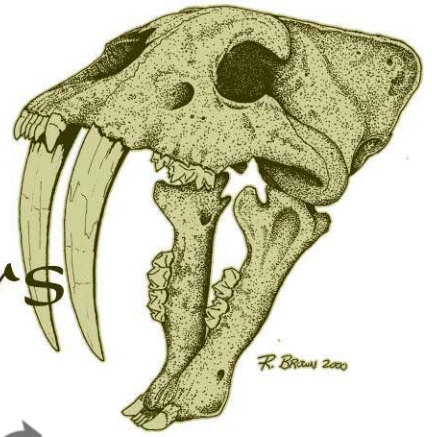


NEWS

Florida Fossil Hunters



Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc. dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters
Volume 27, Number 3

March 2017

From the President.....

I hope everything is just diggidy, and I do mean diggidy... more on Peace River later.

Harley Means of the Florida Geological Survey gave the members a "down to earth" talk on Florida's geologic history. We all learned a lot and we thank him for coming all the way from Tallahassee (and his lovely wife, Tammy). It's always fun to learn something new. We're planning on having him back in the future.

As the President of the club, I like to think that I run it. So Bonnie told me that this month I will be running a **"Shark tooth - Peace River Collection"** display workshop. She told me that the club would provide one case per membership (we ask for donations to cover the cost of any additional). Kids of course, will get one case each. You bring your own shark teeth (I'll have some extra to fill in any gaps in species) and I'll do the "show-how-to".

Speaking of Women in Power, I mean Paleontology, May is fast approaching. Please all of you that can, please volunteer for the **Women in Paleontology** event. Ask Cindy Lockner what you can do to help. This is one of our club's biggest outreach to the public so join us at OSC on May 6th.

Sheila's tentatively set a date of Mar, 25th for the next **Peace River dig**. Check the article and watch your emails. Or you can contact Steve Sharpe (Vice President). He's always going to the Peace River. (if you see him there, tell him to come home. Marly needs to be fed and let out.) You can reach Steve at sharpe626@yahoo.com or call [352-552-2296](tel:352-552-2296).

Got to go get my act together. See you at the meeting.

Russell Brown
President

Join Our Facebook group, Search:
Florida Fossil Hunters



Coming Events

UPCOMING MEETINGS at the Orlando Science Center

Saturday, March 18th
3 pm Meeting

Saturday, April 15th
2 PM - Kids' Fossil Blast
3 pm - Meeting

*More events listed on back page
For more info...
www.floridafossilhunters.com*

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Florida Fossil Hunters News

Fragments

Tampa Bay Fossil Club, March 11-12

Florida State Fairgrounds, intersection of I-4 & Hwy 301 just east of Tampa. Adults \$8, kids 12 & under free. Sat. 9-5, Sun 10-4. Fossils, gems, minerals, shells, kids' games, fossil mine, raffles, silent auctions. www.tampabayfossilclub.com

Central Florida Mineral and Gem Society Annual Gem Mineral and Bead Show, April 28-30, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

National Guard Armory; 2809 South Fern Creek Ave.; Fri. 1-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Adults \$5, Students \$2; Central There will be demonstrations, 30 minute auctions, kids table, sluice mining for gems, and hourly door prizes. See and buy gems, minerals, beads, metaphysical stones, fossils and much more from all over the world. Scouts can earn merit badges from a mineral gemologist to assist with identification and requirements. ; contact Paul Hayes, 1400 Sawyerwood Ave., Orlando, FL 32800, (407)-816-1220; phayes3@cfl.rr.com; www.cfmgs.org

Earth Day at OSC, Saturday, April 22nd

Florida Fossil Hunters will participate this year in the Earth Day celebration at the Orlando Science Center on Saturday, April 22nd from 10 am to 3 pm. We'll have more information later. If you'd like to volunteer for this event, sign up at the meeting or email Bonnie at bonnierussell62@gmail.com.

Morgan Award

Thanks for letting me know that FFH will once again donate to the Gary Morgan Award. The selection committee has already reviewed the proposals and **Natasha Vitek (Current Status: Ph.D. Candidate. Anticipated graduation May 2018.)** will be the recipient of your club's generosity. Below find a synopsis of her proposed work. All her funding will be used for rental of CT scanner at UF Nanotechnology facility, software for manipulation of scans, and data storage.

