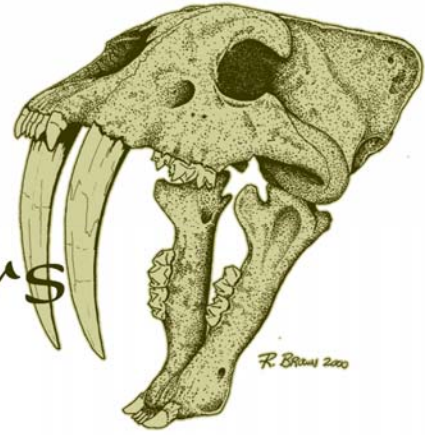


NEWS

Florida Fossil Hunters



Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc. dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters
Volume 23, Number 4

April 2013

From the President.....

Fossil Fest 7 was a success! Orlando Science Center sends their thanks to the Florida Fossil Hunters' volunteers who made the event great for all who came.

I've been working on getting this event moved to right before our Fossil Fair in October. I believe this would boost attendance at our Fair. Luckily this falls in line with some plans Stephanie at OSC has been working on for a month-long "Science and the Past" theme which would include paleontology and archaeology, etc. As details come forth, we will pass them on.

At this month's meeting, I'll be gearing you up for the Peace River Dig in May, including tips on how to build your own screen, what to look for, rules & regulations, etc.

Bonnie is having a Kids' Blast on "tusk or tree; bone or stone" identification. Some of you first-timers may want to sit in on this one.

Several "BIG" announcements in this newsletter, so please read on.....

Russell Brown

President

**Peace River
Fossil Hunt &
Picnic
May 11, 2013**
More Info Page 2

**Bone Valley
Mine Field Trip**
More Info Page 3

Coming Events

UPCOMING MEETINGS at the Orlando Science Center

April 20th

2 pm Kids' Fossil Blast
3 pm Meeting

May 11th - Peace River fossil hunt & picnic. No regular meeting in May - Peace River trip instead

June 15th

2 pm Kids' Fossil Blast
3 pm Meeting & Fossil Bucks Auction

More events listed on back page

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www.floridafossilhunter.com

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Fragments

Kids' Fossil Blast

On Saturday, April 20th at 2 pm we will be investigating the differences between bone, petrified wood, fossil ivory (tusks), and rocks. We'll have lots of examples to look at and handle. Those big kids (adults) who are new to fossil hunting are welcome to join us.

We'll meet at 2 pm at the Science Center on Saturday, September 17th. The next one will be on Saturday, November 19th.

Fossil & Mineral Shows

Central Florida Mineral & Gem Society

Their Spring Mineral & Gem Show will be held 10 am to 6 pm on Saturday, April 27th, and 10 am to 5 pm, Sunday, April 28th. at the Florida National Guard Armory, 2809 South Fern Creek Ave., Orlando, FL 32806. Vendors will offer beads, minerals, gemstones, custom jewelry, and fossils, etc. Family activities include a sandpit and sluicing. There also will be demonstrations. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for students. go to their website www.cfmgs.org for a \$1 coupon off admission.

Venice Shark Tooth Festival

The 2013 Festival will be held April 12th - 14th. The hours are- Friday 4 - 9 pm, Saturday 10 am - 9 pm, Sunday 10 am - 5 pm. There are shark teeth and fossil vendors as well as lots of arts and crafts booths. You can get all kinds of food and enjoy the music of the live bands while you eat. There are kids' activities, too. While you're in Venice, you can go to the beach and hunt for your own fossil shark teeth.... hint - they are generally black in color.

Cost is \$3 for adults and kids under 12 can get in free. Directions: From Sarasota take Rt. 41 south to the Rt. 41 Venice bypass. Look for the signs on Rt. 41 along the bypass directing you to the Venice Municipal Airport festival grounds. For more info, check out www.escape-to-sarasota.com/venice-sharks-tooth-festival

Field Trips

Peace River Fossil Dig & Picnic

On Saturday, May 11th the club will have a get together for fossil hunting on the Peace River and a cookout/ covered dish picnic.

Dave Cass and Dave Dunaway will be the trip leaders. They will set up camp at Thousand Trails Campground, 2555 US 17th South, Wauchula, 33873, on Friday. They hope to get one of the camp sites there along the river so we can just walk in from there like we've done in years past. There is a \$5 fee to park there for the day. If you want to camp there, the phone number is: [863-735-8888](tel:863-735-8888). The website is www.1000trails.com

The club will provide hot dogs and the fixin's and plates and utensils. Bring some food to share: salad, fruit, or a dessert, etc.

