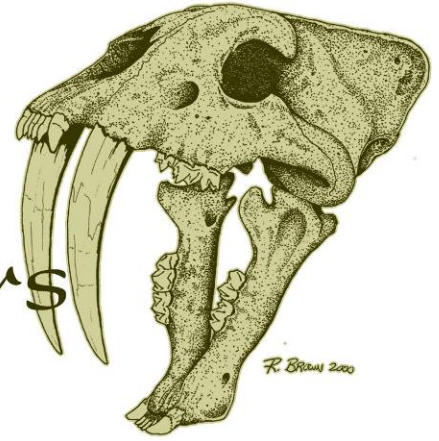


NEWS

Florida Fossil Hunters



Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc. dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters
Volume 21, Number 1

January 2011

Passing of Time, Passing of the Torch

Another year gone by....faster each time around. Once again it's time to take down the Christmas tree, to renew memberships, and fill the positions of club officers. Jimmy Waldron has done a terrific job as President and is a hard act to follow. But his sentence has been served and by law, we have to let him go. I'm sure Jimmy will remain an active Fossil Hunter and will continue to be an asset to the club. I'll be asking him to be on the Board.

Every year we try to somewhat follow a schedule and every year we come across unforeseen events that change our plans. The creativity and flexibility of those core members that make up the base of our club manage to coordinate meeting times and places, events, speakers, keep track of membership...everything we belong to this group for. I thank you. I thank you, like you thank me. I'll once again take the helm and be President.....Sara and Bonnie said so.

We are all currently working on the next few months' agenda. We are always looking for new ideas for activities and events for the members to enjoy. Please feel free to share your thoughts with us.

I remain dedicated to working with the Orlando Science Center and encourage members to become more involved with volunteering there. I would also like to work on a closer relationship with the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville.

Whatever the challenge, we've always overcome...sometimes good, sometimes not-so-good, but we overcome. I guess what I'm trying to say is become active in life, your community, your clubs..... whatever brings you happiness.

Before you know it, another year will have come and gone. Look forward to where life is taking you, but don't forget to look back.

Thank you for your support.
Russell Brown
President

Looking forward to 2011

January Mtg

January 15, 2011
Meeting at
Florida Museum
of Natural History

February Mtg

DATE CHANGE
We'll post on the website and it will be in February's newsletter.
See Page 2 for more info

March Mtg

March 19, 2011
Orlando
Science Center
Fossil Fest

Coming Events

MEETINGS SATURDAY

at the Orlando Science Center

January 15, 2011

Field trip to
Florida Museum of Natural History

February 2011 TBA

See page 2 for more info

March 19, 2011

Orlando Science Center
Fossil Fest

April 16, 2011

2:00pm Kids Fossil Blast
3:00pm Club Meeting

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www.floridafossilhunter.com

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Fragments

Tour of Florida Museum of Natural History January 15th, 2011

The "behind the scenes" tour of Dickinson Hall of the Florida Museum of Natural History is almost here.

Instead of a meeting in January, our club gets to visit Dickinson Hall which is the place where the real Paleontology is done for the Florida Museum of Natural History, which is renowned for having one of the best fossil collections in the world. This "behind the scenes" tour will start at 10 am on Saturday, January 15th, 2011. We will get to see some of the ongoing research in the areas of Invertebrate Paleontology, Vertebrate Paleontology, and Paleobotany.

Don't miss this opportunity to experience for yourself just how the professionals tease the information from ancient rocks.

According to mapquest, the trip from the Orlando Science Center to the University takes about 2 hours. You'll have to adjust that depending on where you live. From I-75 take exit 384 at SR 24. Take SR 24/Archer Rd. east. Turn left onto Gale Lerner and Dr. (just past Shealy Dr). Turn right on the 2nd road which is Museum Road. Dickinson Hall will be on the right after the greenhouses.

