



# Fossil Club OF LEE COUNTY

NOVEMBER 2011



## *Message from the President*



Greeting to all and welcome aboard to our new members. For those of you who just joined the club, we encourage you to take part in all the activities--it is your club now so have fun, learn more about fossiling and know that you are now part of a great club.

The Club is about to hold its Annual Fossil Show and it promises to be a real success. See the show flier and the article in this newsletter for details and also note that there is a need for several show volunteers. So come to the show, do a little work, and have a lot of fun. Incidentally, the Show goes on rain or shine so dress appropriately.

There was a field trip to the CF Industries phosphate mine in late October and another to a quarry in Sarasota in November. Everyone has a good time on these trips and we will continue to work up some more excellent trips over the next few months. When the water level of the Peace River drops another two or so feet, we plan to schedule a club trip. A trip to Gainesville is still in the works and we hope to have that in place later this year. Our invertebrate trip leader, Gunther Lobish, has been up to Yankeetown recently and he will set up a trip for those who are interested in fossil echinoids. Looking ahead, we already

have a trip scheduled for a phosphate mine in early February.

Our club membership now stands at about two hundred. I hope that everyone is enjoying the many activities our club offers and that you continue to maintain your membership. You can pay your dues anytime in November or December for 2012 and for those of you who joined in October, you are good for 2012. We try to please all of our members and we are open to suggestions for improvement. Please talk with me or any of the club officers or directors if you have suggestions on how to make your club better.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the November 17th meeting. Regards, Bill



### **Next Meeting**

Our next meeting will be November 17<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 pm at the Iona House at the  
Calusa Nature Center.



## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Gail Wilson and Gabriel, Andre,  
and Morgan Hawthorne  
Clyde Dabbs  
Stephen Wheelock  
Kim Westberry  
Karen Kaskel (welcome back)

### **OFFICERS**

Bill Shaver, President, 239-834-0694  
[billshaverpeace@river.com](mailto:billshaverpeace@river.com)  
Michael Siciliano, Vice President,  
239-980-1406  
Ray Seguin, Treasurer, 239-939-1921  
Kathy Pawlowski, Secretary, 239-267-6130

### **DIRECTORS**

Dean Hart, 941-979-8217  
Gunther Lobish, 941-268-7506  
Charles O'Connor, 239-246-5526  
Pam Plummer, 239-573-7807  
Joshua Frank, 239-248-5094

### **COMMITTEES**

Cherie Neat, Newsletter  
Curt Klug, Web Master  
Bill Shaver, Speakers  
Louis Stieffel, Auctioneer  
Kathy Arnold, Club Merchandise  
Pam Plummer, Club Badges  
Ray Seguin, Membership  
Joshua Frank, Refreshments  
Dean Hart, Refreshments co-chairman  
Gunther Lobish, Pit Trips  
Michael Siciliano, Raffle and Dive Trips  
Coby Pawlowski, Youth Activities Director  
Hollie Tiner, Club Photographer  
Gunther Lobish, Invertebrate Education  
Louis Stieffel, Vertebrate Education

## **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AND SPEAKERS**

Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011—Annual Fossil Show @ Calusa Nature Center  
Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011—Club Holiday Dinner @ Zion Lutheran Church  
Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012—Greg Shanos Meteorite Lecture  
Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012—Dr. Charles O'Connor Panama Paleontology Project  
Mar., 2012—Club Annual Auction @ Zion Lutheran Church

## **MINUTES OF OCTOBER MEETING THE FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY**

Date: October 20, 2011  
Place: Iona House, Calusa Nature Center  
Attendance: 50  
Presided by: Bill Shaver

Bill welcomed all members and guests and thanked everyone for writing and submitting some great articles for the Club newsletter.

Our club needs a volunteer to take over the Club Merchandise committee. Kathy, Kevin, and Joseph Arnold will be leaving that role due to personal reasons. Bill thanked them for all their help. They will finish out the year.

The November meeting will be held at the Iona House and in the December meeting will be at the Zion Lutheran Church.

Field trips are scheduled for October 28th at CF Industries and November 12 to Sarasota. Gunther Lobish will lead a trip to Yankeetown to collect echinoids. See him if you are interested.

Our Webmaster, Curt Klug, asked members to let him know if they find any problems with the site.

The current status of the Annual Fossil Show to be held on December 3rd is that six dealers are now signed up as well as the Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, SW Florida Gem and Mineral, the Imaginarium will support the Kid's Dig, and a food vendor is signed up. Show fliers are published and publicity is on-going.

The club needs volunteers to help set up the Fossil Show on Friday, work the various stations on show day and help to tear down after the show on Saturday. Please sign up at the November meeting.

Show and Tell was done by Gunther Lobish, Linda Werner, Ron Seavey, and Louis Stieffel.