You will need: shovel, sifter, and a bag or fanny pack to put the fossils in. Suggest you have some way to tie the sifter and bag to you since humans do not have more than 2 hands. You can bring dive mask and snorkel and look for fossils that way, too. If you don't have a screen to sift, you can call Dave Cass. He makes and sells them.

Wear: dive boots or old gym shoes so the rocks and glass don't cut your feet (I find wearing socks that are tight at the ankle keep out the sand and small gravel as you sift, too.); a hat; sunscreen; and old clothes. Bring dry clothes and towels. You don't want to drive home wet..... and believe me, even if the water is only a foot deep where you dig, you will be drenched by the time you're done.

Bring your own drinks and any snacks you want before lunch and a chair.

You can sign up at the April meeting on Saturday, April 20th at the Orlando Science Center OR you can call Dave Cass at [407-409-9095](tel:407-409-9095) or Dave Dunaway at [407-786-8844](tel:407-786-8844).

Of course, the trip is contingent on the Peace River staying low enough. It's been nice and low all winter, so unless we get really heavy rains, it should be fine.

Vulcan April

TRIP LEADER STILL NEEDED.
See page 6 for more information.

Bone Valley Mine Field Trip Incredible news, Florida Fossil Hunters!

One of our new members has arranged for a field trip to Ft. Green Mine in the Bone Valley region on Saturday, April 13th from 8:30 to 12:30. We'll meet nearby before 8 am and carpool into the mine.

There are a limited amount of people allowed so the first to respond are the ones that get on the list. Please note: the minimum age is 13 and minors **MUST** be accompanied by a parent.

Cindy Roll is the Trip Leader. Her contact info is: email croll59@com (h) [904-264-2158](tel:904-264-2158) (c) [904-571-4258](tel:904-571-4258)

We are pleased to share that our management will accommodate the Florida Fossil Hunters Club request for a fossil hunt on Mosaic's property. This opportunity is a special privilege only for selected fossil clubs in Central & Southwest Florida. Please read this entire email carefully and let me know if you have any further questions.

CONTACT INFORMATION: At least one week prior to the hunt, you are required to electronically send:

Please include:

Full name, Address, ph.#,email, and age if between the ages of 13-17 years.

Contact information for all participants is being requested by our Public Relations department as part of our public education campaign – where they'll receive periodic mailings, emails and communications (no more than once monthly – usually less). Participants may "opt out" of the e-mail newsletter electronically once they receive an issue.

WAIVER & RELEASE: All participants will be required to sign the attached "MOSAIC VISITOR AGREEMENT-WAIVER RELEASE.pdf." Hard copies of the attached form may NOT be available onsite, so please bring your copy with you. Participants ages 13-17 will be required to bring their signed form with them (or email scanned copy to Kaley prior to trip) if their parent/guardian is not accompanying them.

WHAT TO EXPECT: Before being allowed to dig onsite, participants will be given a safety orientation. Mosaic cannot guarantee the quality or number of fossils, nor can we specify the exact location, type of land forms or materials you'll be digging in prior to the trip.

DRINKS/FOOD: Participants are responsible for bringing their own drinks and food. They will have an opportunity to eat their lunch while enjoying a presentation after the fossil hunt.

ZERO TOLERANCE: A zero tolerance policy will be in effect. If one person knowingly breaks the rules that person will be removed and sent home. Depending on the situation, your fossil club may be sent home early and/or not be allowed to dig the following year.

SIGNIFICANT FINDS: Mosaic strongly encourages that any scientifically significant fossils found on our property be shared with a museum or research institution, where they can benefit the scientific community as a whole as well as future generations.

CLOTHING: All participants must wear long pants, closed toe shoes with ankle support (lace up shoes/boots preferred, avoid slip on shoes). Please also wear and bring sunscreen. Hard hats and safety glasses will be provided by Mosaic, and must be worn on site.

New species of Echinoid discovered at Vulcan Mine...?

30 or so members were present at the March 9th dig at Vulcan Mine. The weather was perfect. We had a great set-up with tarps, grill, tables, etc. There was plenty of food brought (Thanks, everyone!), we grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, and, of course, there were deviled eggs.

During the morning, most members found the common echinoids, some sand dollars, shell molds, calcite crystals, and chert. I saw one really nice piece of dugong rib that a new member found. During lunch a few people reported strange echinoids... brightly colored with reds or blues. Some even had dots. No this was NOT a new species. Dave Cass and Russell hid a dozen colored echinoids, which were redeemed later for surprise fossils. Eight of the twelve were found.

Many thanks to Alan Pagels and Vulcan Materials, and all of you who participated.... especially those who helped get Marcia's car running again.

