

# NEWS

## Florida Fossil Hunters



Volume 19, Number 8

September 2009

### Prez Sez:

Hello Fellow Fossil Fanatics!

This is the part where I typically offer a post-lecture thank you to last month's speaker, but since it was me, it would be impolite to do so. So, thanks to everyone else for not walking out while I prattled on about dinosaurs again. Our next featured speaker will be Dr. Richard Hulbert, collections manager of the Florida Museum of Natural History. He will shed some new light for us on a question that has been bugging many a fossil-digger, and help us with our listening students as well: "How Old are my Fossils?" So mark your calendars, and join us on October 17th at 3PM for this fascinating presentation.

Now that the summer has come to an end, our meeting place at Orlando Science Center, has returned to its shorter hours. The building will close at 5:00 pm on Saturdays, and we will need to leave the premises by no later than 5:30 pm. To that end, look below for our new meeting times.

Every day we get a little bit closer to Fossil Fair (October 10 & 11) and a little bit more in need of volunteer help. If you are able to help with this event (if for only a few hours) then please contact Valerie First at [VJFirst@aol.com](mailto:VJFirst@aol.com). There's fossil bucks in it for ya, too!

Let's make it a September to remember!

Peace, Love & Paleo-Bond  
Jimmy Waldron  
President, Florida Fossil Hunters

**SEPTEMBER**

club meeting

**September 19, 2009**

3:00pm Meeting

2009 Fossil Fair

**October 10 & 11**

See page 3  
for more info

### Coming Events

#### MEETINGS SATURDAY

at the Orlando Science Center

**September 19, 2009**

3:00pm Meeting

**October 10 & 11, 2009**

Florida Fossil Fair

See page 3 for more info

**October 17, 2009**

2:00pm Kids Blast

3:00pm Meeting

*For more info...*

[www.floridafossilhunter.com](http://www.floridafossilhunter.com)

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## Fragments

### ***Piece on the Peace***

The level for the first week of September had climbed to 9 feet again at the Zolfo gauge station. Keep an eye on the river depth and get out as soon as you can to collect fossils for the kids' dig pit at the fossil fair and to find some treasures for yourself as well.



### ***Daytona Beach Museum Invitation***

Zach Zacharias of the Daytona Museum of Arts and Sciences has invited all of us to attend Mark Renz's presentation of "Fossil Sharks of the Peruvian Desert" on Tuesday, October 6th at 2 pm. Admission to the talk and the museum will be free to all members of the Florida Fossil Hunters for the event.

To get directions and other information for the museum go to [www.moas.org](http://www.moas.org) or call 386-255-0285.

### ***October Speaker***

Richard Hulbert, Collections Manager at the Museum of Natural History in Gainesville, will give a presentation titled "How Old are my Fossils? Chronology of the Bone Valley Fossils using Horse Teeth and Bone Geochemistry"

### ***Fair T-Shirts***

We are reprinting one of the most asked for t-shirts this year....the two sided shell design. We have ordered half the shirts in the ash grey like we used before and the other half in "natural" which looks like a cream color. We will have the shirts at the September meeting and at the fair. Sizes available are adult small through 2X and child's medium.

Our supplier Metropolis Graphics, has kept the costs down so we are able to offer the shirts again for only \$10 each. Be sure to get yours early ....supplies are limited.

## Kids' Fossil Blast

We had a great time in August learning about the ground sloths and armadillos.

We'll be examining limb bones of the Animal Kingdom when we meet next on Saturday, October 17th at 2pm.

## New Book

### EXPEDITION TO PERUVIAN DESERT YIELDS CLUES, BOOK ON EVOLUTION OF GREAT WHITE SHARK

With the release this month of his fifth book, "Desert Sharks" (PaleoPress), Florida author Mark Renz hopes to shed more light on the evolution of one of the ocean's top apex predators: the great white shark.