Roger W. Portell **Gary**

Director of Collections

Invertebrate Paleontology and Micropaleontology
Florida Museum of Natural History

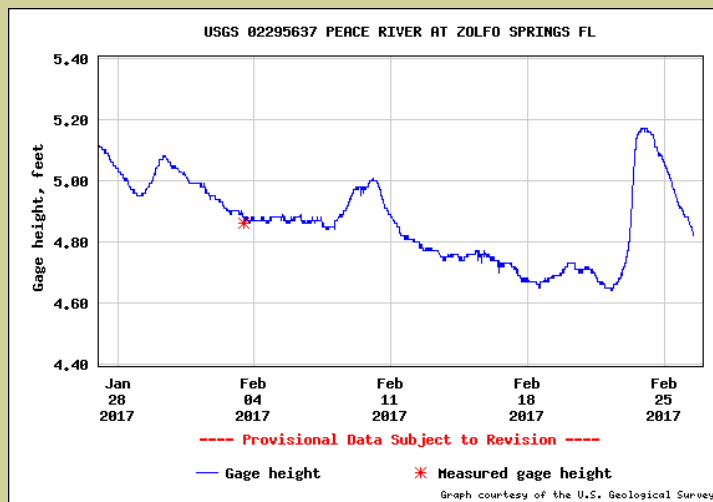
Kids' Fossil Blast

The next kids' program will be on Saturday, April 15th.

Kids' Fossil Blast is an informal, hands-on experience with real fossils, casts, etc. aimed at kids ages 5 to 14. We meet for an hour before our regular meetings.

Piece on the Peace River

We are planning a Peace River Fossil Hunting trip for Saturday, March 25th. We will plan to meet at the boat ramp just before the entrance to Payne Creek Park in Bowling Green. Coming south on Highway 17, you will turn left onto Hardee St and in .4 miles turn right onto Lake Branch Road. The turnoff to the boat ramp will be on the right in .5 miles. We will meet at 8:30 AM, get the boats unloaded, and then shuttle cars a few miles south to the Rea Road ramp where we will be getting off the river. Please contact Sheila Walaszek at swala@mac.com or call her at [321-217-4889](tel:321-217-4889) if you are interested in going. Please indicate if you are bringing your own boat or will need a canoe. Mark Voke is providing the canoes and paddles for \$20 per canoe, but he does not have life vests, so bring your own. You will need a shovel, sifting screen, and something to put your finds in. (A nail apron from home depot works well and is only a couple of bucks.) Wear closed shoes, either neoprene dive booties or old tennis shoes. The water will be cold, so bring a wet suit if you have one. Don't forget hats, sunscreen, fossil hunting permit, snacks and drinks. If you don't have all the above gear, let her know and chances are you can borrow from someone.



Florida Fossil Hunters News

ASK A SCIENTIST - GEOLOGY

March 12th

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

FLORIDA MUSEUM -
3215 Hull Road,
SW 34th Street and
Hull Road Gainesville, FL 32611



Science is all around you! Take advantage of this opportunity to talk with researchers from [UF's department of Geological Sciences](#) and ask those questions you have been wondering about. Bring your specimens and find answers during an afternoon of discovery and learning.

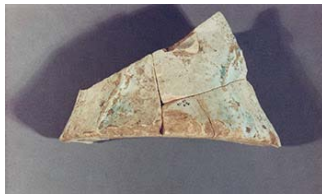
For more information, call [352-273-2064](tel:352-273-2064).

Archaeology Workshop: Ceramics

Mar 26th 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Florida Museum - 3215 Hull Road, SW 34th
Street and Hull Road Gainesville, FL 32611

Archaeology isn't just about the prehistoric past. It also can shed light on people who lived more recently in Florida. Come learn how archaeologists study Florida's historic



residents through the ceramics they left behind. A presentation is followed by hands-on activities. Join the [Florida Public Archaeology Network](#) for this free workshop recommended for all ages. [Pre-registration](#) is required.

For more information, call [352-273-2064](tel:352-273-2064).

Women in Paleontology 2017

This year's program promises to be bigger and better. We are fortunate in having the support of the folks at the Florida Museum of Natural History who have helped us secure a grant from the Paleontological Society this year to target young girls and minorities.

If you want to be part of this event, contact Cindy Lockner at clockner@comcast.net or Bonnie at bonnierussell62@gmail.com

The date for this year's program is **Saturday, May 6th**. Mark your calendars! We are so excited!!!

Women in Paleontology Webinars

This new webinar series is dedicated to promoting Women in Paleontology and Jan. 25's webinar will be presented by Tara Lepore, who is a researcher and educator at the Alf Museum of Paleontology in California. Tara will discuss her personal route to paleontology, resources for those interested in pursuing a career in the field, and she will cover a little bit about her research on coprolites.