Please arrive early (in the lobby of Dickinson at 9:45 am) and give yourself some extra time to find a parking space and to walk to Dickinson Hall. Since we'll be visiting on a Saturday, we won't need decals to park but that doesn't mean that the parking spaces will all be empty. There is a parking garage across the street from Dickinson and several lots along Museum Road.

Please RSVP me at bjrb48@netzero.com or 352-429-1058 if you are going to participate.

You can find out more at www.flmnh.edu/exhibits

Happy New Year!

Bonnie Cronin, Florida Fossil Hunters

Orlando Science Center's Fossil Fest 2011

The Science Center's blast from the very distant past will be held on Saturday, **March 19th**. As part of our partnership with them in educating the public about fossils and Florida's past, we will be setting up displays and explaining the wonders of fossils to visitors. This event will be INSTEAD of a regular meeting for March.

Please mark your calendars and volunteer some time that day... and you'll have fun while earning Fossil Bucks!

FEBRUARY MEETING CHANGE

The Science Center did not have a room available for that day, so we are in the process of trying to get a room for Sunday, February 20th or Saturday, February 26th. We'll have the date on the website as soon as we get confirmation and it will be in February's newsletter.

Gem and Mineral Show

The Tomoka Gem & Mineral Society will hold its annual Jewelry, Gems, Minerals & Fossils Show on Saturday, January 15th from 10 am to 6 pm, and Sunday, January 16th from 10 am to 5 pm, at the Volusia County Fairgrounds, State Route 44, Deland. (1/2 mi. east of I-4, xi 118). For additional information, call 386-226-4032.

Fossil and Mineral Show

The Tampa Bay Fossil Club will hold its 24th Annual Fossilfest on Saturday, March 12, from 9 am to 6 pm, and on Sunday, March 13th, from 10 am to 4 pm, at the Florida State Fairgrounds at the intersection of I-4 and Hwy. 301, just east of Tampa. Admission is \$5 for adults. Kids 12 and under can get in free. There is a charge for parking.

There will be fossils, artifacts, minerals, and shells for sale. There will also be silent auctions, raffles, door prizes, exhibits, workshops, and a kids' fossil mine.

For more info go to www.tampabayfossilclub.com

The "Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway" exhibit with the works of artist Ray Troll will be on display at the Florida Museum of Natural History in 2012....not 2011, as we had printed in previous newsletters. Sorry.

Kids' Fossil Blast

Ever wonder why some wood is "petrified" and others aren't, why some areas have detailed fossils of fish and other areas just have a few teeth, why things fossilize at all?

We will try to find the answers to some of these questions at our next Fossil Blast in February. February's meeting day will **NOT** be Saturday, February 19th.

There's been a change in the schedule...our next Kids' Fossil Blasts will be on February ?, April 16th, and June 18th... unless the club is digging in the Peace in April.

For more info, email Bonnie Cronin,
bjrb48@netzero.com

Vulcan Mine Field Trip

There will be a field trip to Vulcan Mine near Brooksville on Saturday, January 8th. Jimmy Waldron will be the Trip Leader for January's outing to the Vulcan Mine. To sign up, email him at jrexosc@gmail.com or call him at 386-212-5814 (leave a message if he doesn't answer right away). This is one of the few places where kids are allowed in to fossil hunt. Be sure to stay with them since there are steep cliffs, sharp rocks, and small sinkholes.

*You **MUST** be a member of the club for insurance purposes to participate in this field trip.*

Meet on the driveway loop near the entrance to the Mine by 8:30am to sign releases before we are escorted into the mine around 9 am. We get to drive our vehicles in so you can have your coolers, snacks, and equipment handy while you hunt. They usually allow us to dig until noon and sometimes people can stay till 2pm.

All of the participants **MUST** be escorted into and out of the mine. Do not leave on your own since it is easy to become lost.

Directions: The trip will take approximately 2 hours from Orlando to Vulcan Mine. Be sure to allow for extra time to stop at a restroom before you get there. **THERE ARE NO RESTROOM FACILITIES AT VULCAN**, other than the boulders and the hills.

