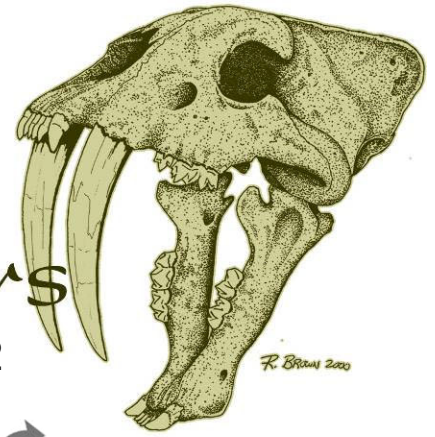


NEWS

Florida Fossil Hunters



Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc.
dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters
Volume 32, Number 1

JAN/FEB 2022

From the President's Desk...

Welcome to all members - new & old. It's a busy time for everyone at the end of a very busy year. Thank you to all members who made time to participate in 2021 club activities: Women in Paleontology, Fossil Fest, National Fossil Day, Earth Day, our Annual Fossil Fair, and field trips. Remember all these activities earn Fossil Bucks which is the currency used at the club's Fossil Bucks Auction.

At the close of another year as your President, I'd like to thank all of the officers, friends, family, dealers, members new & old, and all the folks at the Florida Museum of Natural History for your support.

The December 18th Holiday Party and Fossil Bucks Auction was loads of fun and about 20 people attended. We had some great stuff for this auction; everyone got to go home with something. Special Thanks to Dave Dunaway for hosting the Christmas party at his house.

January's Meeting guest speaker will be Kala Warner and the topic is Fossils of The Bad Lands, SD and we will conduct our club elections for 2022 officers. *See page 2 for more information.*

February's meeting will not be held the Orlando Science Center. FFH has scheduled a Yankeetown field trip, club picnic and meeting on February 19, 2022. *See page 2 for more information.*

Thank You
Salvatore Sansone, FFH President

In this issue we are on the hunt!

All about the what's and where's of Florida fossil hunting.

MEETING
SCHEDULE

FULL 2022
Schedule Pg 8

RENEW
TODAY

'22 Membership
Online/Mail/Mtg Pg 2

VENDORS
REGISTER

2022 Fossil Fair
OPEN NOW Pg 2

Coming Events

UPCOMING MEETINGS at the Orlando Science Center

FFH meeting at OSC
Saturday, January 15th
3pm Club Meeting | See pg 2

**Yankeetown Spoils Island
Field Trip
& Club Meeting**

Saturday, February 19th
8am | See pg 2

2022 Fossil Fair
October 22 & 23

Full 2022 Meeting Schedule
on pg 8

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www.floridafossilhunters.com

Florida Fossil Hunters News

MEETINGS & MORE

January FFH Meeting & Elections at OSC

GUEST SPEAKER KALA WARNER

TOPIC: FOSSILS OF THE BAD LANDS, SD

The meeting is January 15th at 3pm. Will include our guest speaker and officer elections to re-elect or nominate new FFH Officers. All positions are available for all FFH members.

- President: Salvatore Sansone
- Vice President: Steve Sharpe
- Secretary: Melissa Cole
- Treasurer: David Dunaway

Regular Meetings are held at the Orlando Science Center. Unless otherwise noted.

Admission and parking is FREE to attending members. At the garage & ticket counter inform them you are there for the meeting.

Social distancing & face masks requirements dependent on current [State of Florida](#) and [OSC](#) policies.

February FFH Meeting & Fieldtrip AT YANKEETOWN SPOILS ISLAND

Note this meeting will NOT be held at the OSC.

Field Trip, Club Meeting, & Picnic will be at Yankeetown Spoil Islands Saturday, February 19th. **Meet at the boat ramp at 8:00am.** Canoe, kayak, or boat needed to access the islands, the channel is too deep to walk over and the current is too strong to swim. It's a very relaxing place to spend a few hours hunting for echinoids, sand dollars, etc. We often see dolphins and manatees swimming around.

Recommendations: Bring drinks, food, bug spray, hat, etc. Wear gym shoes or dive boots - corals are sharp. Bring your fishing gear if you are so inclined.

Picnic: FFH will supply hamburgers, hot dogs and drinks. Members please bring a covered dish to share. *No restaurants in the immediate area.*

Volunteers with boat/canoe needed to help transport members to the Islands for digging.

If you don't have a boat, join us and we will ferry you across! Even if you are late, just honk your horn and we will hear you and come to ferry you across.