From Barbara Fite - *who the new Smilodon species is named for*

My parents, Freddie and Hugh Wright, raised us to be knowledgeable in local history and through them I met Frank Garcia a local amateur paleontologist, and became a founding member of the Tampa Bay Fossil Club twenty-five years ago. On one of the club trips in 1990 I found my first Smilodon jaw. Amazingly, the second one I dug up just nine years ago. The third one I acquired from another fossil collector. I am so honored to be able to help bring a new species to light. It is a great way to celebrate my birthplace in Brewster, the area called Bone Valley for the phosphate mining, only a few miles from where this species was found in Polk County.

Special thanks go out to those who that helped make this happen:

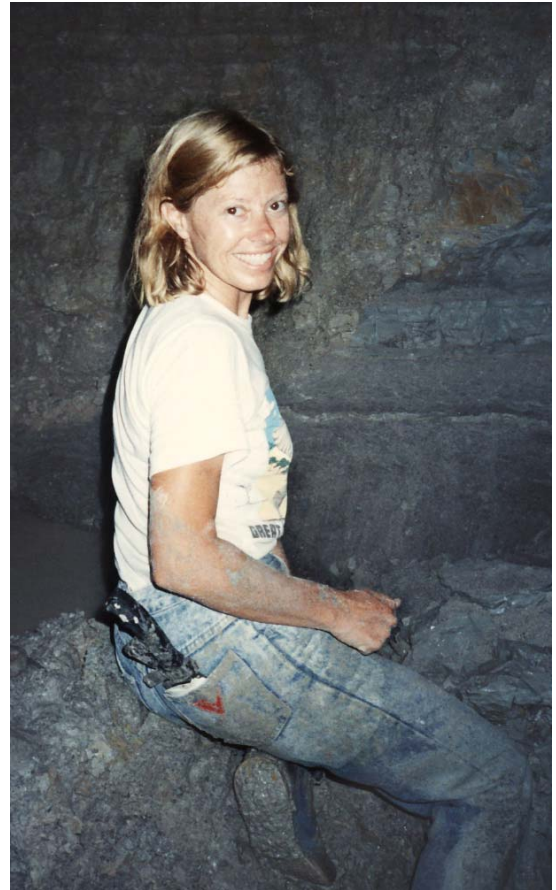
1. Property owners like the Leisey and Casey families, the Vulcan mine in Brooksville and the former Gardner, Cargill and IMC phosphate mining companies which allowed fossil-hunting on their land. By sharing their excavations they helped uncover the rich history of our state as well as spark the love of science and discovery for thousands people of all ages, plus assisted in the finding of numerous new species

2. A thumbs up to amateur women of paleontology and some that we have recently lost such as Rudi Johnson, Nita Akin, Pat Smeelink and Myla Stevenson. The Tampa Bay Fossil Club is also sponsoring several young women who are studying paleontology.

3. A huge thanks to the professionals at the museums who, while the amateurs are the eyes and ears of the museum out in the field, spend countless hours researching the fossils to determine what the bones can tell us. Please donate to our underfunded science museums, whether they are small local ones such as the PaleoPreserve in Ruskin or larger ones including the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville.

Dr. Steven C. Wallace, Associate Professor, Department of Geosciences at the Don Sundquist Center of Excellence in Paleontology, East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tennessee, and Dr. Richard C. Hulbert, Vertebrate Paleontology Collections Manager at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville who deserve so much credit for their diligent work on this project.

4. My husband Mike who has put up with bones around the house for so many years.



Barbara Fite at the "Bird Dog" site
where she found the jaw.
Taken 8-10-89



Lulu Creek - Part 12:

Early Artifacts and the People that Left Them

Before the European push into the newly discovered Americas, many groups of people had already set roots here. For thousands of years different Native American cultures lived, hunted and played right here around Lake Apopka. The artifacts left behind have been discovered here and all over our State, not to mention the Country.

At one time in Lulu Creek's past, it's thought that the Timuccan Indians settled in the area. Numbering in the thousands, they were one of Florida's largest populations of Native Americans. They had separate cultures and sub-tribes within the Timuccan grouping. The men hunted and fished while the women raised crops... beans, squash, corn... along with native nuts, fruits, etc. that they gathered in the woods. They lived in small rounded huts constructed on posts, with roofs of thatch or palmetto leaves. Sometimes mud was used over the leaves on the sides of the hut. The people lived in groups of around 200 to 300 and had a main building where ceremonies and other gatherings would be held.