The speaker was Luz Helena Oviedo from the University of Florida Vertebrate Department who talked about the evolution of the horse and how museums present that information.

Kathy Pawlowski, Club Secretary





## **SPEAKER FOR NOVEMBER 2011**

One of our new members, Kim Westberry, is our speaker for the November meeting. Kim was originally scheduled to demonstrate the techniques of mixing and applying plaster jacketing for fossils, but the material needed will not be available by meeting time. *Instead, Kim will relate some of her many experiences in fossil collecting in Europe, Nebraska, and Florida. She is past-president of the Manasota Fossil Club and an active member of the Florida Paleontological Society.*

## **REFRESHMENTS SUBCOMMITTEE**

Many thanks to Joshua and Melanie Frank. They provided the refreshments for September and because there were no volunteers for November, Joshua said that he and Melanie would do them for November. All club members are encouraged to participate in this activity and we should not leave it to a few people! We hope that a few more people, especially those who do enjoy the drinks and snack during the break, will consider helping out.

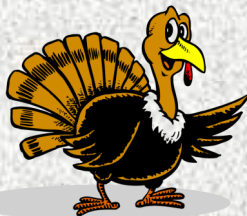
Thanks to Marc Cantos for treating the club with pizza and beverages at the October meeting.

Our annual Holiday Dinner will be held at the December meeting at the Zion Lutheran Church on Winkler Road. As is tradition, your club will provide a turkey and a ham and members will bring in various hot and cold dishes and desserts. More details to be provided in the December Newsletter.

At the December meeting, Joshua Frank and Dean Hart, who co-chair the refreshments committee, will have a sign-up sheet for January, February and March 2012.

The Club will reimburse members for the cost of beverages and snacks and also provide the coolers. Yes, its a bit of work, but it's the right thing to do! If any one has any suggestions regarding any aspect of the refreshments program, please let Joshua or Dean know about your ideas. All inputs will be considered. Thanks to all those who have supported their club through out the year.

## **Websites & 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>

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

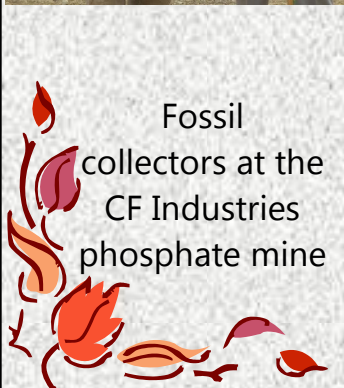
Tampa Bay Fossil Club  
[www.tampabayfossilclub.com](http://www.tampabayfossilclub.com)



## Trip to CF Industries

The club just recently took a trip to CF Industries phosphate mine located near Wauchula. It was a very rainy day but the megs still showed up for a few. The phosphate mines produce a lot of teeth because when the ocean was present in that part of Florida millions of years ago, the phosphate brought in smaller fish which brought in the bigger fish, and so on and on until the megalodons showed up, and when the oceans left that part of Florida, the phosphate and fossils were left high and dry, creating the phosphate deposits we have today. Normally, the teeth will be broken and worn after being in the pipelines for miles. but this trip produced some nice teeth with little wear, and some still had some nice serrations. So next time the trip to CF is announced, you can expect a nice day of hunting with some great finds.

Coby Pawlowski



## Saber-toothed Fossil Sheds New Light On Ancient Mammals

A remarkable 94-million-year-old fossil found in South America is shedding new light on the ancient history of mammals. The specimen, dubbed *Cronopio dentiacutus*, is one of the very few mammal fossils to come out of South America from the era when dinosaurs ruled the Earth. The mouse-sized creature had a long snout, dagger-like canines and a powerful set of muscles it used to chew its insect food.

The mammal is a dryolestoid, an extinct group of animals distantly related to today's marsupials and placentals. "The new dryolestoid, *Cronopio*, is without a doubt one of the most unusual mammals that I have seen, extinct or living," said John Wible, curator of mammals at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. University of Louisville paleontologist Guillermo Rougier and his team found the fossil, which breaks a roughly 60-million-year gap in what is known about South American mammals and their evolution.

"It looks somewhat like *Scrat*, the saber-toothed squirrel from 'Ice Age,' " said Rougier, professor of anatomy and neurobiology at University of Louisville. But even before they knew what it might look like, the researchers realized the importance of the discovery when they found the two fossilized skulls in 2006.

The skulls were embedded in rock in a remote area of northern Patagonia, about 100 miles from the city of Allen in the Argentinian province of Rio Negro. It took several years of patient lab work to remove the specimens from the rocks. "We knew it was important, based on the age of the rocks and because we found skulls," Rougier said.