From Orlando take Hwy. 50 west (or the 408 west to the Fl. Turnpike, take exit 272 and then continue west on Hwy. 50) to Brooksville. Follow 50A/98 North through Brooksville and turn right on Ponce De Leon Blvd. (Hwy 98 North). Go approximately 10 miles. Vulcan/Cemex will be on your left. The address is 16313 Ponce De Leon Blvd, Brooksville, for those of you who want to download a map.

IF you follow the truck route for Hwy. 50, you have to turn right onto 41, and then take the fork to the left to hook up with Ponce De Leon Blvd/98. There are several fast food places on 41 where you can take advantage of the bathroom facilities before getting to Vulcan. Be sure **NOT** to keep following 41 north. You want to take 98 north from Brooksville.

This is mostly surface collecting with occasionally a little digging to pry out a specimen. Bring a small trowel or screwdriver or rock hammer, and a bucket to put your fossils and rocks into. You may want to bring small containers and tissue for fragile fossils.

Wear a hat, sturdy shoes, long pants (some of the rocks are sharp), and sunscreen. Bring lots of water and/or drinks and some snacks or lunch to eat.

We find mostly echinoids and sometimes sea urchins, pieces of bone, or other fossils are found. We also find chert rocks. This is the material that the Indians used to make their arrowheads and tools.

FPS Spring Meeting and Dig

The Florida Paleontological Society has scheduled the spring weekend event for April 9th through 10th. It will include a fossil hunting trip to a shell pit in Bradenton that has yielded some really good specimens...even some vertebrate fossils. It's a great opportunity to socialize with folks throughout the state that are just as intrigued by fossils and the past as we are.

If you're not a member of FPS, you can get information on joining at www.flmnh.ufl.edu/fps

Orange City's Blue Spring Manatee Festival

The Central Florida Zoo is partnering this year in this event which will be held on January 22nd & 23rd (Sat. & Sun.) from 10 am to 5 pm at Valentine Park, 1575 W. French Ave., Orange City, FL 32763. Admission is \$8 for adults and \$2 for kids ages 4 to 10.

There will be crafts, animal displays, food, live entertainment, etc. Shuttles will take visitors to the Blue Springs to view the manatees.

Valerie First, who volunteers almost every weekend at the Zoo with her fossils, will be setting up a display booth at the event. If you'd like to volunteer to help get the word out about fossils and our club, email her at VJFirst@aol.com or call her at 407-699-9274.

Florida Museum of Natural History

A new exhibition opens on Nov.13th, titled "Dugout Canoes: Paddling through the Americas". It features dugouts over time and includes the discovery of the 101 canoes at Newnans Lake near Gainesville.

The exhibit "Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway" with Artist Ray Troll and Paleontologist Kirk Johnson will run from Feb 4th to Sept. 3, 2012. This exhibit combines some of the Florida Museum's paleontology specimens and the fossil-inspired artwork of celebrated artist Ray Troll to explore questions about evolution, extinction and early life on Earth.

Renew Your Membership

It's that time of year to renew your club membership... still a bargain at \$17 per household for a full year. Be sure to fill out a renewal application so we can make sure we have your address, email and phone numbers up to date.

PLEASE WRITE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS CLEARLY.

To receive the newsletter link and special notices of coming events. Thanks. Bonnie Cronin

Board Members Needed

No experience is necessary... just enthusiasm and your time. Contact Sara Morey or Bonnie Cronin for more info (see page 7 for contact info).

Fossil Preparation

This is an excerpt of the article about Jonathan Bloch's discovery of *Labidolemur kayi*, a species of apatemyid, in the "Science Stories" on the website of the Florida Museum of Natural History.

"The process of exposing bones encased in limestone can be lengthy, depending on the size of the block and the purity of the limestone.