FOSSIL Project Women in Paleo Webinar Series

Tara Lepore, researcher and educator Jan 25th

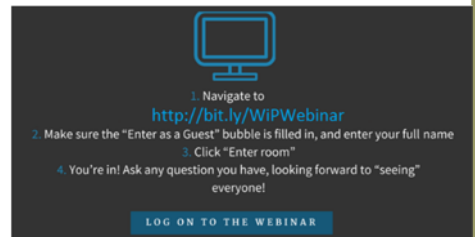
Brenda Hunda, museum curator Feb 22nd

Cindy Lockner, amateur paleontologist Mar 29th

Lisa White, museum director of education Apr 26th

Sponsored by: Contact @egardner for details

In partnership with the Paleontological Society and with technical support from iDigBio, the FOSSIL Project is thrilled to be hosting a four-part webinar series throughout Spring 2017. All are welcome to attend these free webinars. Just connect at <http://bit.ly/WiPWebinar>. Connection time will begin at 6:45pm ET, allowing for 15 minutes to address any technical problems. If you are unfamiliar with AdobeConnect online conferencing software, don't worry! All you need is an internet connection and the webinar link above. There is no sign-up or installation. (Unless you wish to use a mobile device – then you will have to download the AdobeConnect app for either Android or iPhone/iPad.) And here is a helpful "[quick start guide](#)" for connecting!



Be sure to enter the webinar as a "guest" and write your full name so that we can keep track of attendance. Please see the attached webinar directions image for help.

If you haven't yet, please consider joining the myFOSSIL community website at www.myfossil.org. As a member of myFOSSIL, you can view the recorded webinars at a later time, engage with other members in the [dedicated webinar forum](#), and – best of all – receive a certificate of completion for attending/watching all four webinars.

Fossil club/society officers, please feel free to forward this email to your members, or publish the attached full schedule in your newsletters.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns. Hope to see you this evening!

Eleanor E. Gardner, M.S., FOSSIL Project Coordinator,
Florida Museum of Natural History
[\(352\)-273-1936](tel:352-273-1936) | egardner@flmnh.ufl.edu
fossil@flmnh.ufl.edu | www.myfossil.org/

It's always a good time when we get to inspire children and talk to adults with curious minds and there were plenty of them that day.

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Car Wash for Fossil Project

Andre Tovar has scheduled three Eagle Scout car wash fundraisers for his project on the following dates:

- **Saturday, April 15** from 10 a.m to 4 pm
-- Winn-Dixie / Circle K on 434 in Longwood
- **Saturday, April 22** from 10 am to 4 pm
-- True Value Wekiva
- **Saturday, May 27th** from 10 a.m to 4 pm
-- Winn-Dixie / Circle K on 434 in Longwood

Get the grime off your cars & promote fossil education!

FOSSIL & MINERAL DONATIONS NEEDED FOR EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT!



About the Project:

- 3 Fossil cases, each containing 20 fossils
- 3 Mineral cases, each containing 12 minerals

Florida Fossil Hunters would like three 3 fossil cases and 3 mineral cases. Once completed, the cases will be available for middle school teachers in public and private schools in Orange, Seminole, and Lake counties. Our goal is to give students an opportunity to learn about fossils and minerals by touching and holding them instead of looking at pictures.

Donations Needed (All Cases Combined):

- ✓ 12 Mammal Fossils
- ✓ 12 Sedimentary Rock Samples
- ✓ 12 Bird Fossils
- ✓ 12 Igneous Rock Samples
- ✓ 12 Amphibian Fossils
- ✓ 12 Metamorphic Rock Samples
- ✓ 12 Reptile Fossils
- ✓ 12 Fish Fossils

My name is Andre Tovar and I live in Central Florida. I have been a member of both Florida Fossil Hunters and Boy Scouts since I was seven years old. I am 13 years old and am looking forward to becoming an Eagle Scout, the highest honor of scouting that only 5% of Boy Scouts achieve. I am honored to support Florida Fossil Hunters with this project. I am in 8th grade and am a member of National Junior Honor Society. In my spare time, I like to go fossil hunting, collect coins, and play soccer.

Contact: info@floridafossilhunters.com or atov777-eagle@yahoo.com

Go Play in the Dirt

The FL Museum of Natural History is currently working at a large-scale, extensive excavation at the Montbrook fossil site. The **Hemphillian Montbrook Site** is about a 40-minute drive south of Gainesville, near the town of Williston in Levy County.

The **Montbrook Site** is very productive and almost all volunteers will find some fossil specimens on their first day.