Only paid FFH members can participate with FFH field trips due to our insurance requirements.

Questions? Contact Melissa Cole to sign up and let her know what covered dish you are bringing.

Visit <https://floridafossilhunters.com/yankeetown-club-field-trips/> for additional information, ID sheet and map.

REGISTER/RENEW

Membership options

- Family memberships cost \$25
- Individual membership will cost \$20

3 OPTIONS

RENEW NOW ONLINE!

Mail in the form on pg 7 or renew at the meeting.

<https://floridafossilhunters.com/membership>

Florida Fossil Hunters Memberships supports

- Monthly Meetings with speakers, auctions, fossil sharing and a kid's program
- Field trips
- School and community outreach
- Organize Fossil Fair for 30 years
- Manage Florida Fossil Hunters Facebook group that boasts more than 20,000 enthusiasts.
- Newsletter and website communications
- A stellar reputation with Central Florida science centers and museums... with our support of their events, Fossil collections to display, and community engagement.

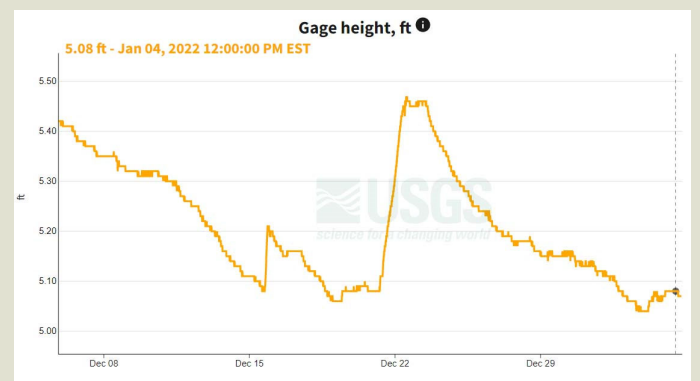
VENDOR REGISTRATION

For Fossil Fair 2022, Now open. Visit <https://floridafossilhunters.com/fossil-fair/>. Scroll down for links to both the mail-in-form or online registration.

PIECE ON THE PEACE

Want the most current height?

Visit floridafossilhunters.com and click on the easy **Peace River Gauge** button in the sidebar or under the Resources tab for the latest water level data or visit the [USGS website](#) directly.



Florida Fossil Hunters News

What can you find when Fossil Collecting in Florida?

- Megalodon, Mackerel, Mako, and other shark teeth!
- Whale vertebrae and teeth!
- Giant Ground Sloth teeth and bones!
- Mastodon and Mammoth teeth, bones, and tusks!
- Saber Tooth Cat teeth and bones!
- Alligator and Camel teeth!
- Coprolites of all kinds (fossilized poop)!

VERY EASY

WANT A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE WHEN COLLECTING FOSSILS IN FLORIDA? WALK ON A BEACH (shark teeth found walking on the beach are typically smaller in size than ones found wading in streams/ivers or scuba diving offshore)

WHO: toddlers, kids, adults, seniors

WHERE: THE BEST BEACHES IN THE STATE for collecting are on the west coast at Venice Beach and just to the south on Manasota Key. On the east coast some finds occur on Jacksonville Beach and beaches directly north.

BRING: hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, bathing suit, snacks/drinks, and a separate container for the sharp sharks teeth – they may poke you if you put them in your pocket

TIP: Stop by a local gift shop in Venice Beach to purchase a “Florida shovel” to sift teeth from the sand. Plan your trip at low tide or head to the beach following a storm to find more and bigger sharks teeth!

EASY TO MODERATE

ANOTHER GREAT TECHNIQUE WHEN FOSSIL COLLECTING IN FLORIDA IS TO GO KAYAKING & WADING IN SHALLOW WATERS

WHO: people of any age that can sit in a kayak and wade in a shallow river or stream with a slow current

WHERE: Peace River, near Arcadia, is the most popular river in the state for family-friendly fossil collecting. Other rivers and creeks in central and north Florida are family-friendly as well – check our fossil guide map.

BRING: any type of water shoe suitable for walking on the river bottom, bathing suit, hat, sunscreen, bug repellent, small cooler with lunch and drinks, change of clothes for your ride home, gallon zip lock bags for your cell phone – wallet and exciting fossil finds.

TIP: Hire a guide – they know the local waters, wildlife-safe locations, will teach you where to look, and how to identify your finds!