A limestone block is first soaked in a bath of 7 percent formic acid for around 2 hours, which will take off about a half millimeter of the stone. Then it is soaked in water for twice as much time to neutralize the acid. Any bones that start peaking out of the rock are painted with protective glue and cracks filled with epoxy. This process is repeated until the skeleton is fully revealed."

...might be worth trying on some Florida limestone.

One More Thing...

Our outgoing President shares his thoughts on the office, animal paleontologists, and the journey still to come.

You've heard the expression about seeing the forest for the trees? In this line of work, you find yourself watching the ground and looking for bones and shark's teeth.

Amateur video lurks on the internet of elephants in the wild holding a funeral service for one of their own. I'd post the link, but this is either a piece of paper in your hand, or a window that you're reading because you clearly have internet access. Either way, Google it. A few elephants—a herdlet, let's say—gathered around a clutch of bleached bones. They began to pick them up, feel them, and place them back reverently *in the shape of an elephant skeleton*. They made a connection to the organism based on its structures, knew what they were, and where they belonged. How many other creatures can figure that out?

Have you ever imagined a dinosaur stumbling across some dry, disarticulate bones and—in a peculiar moment of curiosity—shambled them together into something that "kinda looks like Frank used to?" I have. That is the depth of my insanity. That's also part of how I view this vocation. If non-humans can figure out where the pieces go for some animals, can they figure out the puzzle for things that do *not* look like them? Could an elephant produce a mastodon mount with its unique pachyderm perspective? Could a chimpanzee, so inclined and rewarded, put together a dugong skeleton? Could they have any idea why they go that way? Perhaps, like Tinbergen and Lorenz argued in early animal behaviorist thought, these activities were explainable functions in response to learned evolutionary needs for the animals. Changes like these developed over centuries of exposure to where bones go.

This is one place where I've changed my scientific opinion—as paleontologists we used to think that changes only happened over the course of thousands of years, but we were

Had to rush out December's newsletter so we didn't get to include Jimmy Waldron's articles. They're too good to leave unpublished, so here they are. Bonnie Cronin

wrong. Changes can be extraordinary in only two years.

In the time since I've taken office, we've seen relations with the Science Center go from a tenuous agreement for available real estate to a mutually respected educational partnership, including an annual family event which attracts over a thousand visitors each time. We've produced an all new educational document which encourages future rockhounds to go outside and explore their world. We've increased our recognition in Central Florida through esteemed lecturers, television appearances, and embraced our community ties through our Facebook page. Even the way we do business with ourselves has changed—our membership has exploded; meeting attendance is at an all-time high, participation in club events continues to grow. We just seem to genuinely have more fun as a club.

The credit for all of these achievements truly belongs with you. Because of your interest and your patience we have grown. Because of your enthusiasm and your dedication, we have thrived. Because you cared enough to stand up and join us in support of Science, Education, History, or just good old fashioned American Recreation, we will remain here. Always open, always welcoming, and always digging. I am forever grateful for all that this club has done for me, and all the friendships that have prospered during these past two years.

Finally, words cannot express how thankful I am for the assistance, guidance, and friendship of Bonnie Cronin and Russell Brown. These two tireless and persevering folks have done more for this organization and for the people of our community than anyone can begin to imagine. I will always know that the Florida Fossil Hunters will remain strong, so long as these two are within our ranks.

So with all my gratitude, and all my love, it has been a privilege to serve you as your President.

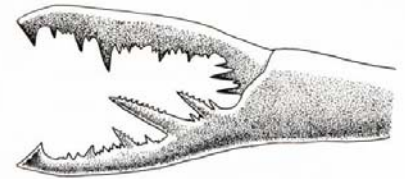
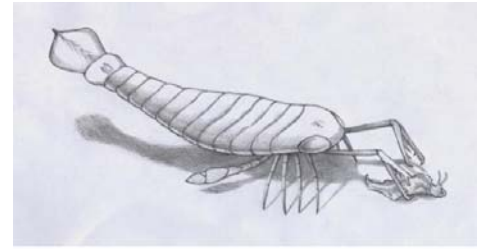
Sincerely, Jimmy Waldron

P.S. Finally found my Gavel. Great timing, huh?