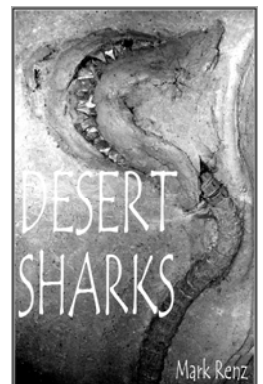
Armed with a camera and an abundance of curiosity, Renz joined Peruvian paleontologists last year on a journey into one of the driest regions on Earth. While his Peruvian hosts were focused on articulated marine mammals, Renz hoped to find 10 million year-old intact sharks. Scientists have convincing evidence that a species of Peruvian mako shark evolved into today's great white while feeding on seals off the coast of ancient Peru.

The group was not disappointed. At an elevation of 2,100 feet above sea level, they discovered nearly complete primitive whales, dolphins and seals eroding away on the desert floor. The preservation was so remarkable that the impression of baleen in a 35 ft. whale jaw was still perfectly intact. Through an unusual search method, Renz stumbled onto 33 vertebrae and a partial jaw of the great white's ancestral mako.

"DESERT SHARKS" 200 pg. PAPERBACK BOOK is vintage Renz: light but tasty science, sprinkled with a slightly warped view of the world. It includes several hundred black & white photos of fossil sharks, whales, dolphins and seals exposed in the desert, plus an ID section tracing the evolutionary path of an extinct mako shark as it slowly transforms into our contemporary great white. Renz takes the time to get to know his host country's proud people and affectionate canines, and leaves with a healthy respect for the nobility and warmth of both.

For a copy of the book, contact Mark or Marisa Renz at 239-368-3252

or [fossilx@earthlink.net](mailto:fossilx@earthlink.net). Web site is [FossilExpeditions.com](http://FossilExpeditions.com).



# Fossil Fair

October 10th and 11th

**Our Fossil Fair is fast approaching!** I hope our members have been resting up so they will be able to participate. Well, probably so many have not been attending the meetings due to busy Saturday schedules but I am hoping everyone will **save the Oct 9, 10, and 11th** for much exercising! We need help if we want to keep the fair going and not burn out any fair helpers. Please save our helpers by increasing their numbers. We all look forward to the fair and we want to keep it going.

We still need people for setting up on the 9th. On the 10th and 11th, we need people for the admission tables, membership, silent auction, and Children's dig pit.

Terry Titus and Randy Bishop have again volunteered to take of security Friday and Saturday nights. Thank you, Terry and Randy.

**We need fossils for the kids' dig pit...a LOT of fossils.**

If anyone has more places to leave the flyers, they may be printed off from our club website. I also bring some to the meeting. I carry some with me at all times because I end up blabbing about fossils and then the fair and then people ask if I have any information. I even had a person stop their car right in front of me, run over and ask if I had a flyer about the fair (assume they saw the flyer on the window of my car). My son was with me and he said

"Wow, that was cool!".

**Please bring covered dishes on show days.** The volunteers and the dealers really appreciate and look forward to all the yummy food.

If anyone has a question or wants to call me instead of signing up at the meetings, please do so.

I send out much advertising but if someone thinks of something I may not be covering, you may ask or just do it. You can google my phone number or "Fossil Fair Orlando" to see places where I have advertised it. I have also sent letters to 75 schools, including universities and community colleges in the surrounding area but who knows where many of them end up. In other words, even if you work at a school and have not seen the flyer, you can bring one in. If there is none hanging in your local library, you can leave one at the front desk of the library for them to look over and decide about displaying it. I also have 540 postcards being sent out to past participants and have sent letters to the clubs throughout the state. (just saying all this to maybe spark some other ideas that I haven't covered). Also notifying radio and television. I volunteer at the Sanford zoo and Orlando Science Center every week and hand out flyers to those that are local and interested (most that look at my bones are very interested).

**Please save the date.**

Oh, my first grandchild is due Oct 11, right here in Central Florida! Finally! Hmmm.