ADVANCED

LOOKING FOR A MORE CHALLENGING ADVENTURE WHILE COLLECTING FOSSILS IN FLORIDA? SCUBA DIVING

WHO: anyone open water SCUBA certified

WHERE: Venice Beach/Manasota Key in shallow gulf waters just offshore

BRING: Your comfortable wetsuit and mask/snorkel – most dive guides include the scuba gear with the price of the dive, cooler with lunch and drinks, mesh bags to put your big teeth in, bathing suit, towels, and change of clothes for the drive back home.

TIP: Hire a guide – they’ll drop you in right over top the hot spots and teach you how to identify your finds!

Full article: <https://playhardflorida.com/fossil-collecting-in-florida-is-it-easy-to-find-big-teeth/>

TIPS FROM SOME OF FFH OFFICERS

Identifying fossils can sometimes be challenging. Our Facebook group has a great group of volunteers who can help you to identify those tricky fossils. -Ken

Talk with other members at the meeting to make plans to go out fossiling. Fossiling is more fun with a buddy! -Melissa

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Best Places to Find Fossils in Florida

FOSSILS IN FLORIDA – HUNTING FOR NATURE’S TREASURES FROM THE PAST

Florida is a veritable hotbed of fossils, and the amateur prospector will be pleased to know that they don't have to get out the pick and shovel in order to nab some truly impressive specimens for their collection as long as they pick their spot carefully.

Florida agates

Fossilized coral agates like this beautiful specimen have been found throughout Florida.

The variety of fossils in Florida is absolutely bewildering, ranging from prized shark teeth to gorgeous coral agates. It should come as no surprise to anyone that there's a wide range of different marine fossils to be found, but you'll be pleased to know that the area also large mammalian specimens present in the state as well.

If you decide to take a trip on your hunt for some of the good stuff, try some of the following areas and you might just come home with a new favorite piece for your collection.

Venice Beach

Venice Beach in Florida is considered to be one of the best places in the world to find fossilized shark teeth, there's an absolutely huge "boneyard" of sorts just off shore here and the action of the waves consistently brings forth new specimens.

If you're particularly bold, you can rent SCUBA gear and head right out to the source, looking and taking the first pick. If you choose to do so you're bound to end up with an amazing specimen or two, and you might even be able to find some of the highly prized teeth of the Megalodon out there.

Don't just keep your eyes open for the big prize, however, there are tons of smaller teeth, Dugong ribs, whale jaws, and plenty of other stuff to be found in the waters just off the beach.

If you aren't quite that adventurous, it's still perfectly possible to add to your collection in the area around the pier where the currents run strong and pull teeth and other fossils from the deep ocean floor and bring them right to the beach.

Tip: Look for black dots in the sand, this phosphate material is usually a good indicator that you're looking in the right place to bring some shark teeth to light.

Divers Hunting Fossils in Florida

Fossil hunters will commonly go scuba diving in search of the best shark teeth fossils.

Peace River

Peace River is another hotspot to hunt fossils in Florida just as long as the water isn't running too high. Most of the fossils here are found while wading in the water or snorkeling under its surface, and many people will rent a canoe and go along the river for some more mundane recreation while they're on the hunt.

The river does have its own set of dangers, like pretty much any body of water in Florida there's always the risk of an encounter with an alligator so you'll need to be alert while in the water.

If you think you can handle the risk, though, you'll find that the gravel bed of the river holds an amazing amount of fossils for the dedicated prospector. The deeper holes sometimes even contain bones from large mammals like mammoth, making for an entirely different set of specimens than you'll find in a lot of the state.

Shell Creek

Shell Creek is another fantastic place to find fossils in Florida. Along with the shark teeth, you can expect to find in almost any body of water in Florida, you'll also have a good chance of coming across rarer specimens.

There are plenty of interesting finds that have been made in this area, including the teeth of prehistoric horses, bone plates off of ancient alligators, and even the plates off of ancient Glyptotherium which were a large armadillo-like creature.

The bewildering variety of fossils is held just beneath the surface, and even an amateur will find themselves quickly dredging up a whole bunch of different types of fossils with only a simple classifier to sift through gravel. Give it a shot and you'll be impressed with what you can find.

Honeymoon Island State Park

Agatized coral is a pseudomorphic fossil which is actually the state stone of Florida. Unfortunately, most areas in the state have long been picked clean and while you may be able to find a piece here and there in the old hunting grounds chances are that you're not going to be bringing a bag of it home in most places.