Ancient Sea Scorpions Not Terrors

First they discovered that the Anomalocaris was not the Terror Shrimp of the Cambrian as previously believed. Now they have analyzed the fossils of the of the Pterygotid Sea Scorpions and they weren't shell crushing monsters. They have deduced that the claws weren't strong enough to crush shells and its arms couldn't bend enough to catch prey. Instead they probably used the claws to grasp food from the sea floor rather than grabbing fast moving prey.

Guess the prehistoric oceans might have been filled with scary looking creatures but not quite as dangerous as we thought.



Season's Greetings, Paleo-Pals!

I hope that we can all look back on 2010 as a year of fun, friends, fellowship, and of course, fossils. It's December, a time when we reflect on the times we've enjoyed together and get ready for the excitement of the coming year. Last year I started a tradition for the President's article. I've had a chance to look back on events that have made this year particularly special for me, and I'd like to share them with you, in the easiest and least thought-provoking way possible. So now, I present, tongue firmly in cheek:

“The Loosely Thrown Together, Legally Distinct, Untitled Holiday Rhyming Project: II”

Twas a great year for fossils,
of the genus called homo,
the Neandertal genome
ends the contract with Geico

Who needs the North Pole,
when we had for ourselves
in the deluxe Fairground workshop
with our junior fossil elves!

So fun to ride in a 3-toed horse sleigh
as exactly 12 folks celebrate
National Fossil Day!
(It's a rebuilding year.)

We're TV stars this year!
See the fame making us shiver--
not the 19 degree water
in March at Peace river.

And all Fossil Hunters,
asleep in their beds,
while visions of smilodons
tomp through their heads

At OSC's Neanderthal Gala,
The atmosphere was regal,
to be the stars of an auction
Where the money is legal.

Our speakers arranged on
the schedule with care,
in hopes that by three,
they'd find us back there.

Tw was a year of new science
rewriting the old
leaving many famed dinosaurs
out there in the cold.

With a bearded old fellow,
so haughty and slick,
From the ghost of Charles Darwin:
“I'm going to be sick!”

Gone Bronto, Apato,
and Diplo the Docus?
Dracorex hogwarts
had no hocus-pocus!

With such controversy,
The buzz briefly stops
to exclaim “Yes Virginia,
there is a Triceratops.”

This poem's running long,
and I'm sure that you're sick of this;
but I'm determined to find a rhyme
for Australopithecus... [Hey!]

I hope you've enjoyed
this year's vague Christmas
rhymes
with its bones and its groans
and sardonic lines

Now return to the world
of ho-ho hustle and bustle;
cuz when you read this next year,
It'll be written by Russell.

And now, Fossil Hunters, by our
rules, its expected,
that we part hand from hand
(unless I get re-elected.)
So farewell, my dear friends, and if
I may be blunt:
Merry Christmas to all, and to all a
good hunt!

*Jimmy Waldron
Fmr. President
Florida Fossil Hunters (2008-10)*

Being Good Moms Couldn't Save the Woolly Mammoth

ScienceDaily (Dec. 21, 2010) — New research from The University of Western Ontario leads investigators to believe that woolly mammoths living north of the Arctic Circle during the Pleistocene Epoch (approx. 150,000 to 40,000 years ago) began weaning infants up to three years later than modern day African elephants due to prolonged hours of darkness.

This adapted nursing pattern could have contributed to the prehistoric elephant's eventual extinction. The findings were published recently in the journal, *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology*.