Valerie  
407-699-9274  
fossilfair@floridafossilhunters.com

## Help Wanted.

Friendly, outgoing types to take admission monies and greet people at the admission table. Must be able to multiply by 3 and add and subtract. No experience necessary.

People who are great with kids and don't mind sweeping up after them are needed for the Kids' Dig Pit. Knowing which end of the broom to hold is a plus.

Do you know a dugong rib from a vertebra? ...a shell from a shark's tooth? Then you're the one we are looking for to help at the ID table at the Kids' Dig Pit.

Folks needed at the membership table to explain how to join the club and what we do. Also need people who can help with t-shirt sales.

## Donations needed.

Clean out those closets and old buckets and boxes that are tucked away. Those "less than perfect" fossils can light the fires of kids' imaginations when they come to the dig pit.

We also need items for the silent auctions: models, toys, minerals, shells, etc.

Food. For years we have all brought some dish or dessert or just a bag of chips to share with the rest of the volunteers and the dealers. So please bring in your special recipe or favorite munchy to share.



# Cradle And Birthday Of The Dog

*ScienceDaily (Sep. 2, 2009) — Previous studies in the field have indicated that East Asia is where the wolf was tamed and became the dog. It was not possible to be more precise than that. But now researchers at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm have managed to zero in on man's best friend.*



“For the first time ... it is possible to provide a detailed picture of the dog, with its birthplace, point in time, and how many wolves were tamed,” says Peter Savolainen, a biology researcher at KTH.

Together with Swedish colleagues and a Chinese research team, he has made a number of new discoveries about the history of the dog.

These discoveries are presented in an article in the scientific journal *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, where it is claimed that the dog appeared 16,000 years ago, in Asia, south of the Yangtze River in China.

This is a considerably more specific date and birthplace than had previously been put forward.

“Our earlier findings from 2002 have not been fully accepted, but with our new data there will be greater acceptance. The picture provides much more detail,” says Peter Savolainen.

The time for the emergence of the dog conforms well with when the population in this part of the world went from being hunters and gatherers to be-

*New research suggests that that East Asia is where the wolf was tamed and became the dog, some 16,000 years ago.*

ing farmers, which was 10,000 to 12,000 years ago.

According to Peter Savolainen, the research indicates that the dog has a single geographic origin but descends from a large number of animals. At least several hundred tamed wolves, probably even more.

“The fact that there were so many wolves indicates that this was an important, major part of the culture,” says Peter Savolainen.

He adds that the research findings provide several exciting theories. For example, the original dogs, unlike their later descendents in Europe, which were used as herders and guard dogs, probably ended their lives in the stomachs of humans.

*Adapted from materials provided by Swedish Research Council.*

# Underwater Expedition Delivers Key Findings In Search For Evidence Of Early Americans

*ScienceDaily (Sep. 1, 2009) — In one of the more dramatic moments of an underwater archaeological survey co-led by Mercyhurst College archaeologist James Adovasio along Florida's Gulf Coast this summer, Andy Hemmings stood on an inundated river's edge where man hasn't set foot in more than 13,000 years.*

Donning full scuba gear, Hemmings stood in 130 feet of water on a peninsula at the intersection of two ancient rivers nearly 100 miles offshore from Tampa. The last time humans could have stood in that spot, mammoth and mastodon roamed the terrain.

"The successful tracking of the St. Marks-Aucilla River and the Suwannee River, between 50 and 150 kilometers respectively, represents what we believe to be the most extensive delineation of submerged prehistoric river systems ever done anywhere in the world," Adovasio said.

Another pivotal find is the identification of chert at three dive sites along the river systems; chert is a superior quality fine-grained stone used by prehistoric peoples to make tools.

"There is no doubt," Adovasio said, "that we have found the haystacks and are one step closer to uncovering the archaeological needles;" in effect, narrowing the search for evidence of early Americans in the now submerged Inner Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Mexico off the Florida coast.