"Usually we find teeth or bone fragments of this age. Most of what we know of early mammals has been determined through teeth because enamel is the hardest substance in our bodies and survives well the passage of time; it is usually what we have left to study." "The skull, however, provides us with features of the biology of the animal, making it possible for us to determine this is the first of its kind dating to the early Late Cretaceous period in South America."

"This time period in South America was somewhat of a blank slate to us. Now we have a mammal as a starting point for further study of the lineage of all mammals, humans included." The prospects for further investigation on the southern continents are exciting. "Until now, all we have had are isolated teeth and a few jaw fragments ... which don't really help much in deciphering broader relationships," said Rich Cifelli, presidential professor of zoology at the University of Oklahoma and a researcher.

"The new fossils provide a sort of Rosetta Stone for understanding the genealogy of early South American mammals, and how they fit in with those known from northern land-masses," said Cifelli, who has spent his career discovering and identifying mammal remains. "Now," he said, "the burden is on the rest of us to find similarly well preserved fossils from elsewhere, so that the broader significance of Rougier's finds can be fully placed in context."



## **Giant 'Kraken' Lair Discovered: Cunning Sea Monster That Preyed On Ichthyosaurs**

ScienceDaily (Oct. 10, 2011) — Long before whales, the oceans of Earth were roamed by a very different kind of air-breathing leviathan. Snaggle-toothed ichthyosaurs larger than school buses swam at the top of the Triassic Period ocean food chain, or so it seemed before Mount Holyoke College paleontologist Mark McMenemy took a look at some of their remains in Nevada. Now he thinks there was an even larger and more cunning sea monster that preyed on ichthyosaurs: a 'kraken' of such mythological proportions it would have sent Captain Nemo running for dry land.

McMenemy is presenting the results of his work on Oct. 10 at the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America in Minneapolis.

The evidence is at Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park in Nevada, where McMenemy and his daughter spent a few days this summer. It's a site where the remains of nine 45-foot (14-meter) ichthyosaurs, of the species *Shonisaurus popularis* can be found. These were the Triassic's counterpart to today's predatory giant squid-eating sperm whales. But the fossils at the Nevada site have a long history of perplexing researchers, including the world's expert on the site: the late Charles Lewis Camp of U.C. Berkeley.

"Charles Camp puzzled over these fossils in the 1950s," said McMenemy. "In his papers he keeps referring to how peculiar this site is. We agree, it *is* peculiar."

Camp's interpretation was that the fossils probably represented death by an accidental stranding or from a toxic plankton bloom. But no one had ever been able to prove that the beasts died in shallow water. In fact more recent work on the rocks around the fossils suggest it was a deep water environment, which makes neatly arranged carcasses even more mysterious.

This question -- shallow or deep ocean death -- is what attracted McMenemy to the site.

"I was aware that anytime there is controversy about depth, there is probably something interesting going on," McMenemy said. And when they arrived at the remote state park and started looking at the fossils, McMenemy was struck by their strangeness.

"It became very clear that something very odd was going on there," said McMenemy. "It was a very odd configuration of bones."

First of all, the different degrees of etching on the bones suggested that the shonisosaurs were not all killed and buried at the same time. It also looked like the bones had been purposefully rearranged. That it

got him thinking about a particular modern predator that is known for just this sort of intelligent manipulation of bones.

"Modern octopus will do this," McMenemy said. What if there was an ancient, very large sort of octopus, like the kraken of mythology. "I think that these things were captured by the kraken and taken to the midden and the cephalopod would take them apart."

In the fossil bed, some of the shonisaur vertebral disks are arranged in curious linear patterns with almost geometric regularity, McMenemy explained. The proposed Triassic kraken, which could have been the most intelligent invertebrate ever, arranged the vertebral discs in double line patterns, with individual pieces nesting in a fitted fashion as if they were part of a puzzle.

Even more creepy: The arranged vertebrae resemble the pattern of sucker discs on a cephalopod tentacle, with each vertebra strongly resembling a coleoid sucker. In other words, the vertebral disc "pavement" seen at the state park may represent the earliest known self portrait.

But could an octopus really have taken out such huge swimming predatory reptiles? No one would have believed such a tale until the staff of the Seattle Aquarium set up a video camera at night a few years ago to find out what was killing the sharks in one of their large tanks. What they were shocked to discover was that a large octopus they had in the same tank was the culprit. The video of one of these attacks is available on the web to anyone who uses the search terms "shark vs octopus."

"We think that this cephalopod in the Triassic was doing the same thing," said McMenemy. Among the evidences of the kraken attacks are many more ribs broken in the shonisaur fossils than would seem accidental and the twisted necks of the ichthyosaurs. "It was either drowning them or breaking their necks."

Of course, it's the perfect Triassic crime because octopuses are mostly soft-bodied and don't fossilize well. Only their beaks, or mouth parts, are hard and the chances of those being preserved nearby are very low. That means the evidence for the murderous Kraken is circumstantial, which may leave some scientists rather skeptical. But McMenemy is not worried.