The most commonly found fossils are bones from the shell of

freshwater turtles and vertebrae, spines, scales, and skull bones of fish, including gar, catfish, snook, and drum. Fossils of alligator, birds, and mammals are also found, but less frequently. For more

information about the Montbrook fossil site, visit: <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/museum-voices/montbrook/>

We will be working at the site from January 14 to May 21, 2017. Work at the site will occur from Tuesday through Sunday, with a few exceptions for some weeks. Volunteers from 15 to 17 years of age will be accepted but must be accompanied by an adult sibling (18+ years old), or a parent or guardian. **Otherwise, volunteers must be at least 18 years old.** Volunteers must be physically fit enough to work outdoors for several hours and be able to walk up and down irregular slopes. Volunteers can work

just a single day, a few days, or a regular schedule one or more times a week. There is no limit to the number of times a volunteer can work at the site.

To volunteer for the Montbrook Fossil Dig, download an application form with more information (including which days we are digging at the site) <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/files/2314/7984/0017/Montbrookdigapplication2016-2017.pdf>. Send in the filled-out form using the directions on the back or second page of the form. If you have any questions about volunteering at the site, please email Rachel Narducci or Richard Hulbert.

You can also pick up the application form at our club meetings or contact Bonnie and she can mail the forms to you.

Montbrook Fossil Dig 2017 dates

March 2017: 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31

April 2017: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30

May 2017: To be decided

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Understanding the modernization of North American soft-shelled turtles (Trionychidae) via Miocene crania

Natasha S. Vitek

Soft-shelled turtles (Trionychidae) are a characteristic group of vertebrates. They are easily recognizable in the modern biota, including the rivers and lakes of Florida, by their leathery skin, long neck, and pointed nose. Only one genus, *Apalone*, containing three species, *A. ferox*, *A. mutica*, and *A. spinifera*, currently inhabits North America. In contrast, 6 genera and 31 species are known from North America between the Cretaceous and the Pleistocene. Some regions of North America during the Paleocene and Eocene have the highest recorded trionychid diversity on Earth (Vitek & Joyce 2015).

The origin of *Apalone* in the context of that lost diversity is still poorly understood. It is thought to have occurred sometime in the Oligocene or Miocene based on a drastic reduction in diversity in the Late Eocene, and general morphological similarities between described, fossilized Oligocene-Pliocene shells and the shells of Recent *Apalone* (Hutchison 1982, 1996; Jasiniski 2013). However, more data from other parts of the skeleton and more careful morphological analyses are needed to understand exactly how those fossils relate to the origin of the species living in North America today.

I propose to study the morphology of eight trionychid skulls from the Miocene of Florida and Nebraska in order to better understand their taxonomy and phylogeny. These eight skulls, from the Hemingfordian—Clarendonian of Nebraska, and the Clarendonian—Hemphillian of Florida, represent a major opportunity to fill in a sparsely documented period of the fossil record of Trionychidae. Seven of the eight skulls are undescribed. Together, they represent the entirety of the known cranial record of trionychids in North America in the Miocene (Vitek & Joyce 2015). In particular, CT scans of those specimens will allow for the digital preparation of parts of the skull still covered in matrix, digital reconstructions of crushed specimens, and visualizations of the internal morphology of the skulls that are not feasible with the physical specimens. Understanding the identity of these skulls will improve our knowledge of trionychid diversity during the Miocene and its potential relationship of Miocene trionychid fossils to *Apalone*.

Ancient Bacteria - Unexpected Fossil Find in North Florida

Florida is a great place to find fossils. Limestone bedrock underlies the entire state and is exposed near the surface in large areas. This bedrock is comprised of the fossil remains of billions of marine organisms that lived, died and accumulated over millions of years. The oldest fossils found at the surface in Florida are approximately 40 million years old and include the remains of marine organisms including sea biscuits, sand dollars, mollusks and sea grasses. The diversity of fossil organisms reflects the environment that existed across Florida at any given geologic time period.

Fossils are the remains of ancient life. Common fossil finds in Florida include shark teeth, bones and shells. These items are more easily preserved as fossils because they are hard and don't decompose as quickly as soft tissue. There are, however, other kinds of fossils that reflect the presence of living organisms without leaving behind preserved body parts. These kinds of fossils, called trace fossils, include footprints and burrows that indicate biological activity occurred at some location in the past even though the organism's remains are not present.