Hemmings, one of the leading Paleoindian underwater archaeologists in North America, agreed. "My feeling is, given a little time to probe the sediments with a dredge, we will quickly find human artifacts."

The signature expedition of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Ocean Exploration and Research began in the summer of 2008 when a distinguished group of scientists led by Mercyhurst's Adovasio and Hemmings identified and mapped buried river channels that could potentially help document the late Pleistocene landscape. This year's mission, undertaken July 23 to Aug. 5, further traced the river systems along whose beaches prehistoric people may have

populated and identified raw materials that they may have used in tool making.

The mission also has advanced underwater understanding and research methodology exponentially, Adovasio said.

"We have developed protocols for exploring deep water, which is both time and labor intensive, as well as expensive, unlike anything done before," he said.

From the Weatherbird II, flagship of the Florida Institute of Oceanography in St. Petersburg, researchers electronically mapped the modern sea floor with a side scan sonar device and created images of the layered sediments below the seafloor surface with a sub-bottom profiler. Using GPS technology, the team selected dive locations based on an understanding of what the surface should look like, and what was hidden below that surface adjacent to the old river channels.

On the peninsula where the relict Suwannee River intersects another ancient system, divers were able to collect a 1m sediment core but were unable to complete a lengthier search for human artifacts because the water neared 130 feet, the maximum depth level for this year's dive. The team plans to return to this spot next year, increasing the divers' depth level certification to 165 feet and using a dredge to lift the silt away and see if there is an archaeological site at this confluence.

"Proof of past human habitation here would reinforce the disintegration of the once prevalent hypothesis about who the first Americans were, how they got here and when they arrived," said Adovasio, who rose to fame 30 years ago while excavating the Meadowcroft Rockshelter near Pittsburgh, Pa. Besides primary funding from NOAA, this summer's work was supported by the Mercyhurst Archaeological Institute, Gault School of Archaeological Research, Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research, Florida Institute of Oceanography, and the University of Illinois at Chicago, among others. Students from Mercyhurst, Harvard, the University of Michigan and Texas A & M were also part of the research group.

*Adapted from materials provided by Mercyhurst College.*

# 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 held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm, check the website for the location.

**Officers:**

|                |               |                |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| President      | Jimmy Waldron | (386) 212-5814 |
| Vice President | Russell Brown | (352) 429-1058 |
| Secretary      | Glory Kerr    |                |
| Treasurer      | Sara Morey    | (407) 353-8675 |

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| Education       | Melissa Cole          | (407) 834-5615 |
| Field Trips     | Shelley Zimmerman     | (407) 891-1260 |
| 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 |
| Historian       | Valerie First         | (407) 699-9274 |
| Librarian       | Kathy Munroe          | (407) 846-7382 |
| Membership      | Joanne Maio           | (407) 375-3635 |
| Newsletter      | Bonnie Cronin         | (352) 429-1058 |
|                 | Elise Cronin-Hurley   | (407) 929-6297 |
| Photography     | John Heinsen          | (407) 291-7672 |
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|                 | elise@liseydreams.com |                |

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| Roy Singer    | (407) 645-0200 |

## Membership Application

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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).

# Florida Fossil Hunters Mark Your Calendar

**September 19, 2009**

3:00pm Meeting and Auction

## 2009 Fossil Fair

### Central Florida Fairgrounds

Florida Fossil Hunters present the

*Seventeenth Annual Fossil, Mineral, and Gem Show*

Saturday, October 10, 2009 - 9:00 - 5:00pm

Sunday, October 11, 2009 - 10:00am - 4:00pm

**September 19, 2009**

2:00pm Kid's Blast

3:00pm Meeting and Auction

### Be Green

We are *emailing* the newsletter each month. If you want to participate, just email Bonnie at [bjrb48@netzero.com](mailto: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.



Visit us online at [www.floridafossilhunters.com](http://www.floridafossilhunters.com)

Articles and comments should be sent to: [elise@liseydreams.com](mailto:elise@liseydreams.com)

Florida Fossil Hunters

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