved in."

*Sarhsaurus* had physical traits usually associated with gigantic animals. For example, its thigh bones were long and straight like pillars, yet were not much larger than a human's thigh bones. *Sarhsaurus* shows that sauropodomorphs started out small and later evolved to a very large size.

"And so it's starting to look like some of our ideas about how size and evolution work are probably in need of revision," said Rowe, "and that some of the features we thought were tied to gigantism and the physics and mechanics of the bones may not be right."

Rowe is also intrigued by the new dinosaur's hands.

"We've never found anything like this in western North America," he said. "Its hand is smaller than my hand, but if you line the base of the thumbs up, this small hand is much more powerfully built than my hand and it has these big claws. It's a very strange animal. It's doing something with its hands that involved great strength and power, but we don't know what."

*Sarhsaurus* is named in honor of Sarah (Mrs. Ernest) Butler, an Austin philanthropist and long time supporter of the arts and sciences.

A team of researchers and students led by Rowe discovered *Sarhsaurus* on a field trip in Arizona in 1997. To reach publication, the team had to obtain excavation permits, excavate the site over three years, remove each fossil fragment from surrounding rock,

measure and analyze each piece, and CT scan pieces to study internal structures.

This research was funded in part by an Assembling the Tree of Life grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF AToL 0531767).

## Inside the fabulous Cro-Magnon caves of France

(article suggested by Bill Shaver)

Follow the link below to a gallery of photos taken at the famous discovery first documented in 1947.

<http://www.life.com/image/first/in-gallery/48231/inside-lascaux-rare-unpublished>

## CLUB MERCHANDISE

The Club has received a large quantity of Riker boxes of several sizes, which will be available at the October meeting. Putting some of your fossil specimens in a riker case makes them show better when displayed and also when labeled they make a great gift. We know from experience that most children love to get fossil shark teeth in a riker box. A little later in life they will want an Ipod and a multi-feature cell phone. So now may be the time to give them a filled up riker box!

As usual, Kathy Arnold and family will be available to handle the sale of the club merchandise, which includes fossil preservative, tee shirts, books, and riker boxes.

Just a thought, but you might consider buying a riker box and putting a fossil or some fossils in it, and then donating it for the raffle or for 2011 club auction. You will be appreciated.

# FOSSIL SHOW 2010

PRESENTED BY

## THE FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

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

MEET LOCAL FOSSIL COLLECTORS!!  
FIND OUT WHERE & HOW TO HUNT FOR FOSSILS  
SEE EXHIBITS!!!

FEATURING MANY WELL KNOWN FLORIDA VENDORS  
KIDS' FOSSIL DIG - KEEP WHAT YOU FIND!!  
RAFFLES, GAMES, DOOR PRIZES, SILENT AUCTIONS

### FOSSIL TALKS BY DR. CHARLES O'CONNOR

**10:00AM - 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, DEC. 4th**

**9 AM TO 5 PM**

**CALUSA NATURE CENTER &  
PLANETARIUM**

CORNER OF COLONIAL BLVD. & ORTIZ AVE.  
ENTRANCE ON ORTIZ AVE.

Ft. Myers, 1-75 Exit 136 - Go West to 1st Light,  
Turn Right, Entrance 500 Feet on Left.  
[WWW.FCOLC.COM](http://WWW.FCOLC.COM)



**ADMISSION \$3. (children under 12 FREE)**