Cyanobacteria were the dominant forms of life on Earth for billions of years. These organisms use photosynthesis, which is the process of using sunlight to create food out of carbon dioxide and water. Over hundreds of millions of years, oxygen, a byproduct of photosynthesis, accumulated in our atmosphere and allowed new life forms to adapt and evolve. Cyanobacteria were also the first reef builders in our early oceans. Structures called stromatolites are the result of cyanobacterial mats growing and trapping sediment over time. The most famous location where modern cyanobacteria are still creating stromatolites is [Shark Bay](#) in Western Australia.

You can sign up by emailing Rosandra at furrykids_2000@yahoo.com or calling [407-340-0419](tel:407-340-0419).

VULCAN MINE Field Trip

Vulcan Mine Field Trip near Brooksville

FIELD TRIP LEADER

Saturday, March 11th

If you did not sign up at the meeting, please call or email:

Trip Leader: The Montequin family
(Rosandra, Victor, and Jenna) !

You can sign up by emailing Rosandra
at furrykids_2000@yahoo.com or calling [407-340-0419](tel:407-340-0419).
Call or email Bonnie to volunteer for the April trip
bonnierussell62@gmail.com | [352-429-1058](tel:352-429-1058)

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.

Meet on the driveway loop near the entrance to the Mine by 8:30 am 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 2 pm.

All participants **MUST**

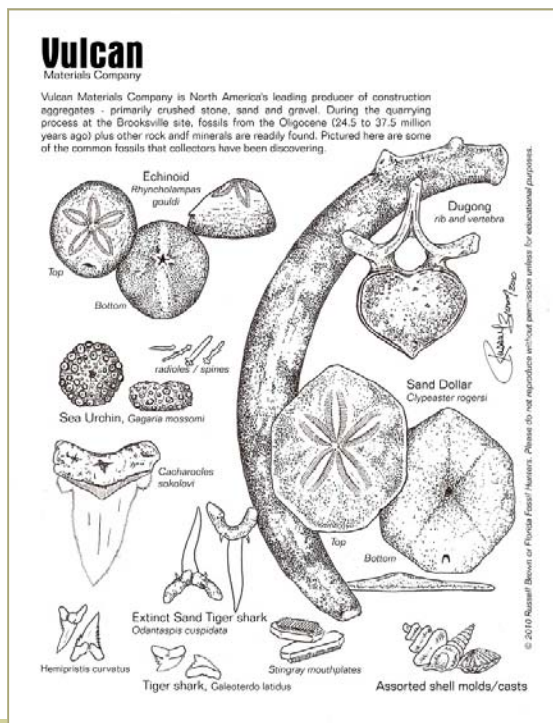
be escorted into and out of the mine. Do not leave on your own since it is easy to become lost.

**THERE ARE
NO RESTROOM
FACILITIES AT
VULCAN MINE,**
other than the boulders and the hills.

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.

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. 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.

**TRIP LEADERS
ALSO NEEDED
APR 8**

*ID Sheet above is available on
the field trip and website.
floridafossilhunters.com/Field_Trips.htm*

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

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Florida Fossil Hunters

Membership Application

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	Steve Sharpe	(352) 552-2296
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
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 Directors:

Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Dave Cass	(407) 409-9095
Marge Fantozi	
Marcia Wright	
Cindy Lockner	
Dave Dunaway	

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: bonnierussell62@gmail.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.

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Florida Fossil Hunters Mark Your Calendar

See inside for more information on events.

Saturday, March 11th
Vulcan Mine– Leader
Montequin family

March 11th & 12th
Tampa Bay Fossil Show

Sunday, March 12th
Ask a Scientist-Geology
FLMNH, Gainesville

Saturday, March 18th
3 pm Meeting

Sunday, March 19th
Ask a Scientist-Geology, FLMNH,
Gainesville

Saturday, May 6th
Women in Paleontology,
Orlando Science Center

Saturday, April 8th
Vulcan Mine - NEED TRIP LEADER

Saturday, April 15th
2 PM - Kids' Fossil Blast
3 pm - Meeting

Saturday, April 22nd
Earth Day at the OSC

April 28 - 30th
Central FL Mineral & Gem Society Show
Orlando, FL

Saturday, May 6th
Women in Paleontology, OSC

January to May
FLMNH Montbrook Dig
Orlando Science Center

FFH Fossil Fair
October 28th & 29th

Saturday, Nov. 4th
National Fossil Day at FLMNH

Join Our Facebook group, Search:
[Florida Fossil Hunters](#)



Be Green

Email Bonnie at bonnierussell62@gmail.com
to receive the newsletter via email.



Visit us online at www.floridafossilhunters.com

Articles and comments should be sent to: bonnierussell62@gmail.com

Florida Fossil Hunters

Post Office Box 540404

Orlando, Florida 32854-0404



Florida Fossil Hunters News