Fresh water was, as it is today, a vital necessity for life. So the springs and large lakes were a magnet for early settlers. Lulu Creek, Tea Cup Springs, Magnolia Springs, and Bear Springs - flowing into then-pristine Lake Apopka - made this area a great place to live.

Trading between different groups can be traced with the artifacts found: shell goods from the coasts is one example. The rivers that run through our state were the main "highways" for transportation of people and goods. There were no stores for people to go shopping at, so whatever those early people needed they had to make themselves from whatever resources were available in their area. Tools and other items were made of bone, shell, chert, agatized coral, wood, and bone. When they killed an animal like a deer, they would use ALL of the animal - meat, skin, bones, antlers... everything but the squeal, 'cause they couldn't catch it.

Each culture's goods were modified based on their resources and archaeologists can tell a lot about ancient lives by closely examining a site.

The use of pottery or ceramics first showed up in Florida about 4,000 years ago, as evidenced by simple bowls found in the St. John's River area. It's use spread across the State and by 3,000 years ago, we start seeing designs and modifications unique to each tribe with complexity increasing over time.

The Timuccans sometimes fought battles among the sub-tribes, but the big battles would be the ones that were waged against the new invaders.... the Europeans. Timuccans (that is the word the Europeans called them but it's probably not what the natives called themselves) were one of the first tribes that early explorers came into contact with. These explorers enslaved or killed most and converted the few that were left to Christianity. After the Timuccans were gone, the Seminoles moved in from the north as they tried to escape the Europeans.



Surely there were many more early native tribes/cultures of people here before the coming of the Europeans. But without a written record, the only clues historians and archaeologists have are the artifacts left behind. Unfortunately, hundreds of the mounds and middens that these early Americans built were used in building the early roads and as fill. Most of the surface of Florida has at one time or another been cut down, plowed, or filled-in as our population as increased.

This means that every remaining early archaeological site is a priceless treasure and must be saved and protected. Just like fossil sites, a lot of archaeological sites are developed, destroyed, looted, and gone before any professional study can be conducted and then the information is forever lost.

If you would like more information on the early Florida Indians, there are two books that I recommend:

Florida's First People by Robin C. Brown

Native Americans in Florida by Kevin M. McCarthy

Russell Brown

Next step back: the early mammals of Lulu Creek

UF RESEARCHER DESCRIBES NEW 5-MILLION-YEAR-OLD SABER-TOOTHED CAT FROM FLORIDA

March 14th, 2013

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — A [University of Florida](#) researcher has described a new genus and species of extinct saber-toothed cat from Polk County, Fla., based on additional fossil acquisitions of the animal over the last 25 years.

The 5-million-year-old fossils belong to the same lineage as the famous *Smilodon fatalis* from the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles, a large, carnivorous apex predator with elongated upper canine teeth. Previous research suggested the group of saber-toothed cats known as *Smilodontini* originated in the Old World and then migrated to North America, but the age of the new species indicates the group likely originated in North America. The study appeared online in the journal *PLOS One* Wednesday.

"*Smilodon* first shows up on the fossil record around 2.5 million years ago, but there haven't been a lot of good intermediate forms for understanding where it came from," said study co-author Richard Hulbert Jr., vertebrate paleontology collections manager at the Florida Museum of Natural History on the UF campus. "The new species shows that the most famous saber-toothed cat, *Smilodon*, had a New World origin and it and its ancestors lived in the southeastern U.S. for at least 5 million years before their extinction about 11,000 years ago. Compared to what we knew about these earlier saber-toothed cats 20 or 30 years ago, we now have a much better understanding of this group."

Hulbert helped uncover fossils of the new genus and species, *Rhizosmilodon fiteae*, from a phosphate mine during excavations in 1990. The species was named after Barbara Fite of Lutz, Fla., who in 2011 donated one of the critical specimens used for the new description and allowed UF scientists to make casts of two other partial jaws in her collection.

The donation was a major contribution to the research because the remarkably well-preserved lower jaw contains almost pristine examples of all three chewing teeth, Hulbert said. The genus name *Rhizosmilodon*, meaning "root of *Smilodon*," implies the animal could be a missing link and direct ancestor of *Smilodon*, which became extinct about 11,000 years ago.

"The taxonomy of this animal was controversial because when it was first published 20 years ago, they only had one partial, somewhat-decent lower jaw, and it was missing some of the critical features," Hulbert said. "We now have more complete specimens showing it has a mixture of

primitive and advanced characters, and does not match any previously named saber-toothed cat genus or species."

Originally misidentified as a member of the genus *Megantereon* in the early 1980s, *Rhizosmilodon* is instead the sister taxon to *Megantereon* and *Smilodon*, and the oldest of the group. These three cats are in the same tribe — meaning they are more closely related than a family or subfamily — and are often called as saber-toothed cats because of their long canine teeth, Hulbert said.