"We're ready for this," he said. "We have a very good case."

Geological Society of America. "Giant 'kraken' lair discovered: Cunning sea monster that preyed on ichthyosaurs." *ScienceDaily*, 10 Oct. 2011. Web. 6 Nov. 2011.



## ANNUAL FOSSIL SHOW UPDATE

This is the last newsletter to address the status and details of our Fossil Show to be held Saturday, December 3rd, 2011. In the past, many of our members have generously given their time and fossil donations to help make our Show a great event for the community.

We will have a sign-up sheet at the November meeting for volunteers to make the show a success. We need members to work the Spin Game, Kid's Dig, Silent Auction, Grand Raffle, Gate and Admissions, Parking, making coffee at 7am for our vendors and work crew, vendor relief, putting up signs on Colonial Blvd, Six Mile Cypress, and Ortiz Av, helping vendors with set-up in the morning, taking a publicity survey, giving out a gift to every child (at the Iona House), being a relief person where needed, providing information and direction to attendees, putting up signs and blocking off certain access points with yellow tape (starting around 7:30), setting up the club tables for club merchandise and fossil exhibits, and helping the Imaginarium staff setting up the Kid's Dig.

Volunteers are also needed on Friday afternoon to prepare the Nature Center, set up chairs, set up tables, tape on the table cloth skirts, and place signs for the vendors.

Vendors will be arriving at 7am and will need some help bringing in their products.

Volunteers will be needed for show tear down (starting at 5PM) and clean up after the Show on Saturday.

At this time, 13 vendors and two not-for-profit organizations have signed up for the show---this is the most we have ever had and it translates to needing a

little more help from our members. We also have a food vendor. Mark Renz, who is a local author of several fossil books and one of the founders of our Club, will be on hand for book signing.

At this time, we need someone to do face-painting. The person who did this job last year has just let us know she will be unable to work for us this year. We need a volunteer. Who wants to give it a try?

To summarize, we need several members to pitch in and make this a great show!!

We have Show Fliers for everyone to hand out. See page 7 of this newsletter. Pick some up at the November meeting and give them out to friends, or post them in appropriate places. All Libraries in Lee County have agreed to make them available at their literature stands. We could use some help in getting our flier out in Charlotte and Collier county. This will be brought up at the November meeting.

Several press releases are in work to publicize the Show. Suggestions are welcome.

We have persons who are getting the word out via the internet to all the schools.

As in the past, the Calusa Nature Center is giving us excellent support and helping us publicize the Show.

Doing the show is a big undertaking, but it is also fun and interesting. We have some great vendors with a big selection of fossils and minerals, animal skulls, Indian artifacts, and many other interesting things.

We can all be proud of what we are doing for our community and what we do to further the fun and science of paleontology.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Clewiston Museum Tour on November 17th, 2011. Guided tour and free admission if you are there promptly at 11AM. The Clewiston Museum has some great fossils of mammoth, mastodon, sloth, horse and shark. Mark Renz will conduct the tour and then have a book signing of his book "Giants in the Storm". Dutch Treat (pay for your own meal) lunch with Mark.

On your way to or from Clewiston, one sight of interest is the Ortona Indian Mound Park on RT 78. The Ortona Mound is located at the site of an Ortona village that has been carbon-dated at 300 AD. The Ortonas built a canal so they could travel by log canoe from their village to a nearby lake. It is thought that the Ortonas were related to the Calusa Indians. The Mound is about 22 feet above sea level and is the highest point in Glades County. There are trails in the park and an interpretive kiosk that sheds some light on the Ortona culture.

Thomas Farm Dig, Fall 2011. The Division of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Florida Museum of Natural History is accepting volunteers to work with staff and students on a fossil dig at the well known Thomas Farm site in Gilcrest County. The first session has been completed, but the second session runs from November 11th to 20th. All specimens collected are the property of the Museum of Natural History. Go to [website www.flmnh.ufl.edu/vertpaleo](http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/vertpaleo) and click on the link on the page for the 2011 Fossil Dig. Florida.

Florida Paleontological Society Fall Meeting: December 9th-11th. The fall field trip is to the Branford Quarry which is a known source of Eocene and Oligocene marine exposures. To join the FPS or to obtain further information, visit [www.floridapaleosociety.com](http://www.floridapaleosociety.com). The Branford Trip will be led by Alex Kittle and Paul Roth of the Invertebrate Division of the Florida Museum of History.



# **FOSSIL SHOW 2011**

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. 3rd  
9 AM TO 5 PM**

**CALUSA NATURE CENTER &  
PLANETARIUM**

**CORNER OF COLONIAL BLVD. & ORTIZ AVE.  
ENTRANCE: 3450 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)**