Fortunately, collectors have found that it's still possible to make good finds along the shores of Honeymoon Island. This is good news if you're looking to add some of this beautiful stone to your collection, and with a bit of know-how, you should be able to find a considerable amount of it.

Many recommend looking along the northwest beach in order to find the best spoils.

For the full article, visit: <https://raregoldnuggets.com/?p=3579>

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Finding Collection Locations

FOSSIL COLLECTING SITES IN FLORIDA

Fossils in Florida – They are just about Everywhere!

Florida is well-known as an excellent location to find fossils. There are a wealth of sites for both vertebrate and invertebrate fossils from the last 44 million years of earth history at or near (within 50 ft) the surface. Most of these localities are of marine origin and span the length and width of the state. Mixed in with or above the marine rocks are terrestrial (land-based) fossils from the Oligocene epoch up until recent times. Florida has the distinction of being the richest state for vertebrate fossils from both land and marine animals east of the Mississippi River.

Many people on our fossil hunting tours ask how we find the sites that we take them to; is it totally random or do we know what to look for to find a site? Can I find fossils anywhere I dig a hole?

The way to find a site is to have some prior knowledge or do your homework on the general geology of the area in the state you would like to look. For instance, the area in which I live in east-central Florida has marine rocks and sands from the Pleistocene epoch (2 million- 10,000 yrs old) near the surface. Many of the fossils easily found are invertebrate shells, snails and sand dollars. They can be found in beaches, canal banks, river beds, spoil islands in the intracoastal waterway or in shell pits where fill material is mined. The fill material is used for driveways, parking lots, road beds, and beach replenishment. Scanning almost any shelly looking material anywhere away from the beach will turn up some invertebrate fossils. Occasionally, vertebrate fossils will turn up in this shelly material but they will be nowhere near as common as invertebrate fossils.

The Peace River area, for another example, is in west-central Florida. While Pleistocene shells and invertebrate material of roughly the same age are present here as well, late Pleistocene land vertebrate fossils (mammoth, mastodon, saber-tooth cat, tapir, horse, giant armadillo etc.) are more commonly found mixed into the shells. Only 15-20 ft below the Pleistocene layers are Miocene age (5-15 million year old) marine fossils found in a layer of sediment. This layer of sediment is composed of gravels, sands and clays

and is mined locally for fertilizer. The gravel is composed of phosphate rock, which is highly organic and good for this purpose. The Peace River washes out this same layer from its banks and bottom and in some areas is full of fossils.

All of this means that looking in the places where fossil-bearing layer is exposed can help you find the fossils from the age you're looking for. If you want to find Megalodon shark teeth, look where the teeth are! Even easier.

Finding a good GENERAL location, like the Peace River or one of the phosphate mines is a start. What you'll really need after you do all your geology homework and river and mine exploration are SPECIFIC locations that produce the fossils you're looking for. It's possible to get lucky and hit the jackpot on your first try but usually it requires diligence and effort to find a good site.

While there are many excellent sites for fossils in Florida, access to them can also make collecting difficult. Many people choose to go where others can't and will dive rivers and ocean bottoms. Others will have access to private locations where the public can't generally collect, such as a phosphate mine, making things easier or at least exclusive to few if any other people.

Where you choose to look, and your success, is sometimes dependent on your time, abilities and access. Great fossils are out there, doing your homework, asking questions and getting yourself out there in likely locations will go a long way to fossil finding success.

Florida is absolutely brimming with fossils, and you'll rapidly

see why if you decide to make the trip.

The fossils themselves are a unique type, not just the impressions of shells and other miscellaneous mollusks that you'll find in many limestone beds around the country, but instead being fully formed pieces of fossilized or agatized critters.

These four locations are great places to start your hunt for fossils in Florida. Just remember that nearly the entire state was once covered by the ocean, meaning that nearly anywhere has the potential of having some marine fossils. What more could a collector want?

For more information, visit:

<https://fossilhuntingtours.com/fossil-collecting-sites-in-florida/>

The way to find a site is to have some prior knowledge or do your homework on the general geology of the area in the state you would like to look.

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Know the law before you go

In Florida it is illegal to collect vertebrate fossils (excluding shark teeth) without a permit from lands owned by the state. State lands include the bottoms of navigable waterways like rivers, lakes and some streams. A permit to collect vertebrate fossils on state lands can be obtained through the Florida Museum of Natural History. There is a \$5 fee per year, and the permit holder agrees to report their vertebrate fossil finds on a yearly basis. The state has the right to claim any fossils found that are deemed scientifically significant as a condition of issuing the permit. This law applies to both Florida residents and those traveling to the state.