"When people think of saber-toothed cats, they think of it as just one thing, as if the famous tar pit saber-toothed cat was the only species, when in fact, it was an almost worldwide radiation of cats that lasted over 10 million years and probably had a total of about 20 valid species," Hulbert said. "Counting the newly described animal, there are now six different species of saber-toothed cats known just from Florida."

For more info, go to: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/03/130314140909.htm#.UVGz04rjfgA.email>

VULCAN MINE Field Trip

TENTATIVE: Saturday, April 13th

Trip Leader: NEEDED, please check website to see if we get a volunteer
Vulcan Mine Field Trip
near Brooksville

If you want to go to Vulcan on Saturday, April 13th, someone is going to have to volunteer to be trip leader. The ones who have done it in the past can't do it on that day.

It's really quite easy: I supply you with all the paperwork.

I give the members your phone # and email so they can sign up and you know who is coming.

Sometimes people have questions. Generally, if you've been there once, you can answer any questions or you can ask me.

You arrive around 8:15 am at Vulcan and get our club members to sign the waiver form. Then give the forms to Alan Pagels when you get into the mine.

You keep a list of those who attended so they can get their fossil bucks.

Then you turn in the list and packet back to me.

And you earn an extra 100 fossil bucks for being trip leader.

If you are interested in going to Vulcan in April or leading the trip, please Email Bonnie as soon as possible: bonnierussell62@gmail.com

Florida Fossil Hunters

is a fun and educational group whose goal is to further our understanding of the prehistory of Florida. We encourage family participation and welcome explorers of all ages.

Membership is \$17 per year. Other household members may be included at no charge.

Meetings are usually held on the third Saturday of the month but may vary with club activities. Check the website for the date and location of the next meeting or call one of the officers.

Officers:

President	Russell Brown	(352) 429-1058
Vice President	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Secretary	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
Treasurer	Sara Morey	(619) 302-4863

Chairs:

Education	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
Field Trips	OPEN	
Fossil Fair	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Fossil Auctions	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Fossil Bucks	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Fossil Lotto	Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Auctioneer	Roy Singer	(407) 645-0200
Membership	Bonnie Cronin Nicole Barr	(352) 429-1058
Newsletter	Bonnie Cronin Elise Cronin-Hurley	(352) 429-1058 (407) 929-6297
Photography	John Heinsen	(407) 291-7672
Webmaster	Elise Cronin-Hurley elise@liseydreams.com	(407) 929-6297

Board of Directors:

Melissa Cole	(407) 834-5615
Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Dave Cass	(407) 409-9095
Shelley Zimmerman	(407) 891-1260
Marge Fantozi	
Marcia Wright	

Membership Application

Names: _____

Associate Members: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

e-mail: _____

____ New ____ Renewal

Please list any interests, experience, talents or just plain enthusiasm, which you would like to offer to the club:

Membership is \$17 per year. Our membership year runs from January to December. All renewals are done in December and January.

Please make your checks payable to:

Florida Fossil Hunters
Post Office Box 540404
Orlando, Florida 32854-0404

Associate members are people in the same household, included at no extra charge, 2 adult votes per household.

Newsletter Policy

Articles must be submitted by the first of the month to be included in that month's newsletter. These can be mailed to the above Post Office Box or e-mailed to: elise@liseydreams.com. Articles can be sent as text in the e-mail or in Microsoft Word files (.doc or .docx).

Please note in subject of email 'FFH'.

Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc.
dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Florida Fossil Hunters Mark Your Calendar

See inside for more information on events.

April 12, 13, 14

Venice Shark Tooth Festival

April 13th

Ft. Green Mine Field Trip

April 13th

Vulcan Mine (IF we get a trip leader)

April 12th, 13th, & 14th - Venice Shark
Tooth Festival

April 20th

2 pm Kids' Fossil Blast

3 pm Meeting

April 27th & 28th

Cen. FL Mineral & Gem Show

May 11th

Peace River fossil hunt & picnic

No regular meeting in May

- Peace River trip instead

June 15th

2 pm Kids' Fossil Blast

3 pm Meeting & Fossil Bucks Auction

Be Green

Email Bonnie at bjrb48@netzero.com to
receive the newsletter via email.



Join Our Facebook group, Search:

[Florida Fossil Hunters](#)

facebook

Visit us online at www.floridafossilhunters.com

Articles and comments should be sent to: elise@liseydreams.com

Florida Fossil Hunters

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Florida Fossil Hunters News