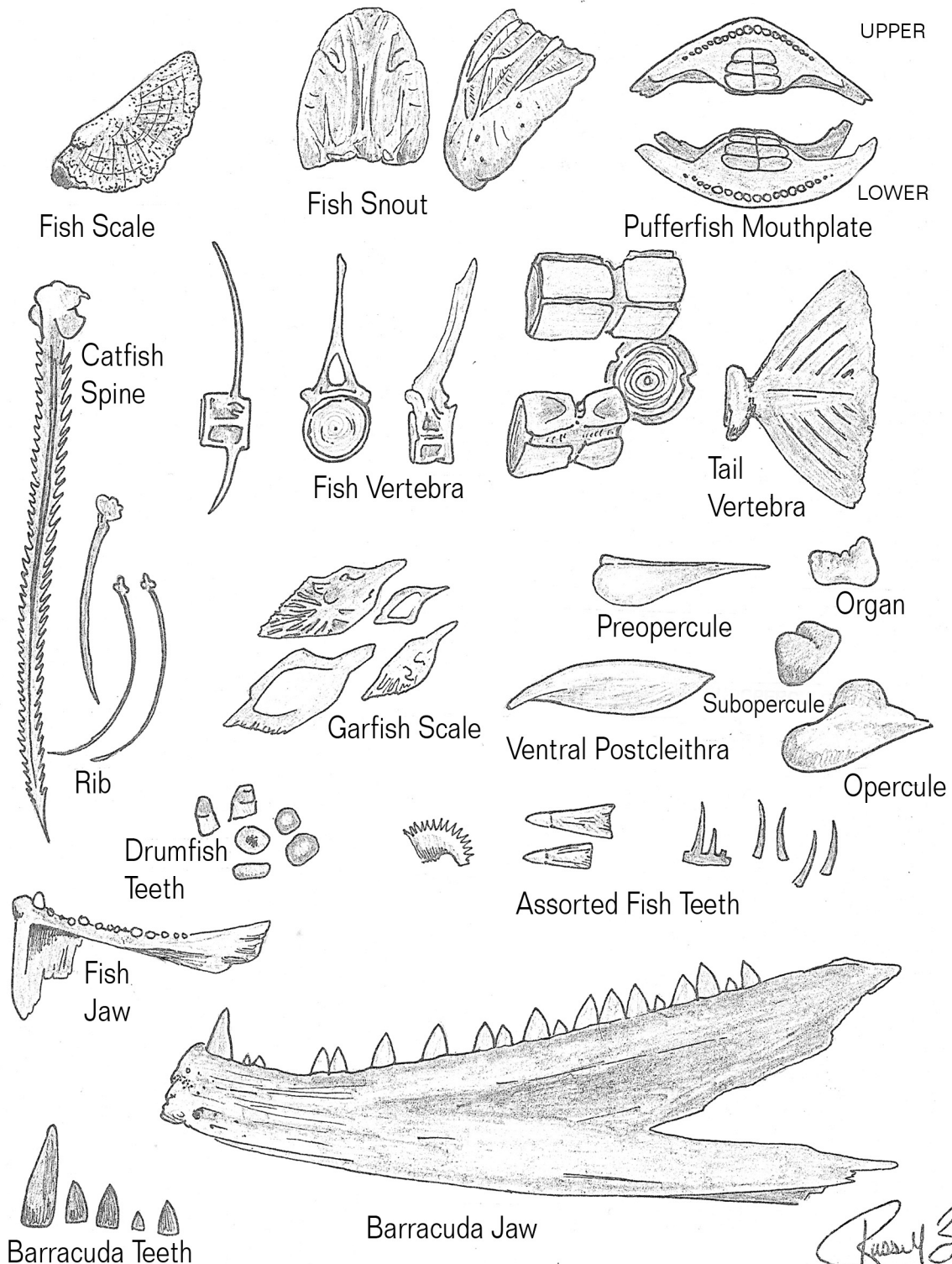


Florida Fossil Hunters ID Sheet

Fish: Actinopterygians / Bony Fish

Fish evolved over 400 million years ago. The ones in Florida's fossil record, which starts in the Eocene 55 million years ago, are modern species. The gar fish evolved in the Cretaceous and have changed very little since then. We find their fossilized scales. Fossil vertebrae from all types of fish are found. Some have become swollen due to the fish having to live in brackish water (mixed salt and fresh water) to which they weren't equipped to live in. Teeth and mouth plates from all types of fish are in the fossil layers, too. These fossils can give us a window into the world that Florida once was; from shallow seas to coral reefs to estuaries to rivers to lakes. One site may have many of these environments over the span of millions of years as the seas covered Florida, subsided, and rose again.



Russell Brown 97