Like shark teeth, invertebrate and plant fossils can be collected without a permit (sea shells, echinoids and petrified wood). Often times, fossil hunters come across human artifacts. An artifact represents something that has been shaped or constructed by prehistoric humans while fossils are the remains of ancient life. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between fossils and artifacts as prehistoric people occasionally utilized fossils as ornaments and tools. An example of fossil material that can also be an artifact is agatized coral. Prehistoric Floridians made projectile points and other tools out of agatized coral. If you cannot tell the difference, then it is best to leave the object where it was found. Collecting of human artifacts on state lands is illegal.

No fossil collecting of any type is allowed inside the boundaries of national and state parks or wildlife refuges. It is suggested that fossil collectors check with the manager of any lands they are interested in collecting from as some areas are off-limits to collecting of any kind. Remember, this applies only to state lands; private lands are a different matter. It is not illegal to remove either human artifacts or vertebrate fossils from private land as long as you have the landowner's permission. However, the collection of artifacts on private land is not allowed if the area contains a human burial.

Florida Law

Florida law requires a \$5 annual Fossil Collecting Permit if you collect vertebrate fossils; however, collecting sharks teeth and shells does not require a permit. If you go collecting with a guide they typically have you covered with a "group" collecting permit.

Florida law states that artifacts are state property and cannot be removed from Florida waters – these include Native American tools and arrowheads as well as any human-altered object older than 50 years old.

Do not disturb any vegetation or wildlife while collecting and be aware of your wild surroundings.

To Register or Renew, visit:
<https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/vertpaleo/amateur-collector/fossil-permit/>

Register or Renew your
Florida Fossil Permit

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS: [CLICK TO RENEW TODAY](#)

ATTEND MEETINGS

Learn more &
Get involved!

Monthly Meetings have
guest speakers & time to
share finds.

GET OUT ON A FIELD TRIP

Join the trip to
Yankeetown
more info pg 2

VOLUNTEER & MAKE AN IMPACT

Help plan club events or
inspire others about fossils
at the science centers &
schools.

JOIN THE FACEBOOK GROUP

Share your finds and
help others identify.
[Facebook Group](#)

Florida Fossil Hunters News

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 options are listed to the right.

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	Salvatore Sansone	(321) 278-9294
Vice President 1	Steve Sharpe	(352) 552-2296
Vice President 2		
Secretary		
Treasurer	David Dunaway	(407) 786-8844

Chairs:

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	Ken Sellers	
Newsletter		
	Elise Cronin-Hurley	info@elisech.com
Photography	John Heinsen	(407) 291-7672
Facebook	Salvatore Sansone	
	Ken Sellers	
Webmaster	Elise Cronin-Hurley	info@elisech.com

Board of Directors:

Joyce Bittle	(407) 341-6366
Melissa Cole	(407) 461-8507
Marge Fantozi	(407) 256-5566
Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Ken Sellers	(407) 457-4117

Membership Application

MAIL in this form or Register ONLINE at
www.floridafossilhunters.com/membership

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:

Family membership: \$25
Individual membership: \$20

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 with Family Membership.

Membership year runs from January to December.

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: info@floridafossilhunters.com. Articles can be sent as text in the e-mail or in Microsoft Word files (.docx).

Please note in subject of email 'FFH News: [article or info]

Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc.
dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Florida Fossil Hunters Mark Your Calendar

2022 Calendar

Meetings 3pm at OSC | Kids' Fossil Blast and alternative time and location noted when applicable.

See inside for more information

Saturday January 15th
in Founders Room
February 19th
Yankeetown Spoils Island
Field Trip, Club Picnic & Meeting
Saturday March 19th
Saturday April 16th
Saturday May 28th
Saturday June 25th
Saturday July 23rd
Saturday August 13th
Saturday September 24th

2022 Fossil Fair
October 22-23rd
Saturday October 29th
Saturday November 19th
Fossil Fair:
October 22nd & 23rd
October 29th
November 19th
December no meeting
Holidays Party, tba

Join Our Facebook group:
www.facebook.com/groups/floridafossilhunters



Visit us online at www.floridafossilhunters.com

Email info@floridafossilhunters.com to share articles, questions & comments

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Florida Fossil Hunters News