By studying the chemical composition of adult and infant mammoth teeth, Jessica Metcalfe, an Earth Sciences PhD student working with professor Fred Longstaffe, was able to determine woolly mammoths that once inhabited Old Crow, Yukon didn't begin eating plants and other solid foods before the age of two (and perhaps as late as three) and considers predatory mammals like saber-toothed cats and a lack of sufficient vegetation to be the secondary reasons for delayed weaning.

"In modern Africa, lions can hunt baby elephants but not adults. They can't kill adults. But they can kill babies and by and large, they tend to be successful when they hunt at night because they have adapted night vision," explains Metcalfe, who examined fossil specimens alongside Grant Zazula of the Yukon Paleontology Program. "In Old Crow, where you have long, long hours of darkness, the infants are going to be more vulnerable, so the mothers nursed longer to keep them close."

Metcalfe says delayed weaning by Old Crow mammoths may have further significance for understanding mammoth life histories and extinction.

"Today, a leading cause of infant elephant deaths in Myanmar is insufficient maternal milk production," offers Metcalfe. "Woolly mammoths may have been more vulnerable to the effects of climate change and human hunting than modern elephants not only because of their



By studying the chemical composition of adult and infant mammoth teeth, researchers were able to determine that woolly mammoths that once inhabited Old Crow, Yukon didn't begin eating plants and other solid foods before the age of two (and perhaps as late as three). (Credit: Image courtesy of University of Western Ontario)

harsher environment, but also because of the metabolic demands of lactation and prolonged nursing, especially during the longer winter months."

Metcalfe concludes that knowing more about the past, can only help researchers understand more about the present and the future.

"Mammoths lived all over the world for thousands of years, even millions of years, and then became extinct about 10,000 years ago, which was around the time the climate started warming the last time," says Metcalfe.

"Understanding their ecology, their adaptations and their behaviour not only gives us insight into why they became extinct but also, potentially, gives us a better understanding of modern day mammals and how they might respond to the current warming of the planet."

University of Western Ontario (2010, December 21). Being good moms couldn't save the woolly mammoth. ScienceDaily. Retrieved December 30, 2010, from www.sciencedaily.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) 493-4253
Secretary		
Treasurer	Sara Morey	(407) 353-8675

Chairs:

Education	Melissa Cole	(407) 834-5615
Field Trips		
Fossil Fair	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Fossil Auctions	Dave Dunaway	(407) 493-4253
Fossil Bucks	Dave Dunaway	(407) 493-4253
Fossil Lotto	Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Auctioneer	Roy Singer	(407) 645-0200
Historian	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Librarian	Kathy Munroe	(407) 301-6773
Membership	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
Newsletter	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
	Elise Cronin-Hurley	(407) 929-6297
Photography	John Heinsen	(407) 291-7672
Webmaster	Elise Cronin-Hurley	(407) 929-6297
	elise@liseydreams.com	

Board of	Paul Bordenkircher	(407) 687-3843
Directors:	Melissa Cole	(407) 834-5615
	Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
	John Jelks	(407) 568-5558

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).

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 page 2-3 for more information on events.

January 8th - Vulcan Mine Field Trip, pg 3

January 15, 2011

Field trip Meeting to

Florida Museum of Natural History Tour, pg 2

January 15th and 16th

Tomoka Jewelry, Gems, Minerals & Fossils Show, pg 2

January 22nd & 23rd

Orange City's Blue Spring Manatee Festival, pg 3

February MTG - TBA—See pg 2 for more info

March 12 and 13th

24th Annual Tampa Bay Fossilfest, pg 2

March 19th - Orlando Science Center Fossil Fest, pg 2

April 8 –10 FPS Weekend, pg 3

April 16, 2011

2:00pm Kids Fossil Blast

3:00pm Club Meeting

TIME TO RENEW

your Florida Fossil Hunters
2010 Membership.

Be Green

We are *emailing* the newsletter each month. If you want to participate, just email Bonnie at bjrb48@netzero.com or sign up at the meeting. If you want to continue to receive a paper newsletter in the mail, you don't have to do anything.



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